

Understanding the Genres of Neuroscience: Tips for Beginners

In the competitive community of science and research, it is crucial to understand the platforms and genres in which researchers publish their work. Specifically, in the field of neuroscience. While it would be worth while to familiarize yourself with all the possible genres available, the three most important and widely used genres today are power point presentations and scientific journal publications.

These genres are essential in the advancement of your career. After interviewing Dr. Nighorn and Dr. Tolbert from the University of Arizona Neuroscience and Cognitive Science department, I learned some of the secrets of publication they had been using for decades.

There are two dominating reasons why power point presentations and scientific journals are the most prevalent genres in neuroscience. Thinking about the many years of science carried out before the age of the internet, paper publication was the most effective way for a scientist to share his or her findings. Since we live in a capitalistic society, naturally certain journals gained more popularity and rose to the top.

This situation is similar to universities in general. While a student can do great work at any state university, certain schools like Harvard or other IV league schools will always take precedent.

While both Dr. Nighorn and Dr. Tolbert admit that they do not feel scientific journals are the most effective way to communicate their work, they recognize the fact that the process is so engrained in the scientific community that it is unavoidable.

Any med school student can tell you that the medical field is extremely competitive. This competitive environment does not end once schooling is finished. Researchers depend on the grants from various foundations willing to invest or donate. In order to receive these grants, (of thousands of dollars) the foundations have to believe that the research being done is accurate and trustworthy.

Credibility in a Scientific Journal Publication

This should be the number one quality on your mind when publishing in a scientific journal. The primary goals of any publication is to present your research and, in return, get the attention of potential investors so you can conduct more research.

The scientific journal should be viewed as a marketplace you can advertise yourself on and the customers are the potential investors. Like a car salesman trying to sell an inadequate car, researchers who stray away from the content of their research may give the impression that they are overselling themselves in order to compensate for inadequate research.

Trying to appeal to the investors emotions will not work because you are essentially selling to a company making a business decision. In a scientific journal, the article being published should give the investors a first impression of “quality research”. The next step is using power point presentations to close the deal.

Power Point Presentations

This is the genre Dr. Nighorn and Dr. Tolbert claim to enjoy the most. There is a lot more room for adding personal touches and being more entertaining. In fact, power point presentations should aim to be very entertaining, in comparison to the scientific journal.

At this point, your audience should be aware of the kind of research and content you can produce, probably from reading your research focused article in a scientific journal. Now is the time to sell yourself.

It is common for these power points to have minimal text on the slides, making more room for more attractive content like pictures, and using the slides as talking points. Using this technique is the effective because it allows credibility and personality to be presented simultaneously. When a researcher can explain his or her work through spoken word, it is a sign for invertors, and peers, that the researcher thoroughly understands what is going on. It shows a level of professionalism and readiness that will help close the deal and receive a grant or donation.

This will also allow personal comments to be added in, showing a level of sociability and charisma. Assuming the quality of content is adequate, investors also need to see the “x factor” or quality that sets you apart from other researchers. While the scientific journal allows you to

reach a large audience, a power point presentation should recognize the specific audience that is being presented to.

Presenting research in the field of neuroscience is essential in order to continue conducting research and progressing in your career. When fishing for an investor, use the scientific journal to attract them with credibility. Once an investor bites, utilize the personal level of a power point presentation to reel them in, appealing to their personal points of view as a company or foundation while showing your personal strengths as well.