

From Conference Paper to Conference Talk: Nano-presentations

This activity, sometimes called the “Academic Minute” is motivated by the frequent need in social, academic and professional life to succinctly summarize our key intellectual activities. In our social life, we are frequently asked “What do you do?” We are expected to provide the essence of our activities within 60-90 seconds. Otherwise, our conversation partner loses interest. Even in a professional setting, it is challenging to identify the essence of our intellectual activities at MIT. Most conference talks are no longer than 20 minutes, including Q & A.

In all contexts, it is helpful to think of the summary we provide as a response to the question “Why should I care?”

Procedure: Each of you will deliver a conversational “academic minute” of 60-120 seconds long. Assume your audience members are part of the MIT community, but not in your area of expertise. Your tone should be conversational and your delivery should be extemporaneous (that is, not memorized or read from a text).

Feedback: You classmates and I will provide feedback on the success of your strategy and delivery.

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