



Today we are going to visit about making the most of your 3MP or 3MT experience. The 3MP or Three Minute Presentation is a communications competition for non-thesis masters', education specialists and graduate certificate students speaking about their graduate discipline and why it is important for meeting societal needs, whereas the 3MT or Three Minute Thesis is a communications competition for thesis masters' and doctoral students speaking on their research project and why it is important for meeting societal needs. But first, let's answer the questions: "Why the 3MP/3MT?"

The importance of the Three Minute Competitions is about helping you develop the skill to communicate with non-specialists, public audiences about what you do and why it matters. In your graduate program, you are learning to communicate with other specialists, but programs for the most part don't teach you how to communicate technical information to non-specialist, public audiences.

So why is it important to be able to communicate what you do and its importance to society to a non-specialist? Two reasons, first, employers highly value employees who can communicate technical aspects of their work with other employees who are not technical experts in their area, whether those employees are the salesforce, management, or even company's clients.

Second, you will have opportunities during your career to represent your discipline or research to the public, whether this is talking to one of your children's school classes or the local Rotary club or your mom about what you do and why it matters.

Public speaking is different than speaking to specialists. It requires a different skill set. The Three Minute Competitions are designed to help you develop this skill set. You will keep hearing me say "why it matters", because that is one of the essential things that the Three Minute Competitions aims to help you develop: How to explain why what you do matters.

The Three Minute Competitions help you to take a technical subject and make it straightforward enough to be understood and appreciated by non-specialists. It involves learning how to speak in a logically organized, concise, understandable and engaging manner. We are going to talk about how to do this. But first, let's go over the Three Minute Competition rules.

3MP & 3MT[®] rules

- Currently enrolled graduate student
- Talk directly relates to your graduate research topic (3MT[®]) or graduate discipline (3MP)*
- Spoken word only
- No reading from notes or electronic devices*
- Single static slide*
- No electronic media, props, pointers*
- Commence from podium, disqualified if > 3 min*
- Judges rule



*Rules in orange font have been violated in previous OSU 3MPs or 3MT[®]s

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The Three Minute Competitions teach you how to speak to public audiences using a competition as a vehicle to provide you with experience of speaking in front of an audience of those outside of your own discipline and scholarly area—also, you have the chance to win some cash doing it.

You can read the rules, but here are some highlights:

You need to talk about your discipline or scholarly project, whether you are just beginning, are in the middle of, or are completing your graduate studies. The Three Minute Competitions are COMMUNICATIONS competitions, not scholarly competitions—The important thing here is to logically, concisely, clearly and engagingly present what you do and why it matters!

The Three Minute Competitions are memorized 3 minute talks—no reading from notes or electronic devices of any kind.

Your Powerpoint slide cannot have animation of any kind. It must be a totally static slide.

You can use your hands to show expression, but you cannot use any object such as a prop, to demonstrate what you are speaking about.

Because you only have three minutes, you will have to have your talk completely memorized. There will be a timer to let you know what time remains before the 3 minute limit, but if you are still speaking when time expires, you are disqualified.

And now for answering the question: "What will you talk about?"

What to talk about?

- What is it about your graduate discipline (3MP) or your research topic (3MT®) & its societal relevance—That you are passionate about?
- Your talk is about your discipline or scholarship—It's not about YOU!
- How is your graduate discipline (3MP) or research topic (3MT®) meeting societal needs? FOCUS ON A VERY SPECIFIC ASPECT.
- Looks for concrete examples or, even better, data to support societal benefit.
- How can you illustrate this to a public audience and peek their interest?
 - Use an oratorical device—Story, quote, question

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So what will you talk about? First, think about how your discipline or research is important to society—what is it that makes what people in your discipline or research area do important for society? This is a big question for you to figure out.

Now, that you have this thought about how your discipline or research is important to society in general—think more specifically about a very FOCUSED area of your discipline or research that you are excited about. This is your topic!

One of the most important things you will learn from doing your three minute talk is to focus on the essential nature of what you do as a graduate student. This can be difficult because you do so much. But you don't have time (and your audience doesn't have the attention span) for you to talk about everything. You will need to boil down your topic to the essence of why your discipline or research is important.

