

Science Stories: Training your scientists to share their passion

Joe Kays, University of Florida; Naomi Hirsch, Oregon State University

The problem: scientists often speak in jargon and at great length about what they know. To address this problem, Joe Kays started with idea of public interest communications (See more on the [UFL's program](#) in this subject.)

Joe and others developed a “science communications academy” at the University of Florida. They made it sound exclusive, so that researchers would want to participate

The academy set up goals for science communications:

1. finding your message (focus on storytelling)
2. creating an unforgettable presentation
3. improv for scientists (learning how to engage with public/audience)
4. working with the media (mock interviews and critique / building relationships with reporters / tracking stories to keep informed)
5. working with policy makers
6. using digital media

Hirsch discussed her efforts to promote effective science communication at Oregon State. She works with scientists who prefer to emphasize their background, supporting details and results. For the public, the focus is often on the bottom line, the so-what message and details that support a conclusion.

Scientists' inability or incompetence at communication is less of a problem today and in future years because younger scientists have been tweeting and blogging, etc. about their passions for many years.