

MICHIGAN TECH SCI COMM 101



Science Communication (Sci Comm) is the art of telling research stories in non-technical terms.

KNOW YOUR CREATIVE TEAM

Sci Comm requires many different skills. Here are a few roles you may encounter as you go through interviews, help edit for accuracy, and share your work:

PHOTOGRAPHER

Lights, edits, and coordinates shoots

WRITER

Translates technical language

DESIGNER

Creates and enhances graphics

SOCIAL MEDIA TEAM

Tweets, posts, likes, and shares content

VIDEOGRAPHER

Arranges and produces short films



IMPORTANT ! ! !



TIMING IS KEY.

WHY DO PEOPLE WANT TO HEAR YOUR STORY NOW?

Let your creative team know **when a new journal article gets accepted**—it may be too late for a news release after the paper is published online—and consider what ties the research topic to headlines or dinner table conversations.

GET STARTED

Make your story matter. Before you do an interview with a creative team, pull together information that will help shape tone, length, depth, and accessibility:



WHO (target audience(s)—be specific)

WHAT (key message with two or three main points)

WHERE (list of media outlets or industry pubs of interest)

Your creative team will help you figure out **HOW** to share your story.

FLIP ME!



HOW CAN WE SHARE YOUR STORY?

There are many storytelling options and more is not necessarily better. Work with your creative team to tailor the **HOW** to your **WHO, WHAT, WHERE**.

MICHIGAN TECH'S CREATIVE TEAMS WORK ON:

- Magazine stories
- Department newsletters and annual reports
- Publications for centers and institutes
- News releases
- Unscripted features, guest blogs, photos + captions
- Lab tours
- Expert pitches
- Targeted media pitches
- Videos
- Infographics and modified figures
- Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, SnapChat



Are you trying to reach a non-technical audience?



Do they need this information quickly?



Would extra visuals make the story more engaging?

BEST PRACTICES AND RESOURCES



PREPARE

Sci Comm is all about distilling complex information; planning ahead makes it easier to get the most accurate key message across quickly to the right people.



GO VISUAL

Make sure you have three to four beautiful images to pair with any written copy; videos increase a story's visibility.



EMBARGOES

Official journal embargoes can increase news coverage by up to 60 percent; talk with the creative team's writer and journal editor.



BE PATIENT

You know your work best and the creative team knows their work best; multiple revisions are expected, so plan to stay open to suggestions that make the work more accessible.

Resources: mtu.edu/news | mtu.edu/unscripted | TK: www.mtu.edu/engineering/share-research
CrossTalk: "5 ways scientists can help their media relations team" | The Plainspoken Scientist: "#SciWords: 1 word, multiple meanings"



QUESTIONS? GOT A STORY TO TELL?

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