For your talk, you will need to have concrete examples to show how the specific, focused area of your discipline or research is relevant to societal needs. This can be a study by others with demonstrable and documented outcomes. Be sure to give these colleagues credit for any work that you refer to. This can be spoken as part of your talk or a reference on your slide.

Your next, and possibly the most important decision, is how to illustrate this understanding to your audience—How do you make them interested in what you have to say?

Use an oratorical device such as a story—it can be hypothetical—or a quotation from a recognized person of stature—or a provocative question.

So, what are some things to consider when preparing your Three Minute Competition talk?

Preparing your 3MP talk

Societal importance —
Why should your
audience care?

Focus your talk on the
essence of your topic

Presentation has a
beginning, middle and
end

Engaging your audience
with an oratorical device

Use readily understood
terms or analogies to
explain technical
concepts



<https://ostate.tv/channels/graduate-college?play=5D91644F-5EA9-CDC8-354D-691F52352957>

Be excited about your topic, if you aren't, no
one else will be either

Practice,
practice,
practice

Engage by using
your voice and
gestures

Conclude by
returning to your
oratorical device

End with a hard
stop—don't just
“fade out”

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Again, your next challenge after deciding what you will speak on is preparing your talk. Although your discipline or research is complex and involves many aspects, for your Three Minute Competition talk, you will need to distill this to its essence. However, don't dumb it down, your audience isn't dumb, they're just not specialists in your discipline.

Plan your Three Minute Competition talk in sections—a beginning to introduce your topic and its relevance to society, a middle to explain your topic, and an end to conclude and circle back to why your topic matters. This uses the standard speaking format of “Tell them what you are going to tell them, tell them, and tell them what you told them. Introduction, body, conclusion.

Now for some, your topic may seem as boring as dried bones, but even dried bones can be interesting when set in a story. To engage your audience use a oratorical device such as a story, quote, or question. Using a device to introduce your topic and its relevance gets you by your first big hurdle: engaging your audience.

As you write out your Three Minute Competition talk, remember that you are talking to a public audience, one that does not necessarily understand the specialist terms or concepts used to describe your topic. This does not mean that you should avoid using specialist's terms, but you will need to define or explain them. Using analogies with examples of

everyday terms is a powerful way to help your audience understand complex terms and concepts.

Once you have your Three Minute Competition talk written, it is time to practice, practice, practice. To help memorize your talk, break it into sections of 20 to 30 seconds along logical sections or pieces. Practice these over and over until you have them down so that you can say your presentations “backwards” and “forwards”.

Once you have your Three Minute Competition talk memorized, you can use your second mechanism to engage your audience—Your voice and gestures. Using variation in voice inflection, tempo, and volume, helps you distinguish and accentuate point of emphasis in your talk. Likewise, using hand gestures helps you connect with your audience and your audience connect with you.

Now comes a very important part of your talk—its conclusion. To conclude, think of the ONE most important thing you want your audience to take away from your talk—Your Take Home Message-- and tell them what this is! Also, it is very effective to return to your oratorical device, story, quote, question, to do this. This will tie your talk together in a cohesive package that will help your audience remember what you spoke to them about.

Lastly, the end of your talk needs to be sharp, definite, not just a fade out.

Now, I want to show you a excellent 3MP, and let’s see how OSU student Grant Lapke uses many of the things that we just talked about to present a logically organized, concise, understandable and engaging 3MP talk.

<https://ostate.tv/channels/graduate-college?play=5D91644F-5EA9-CDC8-354D-691F52352957>

What did you notice about how Grant engaged his audience? What oratorical device did he use to engage his audience? (A question: “How will we feed the world in the future?” He followed this with a provocative statement from a reputable source: “According to the World Bank, production yields in corn, rice, meat, and beans must increase by 60% by the year 2050 to feed the 9 billion people that will inhabit this earth. This means that we will have to produce more food in the next 36 years than we have in the last 10,000.”)

Notice how he now focuses on just one very specific aspect of this potential food shortage for his talk: the J1 Visa program.

Notice how he uses his voice and gestures to connect with his audience.

Notice how he had the three parts of his talk and allotted adequate time to develop each.

Notice how he returned to his oratorical device, the question “How will we feed the world in the future?” to conclude his talk. His conclusion again placed the relevance of his topic in front of his audience.

Now, let’s look at an example of a excellent 3MT® talk.

Preparing your 3MT[®] talk

Societal importance —
Why should your audience care?

