Engage Evaluation Project

"Elevator Pitch" Skills Assessment - Video Review Instructions

Thank you for being a reviewer! Please email Juliana at houghtonjuliana@gmail.com with any questions.

Read through this document (including the links provided) before beginning any reviews.

You will be evaluating students of the most recent Engage seminar on their "elevator pitch" - a 1-2 minute description of their scientific research framed for a public audience. The videos are classified as either pre-course (prior to instruction on effective science communication) or post-course (after instruction). You will be blind to the classification of each video you view.

Each video is a response to the following prompt: *Please prepare a 2-minute description of your research, such as you would give to President Obama if you had two minutes to tell him about your work.*

You will review how well the students did on the five main learning goals of effective science communication, as identified by staff of the Engage Evaluation project.
- Taking the audience and context into consideration
- Conveying complex ideas simply, directly, and clearly
- Communicating the "so what" of the research in ways the audience can understand
- Telling an interesting story
- Having self-confidence when speaking

You will rate each student's pitch on their success toward each of the five learning goals by selecting either:
- Needs a lot of work
- Needs a little work
- Pretty good as is
- Excellent as is

Please assign ratings for each learning goal independently from other goals and from other students and take breaks as needed. Try to avoid common rating errors, including the tendency to be more lenient at the beginning of a review session.

Please watch the following example elevator pitch videos and read through the example evaluations before beginning your own reviews.
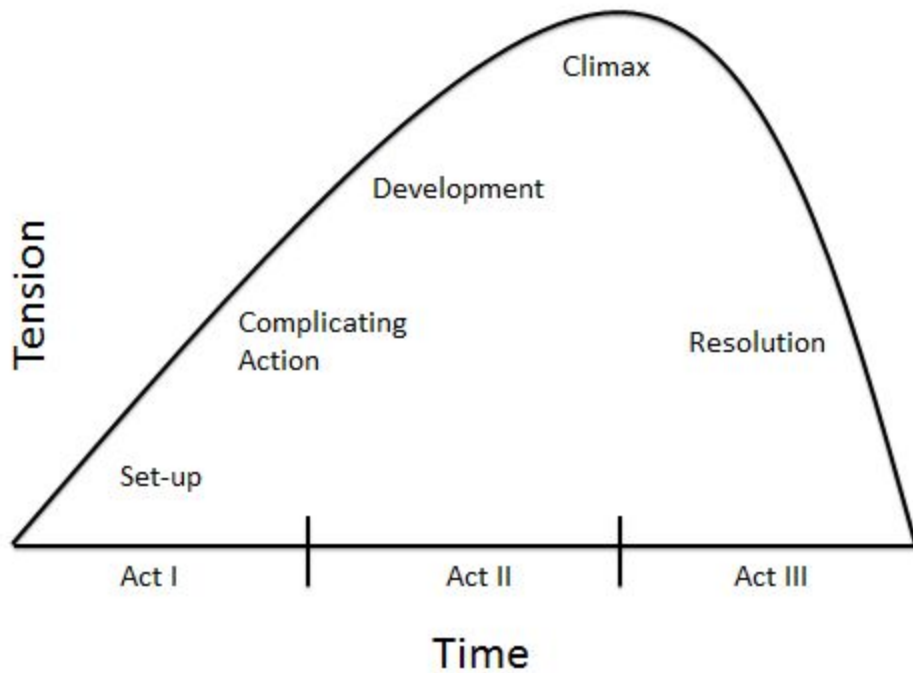Example video A is available at the following link:
https://vimeo.com/122919717

For this example, the evaluation would be:

Learning Goals:	Needs a lot of work	Needs a little work	Pretty good as is	Excellent as is
Taking the audience and context into consideration		X		
Conveying complex ideas simply, directly, and clearly	X			
Communicating the "so what" of the research in ways the audience can understand	X			
Telling an interesting story		X		
Having self-confidence when speaking		X		

Comments:
- **Taking the audience and context into consideration**. Nancy assumed the audience knew that atmospheric dioxide is increasing because of fossil fuel use, etc. This is not necessarily a safe assumption for a public audience. She did explain that the ocean absorbs some of the carbon dioxide.
- **Conveying complex ideas simply, directly, and clearly**. Nancy used a substantial amount of jargon, for example: biosphere, transect, uptake, algorithms, float data. She spoke at a reasonable pace but could have used more analogies and simpler language to convey her ideas clearly.
- **Communicating the "so what" of the research in ways the audience can understand**. While Nancy introduced some of the big-picture idea behind her research at first, she did not directly explain what her research will do to address it.

- **Telling an interesting story**. Many stories follow a simple story arc:

Tension

Climax

Development

Complicating Action

Resolution

Set-up

Act I | Act II | Act III

Time

   While Nancy did have some "complicating action" (i.e. the problem w/CO2 in the atmosphere) at the beginning and some "resolution" (i.e. how her research expands on previous work) at the end, there wasn't a clear "climax". Her description was somewhat interesting, but lacked the structure of a story.
- **Having self-confidence when speaking**. Nancy had a few stumbles and several "um's", indicating she may not have felt as confident as she could be. She did seem a little comfortable though, as indicated by her speaking pace and hand gestures.

Example video B is available at the following link:
https://vimeo.com/122936550

For this example, the evaluation would be:

Learning Goals:	Needs a lot of work	Needs a little work	Pretty good as is	Excellent as is
Taking the audience and context into consideration				X
Conveying complex ideas simply, directly, and clearly				X

Communicating the "so what" of the research in ways the audience can understand				X
Telling an interesting story				X
Having self-confidence when speaking				X

Comments:

- **Taking the audience and context into consideration**. Ian met the audience where they were. Prior knowledge beyond middle-school-level was not necessary to understand the ideas discussed.
- **Conveying complex ideas simply, directly, and clearly**. Ian used historical and current events to relate his research to common knowledge. There were no unclear jargon terms used. He distilled his description into the main components that would be the most simple, direct, and clear.
- **Communicating the "so what" of the research in ways the audience can understand**. Ian framed his research historically and made a big impact in describing how his research will improve the field.
- **Telling an interesting story**. Ian's pitch was interesting and followed the story arc structure well.
- **Having self-confidence when speaking**. Ian seemed very confident (no big stumbles or frequent filler words, confident posture, pace, and hand gestures).

Once you have gone through these instructions, **view the videos you were assigned on Vimeo.** The links to the videos and passwords to access them should be emailed to you by Juliana. **You must complete a separate evaluation form for each video:**
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1nM3HDbiqXVkpo38KTIffZU1-QjF7_st573tdTO5XiPc/viewform?usp=send_form

THANK YOU for helping us evaluate the ENGAGE program!