



 Claremont Graduate University

Presenting a Big Pitch in the Humanities

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Today's Goals

- Discuss key elements of a successful pitch and how to do this with topics in the Humanities.
- Significance
- Audience Curiosity
- Analogies, Metaphors, & Examples
- Narrative Structure
- Emotion

The Bigger Picture Through Significance

Why What You Do Matters For Them



Bring the audience into your world by connecting to something meaningful in theirs.



When we get really involved in a topic, it sometimes becomes harder to take a bird's eye view and see the bigger picture.



Most 3-minute theses use the real-world implications of their research as an immediate connection with the audience



Work in the Humanities has a great impact on people, but you have to spell it out for them instead of imply it.



Exercise 1

**WHY AM I INTERESTED IN MY TOPIC?
WHAT DRAWS ME TO IT?**

Significance in the Humanities

Exercise 2

- Transfer why you are drawn to your topic to others.
- Put yourself in the place of the audience, and ask yourself:
what impact does my work have on people today?
- This might be straightforward, or you might have to reflect and try out possibilities.
- Use this short list to consider a descending order of impact for a Big Pitch audience (#3 can still work great!)
 1. General audience
 2. Intellectually-inclined general audience
 3. Fellow researchers in your field

Example of Bigger Picture Significance

- Since her topic is genocide, her significance is implied—mass murder is a bad thing and something we should care about and work to avoid.
- She utilizes this significance throughout her presentation to engage audience emotion and moral sentiment.



Significance Brainstorm

Exercise 3

1. Topic: **I am studying ...**
(Convey this as concisely as you can at this point)
2. Question: **because I want to find out what/why/how ...**
3. Significance (pure): **to help my audience *understand*...**
4. Significance (applied): **to be able to (*do something differently*)* ...**

*Not all projects have applied significance in that they aim to change something in the world apart from changing our understanding about something in it. However, for a presentation to a general audience, applied significance goes a long way. So, if you don't think your project has applied significance, try and see if there's something there that you haven't considered yet.

Significance Brainstorm

Exercise 3

1. Topic: **I am studying** personal autonomy in everyday life
(Convey this as concisely as you can at this point)
2. Question: **because I want to find out how** people can live in a more intentional way, with more control over who they are.
3. Significance (pure): **to help my audience *understand how*** the way people live day-to-day takes them closer to or further away from meaningful lives.
4. Significance (applied): **to be able to** improve self-reflection and self-transparency towards reshaping daily practices that will increase meaning and purpose in people's lives.

Audience Curiosity

The Audience Doesn't Know What You Know



Getting very involved in a topic often causes us to lose track of what might be interesting about it to an audience that is encountering it for the first time.



Put yourself behind the eyes of someone who has never encountered the details of your topic before—see it as if you were encountering it for the first time again.



Convey that feeling and awe to your audience.

Example of Using Curiosity for Effect

- Whiteness is a concept that many in a general audience will have heard spoken before but will not necessarily understand well.
- Spending time explaining it (through clever use of the PPT slide and comedic effect) creates a powerful impact: it can be a threshold concept when first encountered and understood.



Analogies, Metaphors, & Examples

Do a Lot With a Little Bit of Information



You can convey a lot of information by comparing something unknown to the audience with something they know.



Use this for parts of your presentation or for your presentation as a whole.

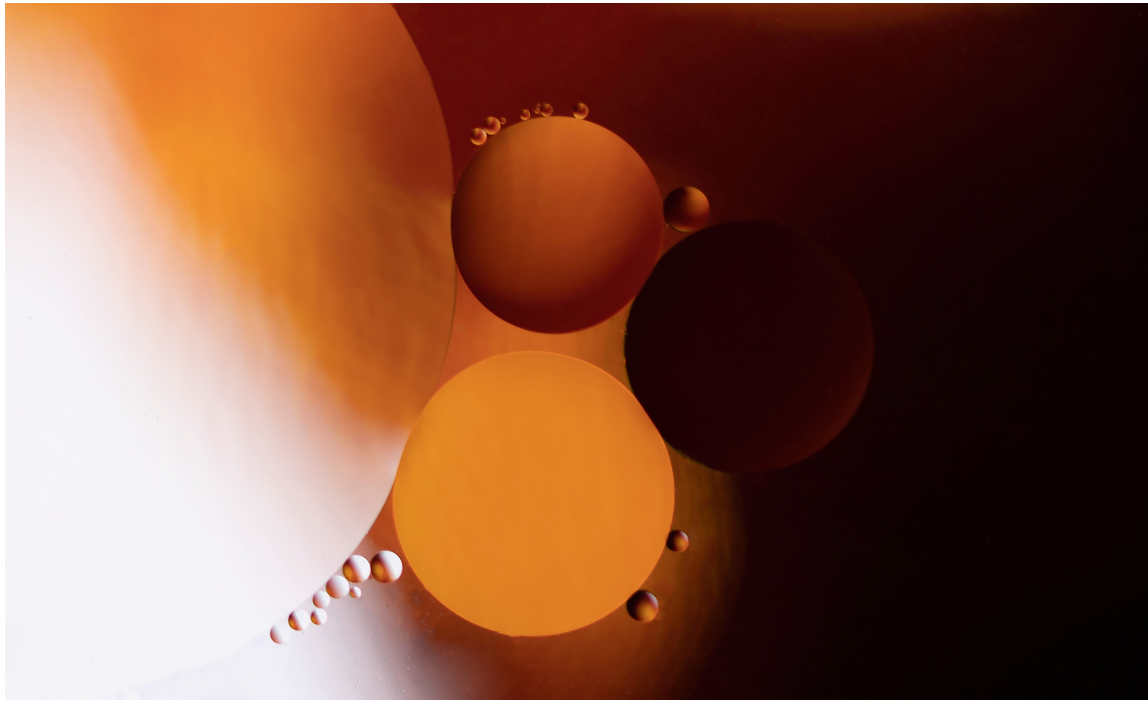


For examples, see some of the sample videos on the website (Finding Nemo, underwater aquarium).

Example of Using Analogies, Metaphors, & Examples

- She uses many examples—personal interactions, a specific person—to illustrate points and increase understanding in a short span of time.
- She spends time discussing and describing one woman's story as a representative example of her main idea—performance as practice.
- Facilitates quick understanding of complex ideas.





Exercise 4

BRAINSTORM A LIST. WHAT ARE SOME INTERESTING FACTS/IDEAS THAT YOUR AUDIENCE MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT YOUR TOPIC?

WHAT EXAMPLES, ANALOGIES, OR METAPHORS COULD YOU USE TO ILLUSTRATE KEY POINTS?

Clear & Fluid Structure

Create a Story to Engage



Use a clear and **familiar** structure for a general audience presentation.



Try structuring it narratively. Who are the characters? What is the beginning, the middle, and the end? What's the crisis, change, or call to action?



Be sure to include a hook to get the audience's attention and convey significance (a powerful question, surprising fact, powerful example, etc).



Ensure things have come full circle at the end and you leave the audience with a strong emotional feeling that will remain with them afterwards.

Audience Emotion

Example of Imbuing Emotion into a Pitch

- Creates some emotion by using incredible statistics to convey significance.
- Strongest emotion by use of specific example: Daniel Summers, PTSD & suicide.
- Used direct quote from example for most effect.



Structure & Emotion Brainstorm

- Sketch out a general narrative structure to your pitch:
 - Beginning ...
 - Middle ...
 - End ...
- Can you integrate mystery or sadness into your presentation?
How?
- What other emotions could you possibly integrate into your presentation?
- Any opportunities for humor?



Contact Us!

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