Focus your talk on the essence of your topic

Presentation has a beginning, middle and end

Engaging your audience with a device

Use readily understood terms or analogies to explain technical concepts



<http://www.ostate.tv/channels/graduate-college?play=934389CD-6354-D9C7-248F-846A727E9221>

Be excited about your topic, if you aren't, no one else will be either

Practice,
practice,
practice

Engage by using your voice and gestures

Conclude by returning to your device

End with a hard stop—don't just "fade out"

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This talk is an award winning 3MT[®] by doctoral student Brittany Bolt for the 2014 3MT[®] competition.

In particular, I want you to notice:

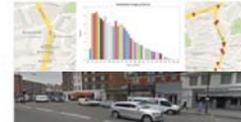
1. How Brittany uses a oratorical device—a hypothetical story—to engage the interest of her audience.
2. How she uses analogies to explain complex terms and concepts.
3. How she has three parts to her talk: a beginning intro to help you understand what she will talk on using a story to engage your interest, a middle section to explain her research and why it is important, and a conclusion with a return to her oratorical device—her hypothetical story about Shawn.
4. Voice and gestures to connect with her audience.
5. Enthusiasm for her topic.
6. Returning to her story to conclude her talk with the take home message and its importance.

<http://www.ostate.tv/channels/graduate-college?play=934389CD-6354-D9C7-248F-846A727E9221>

Next, let's consider how to use your static slide, here are some things to think about when

deciding how you will use your slide.

Preparing your 3MP or 3MT[®] slide



- How will you use your slide?
- Not too lean, not too mean—Engage visually, but don't distract from you
- Always face your audience, not your slide
- More visual than text
- Don't use visuals not easily recognized
- Progression of visuals with story

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We are going to look at four slides that have been used for Three Minute Competitions and see how their presenters used them. Determining how you will use your slide will help you decide how to design your slide.

In the upper left is the simplest of the four. It was for a 3MP about Big Data analytics. It uses images and a few words to alert the listener to what will be presented by the speaker. This slide works well, if your presentation does not need additional images or text to be understood. A slide with this style can be effectively used if the speaker does the rest—provides all of the detail without the need for further visuals. The purpose of this slide is to simply keep the main points of the presenter's main issue talk in front of the audience—Most of Big Data is hidden, how can we understand it?

The second slide below it on the left side is for a presentation on using data analytics to forecast recovery needs post-disaster and is similar to the minimalist slide we just discussed in that it uses only a single image to convey “forecasting the future” and uses text to tell the viewer what the areas of the forecast will involve. The purpose of this slide is to get the audience to anticipate what the speaker is talking about and how the “words” in the graphic apply to looking into the future. Its purpose is to pique the audience's curiosity.

The third slide in the upper right provides more context than the two previous slides—It

uses several panels to present the information need to understand the presentation. It uses the bottom image panel to tell the audience that this talk involves automobile transportation. The three upper panels provide specific data on using to study automobile accidents, relationship to “bars” and the age of the drivers. This slide provides more detail and helps the audience visualize what is being talked about. The purpose of this slide is to help the audience understand the data being presented in support of the presentation. If your talk involves presenting data and a progressive study, then this slide format is best for your presentation.

The last slide on the bottom right is similar to automobile data study in that it provides more information about what the speaker is talking about, but it uses several (and too many) visuals that are not readily recognizable by a public audience. It is less effective because the public audience does not recognize these visuals and cannot use them to better understand the speaker’s talk.

So, how do you decide what your Three Minute slide should contain? You need to decide how you will use your slide, and this decision will help you develop the slide design.

Next, I want to visit with you about what your presentation will be judged on.

What will the Judges be grading you on?

- Communication (1/3 points)
 - Was the topic and significance communicated in language appropriate to an intelligent but non-specialist audience?
- Comprehension (1/3 points)
 - Did the presentation help the audience understand the topic?
- Engagement (1/3 points)
 - Did the presentation make the audience want to know more?
- Judges are “non-faculty” community members to represent the public

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There are three areas of assessment for judging:

Communication—Did you explain your topic in terms and using devices such as analogies to help your audience understand complex terms and concepts? Did you explain why your topic is important to them?

Comprehension—Did you organize your talk logically in three parts and take them on a journey from the begin to the end, allowing adequate time to understand each segment of your talk? Tell them what you will tell them. Tell them. Tell them what you told them. Did your slide help them understand your topic?

