



The Hub's 3MT® Presentation Guide¹

Your work is important and should be shared with others! The Three Minute Thesis Competition (3MT®) is an opportunity to show that you can explain your research to a non-specialist audience and clearly convey your motivations and enthusiasm for your field.

[Make an appointment at the Hub](#) if you would like help with your script, slide, and verbal delivery. Below is a guide to get you started.

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Drafting Your Script

Below are some tips for drafting the script for your 3MT® presentation. As the 3MT® competition prohibits note cards, you must memorize a script or an outline.

¹ Adapted from [Three Minute Thesis Competitor Guide](#) by the University of Queensland.



Clear Outcome

What is the main point that you want to share with your audience? As you draft your script, keep the main takeaway of your presentation in mind to stay on track. In addition, integrate 3 main points:

1. background and significance of your research question
2. description of your research strategy and results
3. description of your research conclusions, outcomes, and impact

How these main points are crafted in presentations can vary, but effective 3MT® presenters keep their messages simple and clear. Remember that this is likely the first time that your audience has heard about your research.

Audience

The judges will look for evidence that you can explain your research to a **non-specialist audience**. Remember that while your judges might be in your field - they are likely outside your specific area. Thus, make it easy for your audience to understand your message by

- **avoiding** jargon and academic language
- **explaining** concepts and people important to your research
- **highlighting** the outcomes of your research and the desired outcome
- **conveying** your enthusiasm for your subject
- **respecting** your audience by keeping your tone professional

Sample Script Components

Most 3MT® presenters create narratives in their scripts, with a beginning, middle and end. Try writing an opener to catch the attention of the audience, then highlight your different points, and end with a summary to restate the importance of your work.

Below is only one way to structure a presentation; presenters should craft their presentations in a way that reflects their topic and personality and also fulfills the parameters of the competition.

1. **Hook**: consider a common experience, well-known idea, current event, or personal anecdote
2. **Background**: add a sentence or two to deepen the discussion of your hook
3. **Problem and Significance**: discuss the problem addressed by your research
4. **Research Question**: describe what you're doing to investigate the problem and how you do it
5. **Research Results and Impact**: discuss your research results and impact
6. **Importance**: relate your outcomes to your audience and society

Script Tips

- The 3MT® event hosts will introduce you and the title of your presentation, so your script should begin immediately with content.

- Most scripts are about 400-450 words long - depending on speed of delivery.
- Reading your 3MT® presentation aloud can help you proofread and memorize your script.

Refining Your Delivery

Consider what *you* appreciate when you listen to a presentation. Most enjoy learning from speakers who are:

- Confident
- Calm
- Friendly
- Humble
- Genuine
- Prepared

Remember - everyone in the 3MT® audience is rooting for your success!

Practice Tips

Practice is essential preparation for 3MT®! Practicing alone and in front of others is helpful to refine your content and delivery style.

- **Time your practices:** remember that presentations that exceed 3 minutes are disqualified.
- **Ask your practice audience for feedback:** ask if your presentation clearly highlights what your research is about and why it is important.
- **Integrate feedback:** revise your script based on feedback.
- **Practice again:** practice your revised script.

Presentation Tips

Everyone has a different style and personality when presenting but consider the following to create a comfortable and engaging experience for your audience:

- **Maintain regular eye contact and hold your head up:** if you feel uncomfortable doing this, look right above people's heads and scan the room from corner to corner. Your audience will think you are looking at them.
- **Do not turn your back on your audience:** refer to your slide if you wish but do not turn to read it aloud.
- **Speak clearly and enunciate:** one way to do this is to pause and take breaths. The audience will not notice if you take a second or two to breathe. Smiling can also be helpful; but if that doesn't feel natural to you, don't force it.
- **Stand up straight but not stiffly:** move and gesture naturally, but careful not to sway or pace.

- **Enjoy the experience:** have fun sharing your important work to a friendly 3MT audience!

Clothing

Wear professional or business casual clothing that helps you feel confident. Your clothes should be comfortable and loose enough so that you can move around.

Creating Your 3MT® Slide

The slide should complement and enhance your presentation by matching it in tone, message, and content. The slide's design should not be complicated or laden with illegible text or data, as poor designs can detract from presentations.

Rules

Your 3MT® slide must meet the following requirements:

- one single static PowerPoint slide
- no slide transitions, animations or 'movement' of any kind
- your slide is to be presented from the beginning of your oration
- no additional electronic media (e.g. sound and video files)

Slide Tips

When creating your slide, consider these guidelines:

- **Less is more:** text and complicated graphics can distract your audience – you don't want them to read your slide instead of listening to your 3MT® presentation. Do not cut and paste from a scientific poster.
- **Personal touches:** personal touches can allow your audience to understand the impact of your research.
- **Creativity drives interest:** do not rely on your slide to convey your message – it should simply complement your oration.
- **Work your message:** think about how your slide might be able to assist with the format and delivery of your presentation – is there a metaphor that helps explain your research?
- An engaging visual presentation can make or break any oration, so make sure your slide is **legible, clear and concise**.

Examples

If you were viewing a presentation about someone's research on Australian venomous snakes, which image would you remember?

