

# THE CONVERSATION

Academic rigour, journalistic flair



## Listen up! How to get your message across in just 60 seconds

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Your minute is nearly up. Shutterstock/Mike Flippo

Do you have something important to say, but find it hard to get people's attention?

Or have you tried to listen to someone who claims to have something interesting to impart, but they can't explain it and the idea gets lost? (Or worse, you get bored and lose interest, even if they're trying to describe their revolutionary new laser shark).

Some people are natural communicators; others ... aren't.

It's a problem many academics face, particularly with the push we're all getting to explain our work to the public.

But there are a few tricks you can use that can help you to better communicate your ideas.

### Authors

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**Merryn McKinnon**

Lecturer, Australian National University



**Will J Grant**

Senior Lecturer, Australian National Centre  
for the Public Awareness of Science,  
Australian National University

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## **So what do you do?**

The old academic axiom of “publish or perish” – to get as many articles as possible published in peer-reviewed academic journals – has changed.

Academics are still expected to publish and share their work with the world, but now the emphasis is not just on publications in academic journals squirrelled behind paywalls. And rightly so – knowledge should be shared with all.

But the range of information available means that people have access to so many more ideas and opinions than before. This is both a blessing and a curse, as the amount of information can sometimes cause unnecessary confusion or contention.

With so much information out there, how can researchers effectively reach their intended audience? How can they engage them in meaningful dialogue?

## **Done in 60 seconds**

There are a few simple steps that anyone can use to get a conversation happening in the right way.

Conversation is a key word. It means an exchange between two people – not a ten-minute monologue in response to the polite question of “so, what do you do?”

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Imagine this. You have just met someone at a social gathering (work-related or not) and you have a feeling that they are someone you could benefit from getting to know better. You have 60 seconds to make the most of this chance.

What do you do?

Here are some suggested starting points. It doesn't have to be perfect! Make do with what you have, wherever you are, distractions or otherwise (we filmed our attempt during some renovations on campus).

## **How to explain your research in 60 seconds**





Just a minute!

We've just taken 60 seconds to explore how you can best use your window of opportunity. Now it's over to you to see what you can do.

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