Engagement—Did you use an oratorical device to engage your audience? Were you enthusiastic about your topic? Did you have your talk memorized so that you could use your voice and gestures to connect with your audience? And the ultimate questions: Did they want to know more about your topic when you finished talking?

Our judges for the 3MP and 3MT are community members from a variety of backgrounds, but they are not academic faculty because we know that academic view presentations differently than the public does, and the Three Minute Competitions are training you to explain what you do and why it matters to a public and not an academic audience.

Now, let's talk about how the Three Minute Competitions are organized and work.

How are the Three Minute Competitions organized?

- Initial competitions
 - Programs with many participants have pre-preliminary competitions
- Preliminary 3MP & College-level 3MT[®] Competitions
 - Prize money: 1st \$300, 2nd \$200, 3rd \$100, Peoples Choice (PC) \$300
 - PC awards are by vote of the audience-so pack the house with your friends & supporters
- University 3MP & 3MT[®] Finals
 - First place (and some additional places for competitions with high #s of competitors) compete in the Finals
 - Prize money: 1st \$1,000, 2nd \$750, 3rd \$500, Peoples Choice \$1,000
- Participation lottery
 - Do a Three Minute Competition presentation
 - Attend the University Finals for your competition
 - 1 in 8 odds of winner \$100 award

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Here is how the competitions work:

For programs or colleges with many participants, there may be pre-preliminary rounds or even video submissions of your Three Minute Competition talk for assessment to participate in the Preliminary 3MP or College-Level 3MT[®] competitions. You will be notified how your competition will work about the end of September—but don't wait until then to start developing your talk.

The Preliminary 3MP and the College-level 3MT[®] competitions occur in October. These are already scheduled and you can find them on the Graduate College website. There are cash prizes for 1st through 3rd place and the Peoples' choice winners for the Preliminary 3MP and College-level 3MT[®] competitions. Note that the Peoples Choice awards are equal to the first place awards and are selected by a vote of the audience, so be sure to get all of your friends and supporters to attend and vote for you.

The university 3MP and 3MT[®] competitions are scheduled for Thursday November 2nd and Wednesday November 16th, respectively. Again, there are cash prizes for 1st through 3rd place and the Peoples' choice winners for the Finals.

There are 12 competitors for the finals for the 3MP and for the 3MT[®] selected by their

place in the preliminary or college-level competitions relative the total number of competitors in that competition.

Finally, you can win a cash prize of \$100 just by doing a 3MP or 3MT[®] presentation and attending the Finals for your competition. The number of \$100 prizes will be set such that one in every eight presenters present in the audience at the finals will be selected by lottery for a prize.

Finally, let's review the "Do's" for your Three Minute Competition talk.

3MP & 3MT[®] Do's

- Do focus your presentation, but don't dumb-down your explanation of your research topic or graduate discipline
- Do use a oratorical device, e.g., story (can be hypothetical), quote or question, to engage
- Do organize your talk into beginning, middle and end
- Do use technical words that you explain their meaning, but don't use jargon
- Do memorize your talk
- Do speak loudly enough to be heard
- Do use expressive speech (volume, inflection, tempo)
- Do use hand/arm gestures, but don't let these be distracting
- Do "dress for success"
- Do smile, be excited and engage—you know your topic better than anyone—help your audience understand it too!
- Do watch 3MT[®] or 3MP videos to see how others were successful
 - OStateTV Graduate College and <https://threeminutethesis.uq.edu.au/watch-3mt>

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Your audience, although not specialists, are smart and able to understand technical topics as long as your talk is logically organized, concise, understandable and engaging.

Memorize your talk, you can't ad lib and do a good job for a Three Minute Competition talk.

Engage your audience with a device, voice and gestures—keep your talk interesting!

Portray confidence by your dress, smile and eye contact with your audience.

View other's Three Minute Competition talks to see how they were successful in communicating technical information to non-specialists audiences.

Here are some places to find these talks: OStateTV Graduate College and <https://threeminutethesis.uq.edu.au/watch-3mt>

Returning to our question that we began with "Why the Three Minute Competitions?" By participating in these competitions, you will develop skills that will serve you well in whatever career you chose to pursue.

Comments and questions?