How to win the 3 minute thesis

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In this presentation we will

Talk about bad presentations

Look at some examples of the 3MT in action

Go through some steps to help you make one
What is the 3MT?

**YOUR THESIS IN 3 MINUTES:**

1. Why you're doing it ("My supervisor told me to do it" doesn't count)
2. How you're doing it (assuming you know)
3. How it relates to the real world (umm... pause!)

J. Cham
In other words, it shouldn't be like this:
Why are some presentations bad?
What other students have said

Too technical
Too much on each slide
No structure to talk
Reading from notes
Unclear speech
Nervous speaker
Too simple
Weird body language
Small font / wacky fonts / yellow font on white background
Busy backgrounds
Let's look at some 3MT contestants in action

Barlarka Banerjee
Jack Midalek
Sumaiya Ahmed
Jamie Flynn
Daniel Crabtree
A good 3MT presentation...

Doesn't try to say too much
Is delivered slowly.
Has expression (pauses, rises, falls and stresses)
Includes a story, metaphor or emotional element
Gives concrete examples
Doesn't ‘telegraph’
Tells you things you didn't expect to hear about the topic

Anything else?
A framework for action

In "Made to Stick" Chip and Dan Heath claim that this formula makes information rich presentations unforgettable:

Simple
Unexpected
Concrete
Credible (we won't deal with this)
Emotional
Stories
Let's work on Simple

Complete the following sentence.

"The purpose of my research is..." (add max 50 words)

Share your sentence and we'll workshop some of them.
Let's work on Unexpected

Tell us an interesting fact about your research!

All of you will know something that has probably ceased being of interest to you, but is new to us.

For example:

- Silver turns your tongue blue.
- The chemical that makes bananas go brown probably causes Alzheimer disease.
- Watering a plant is good because you are giving it electrons.

Take a few minutes to think about it, then share one if you can.
Let's work on Concrete

Close your eyes... and listen to me
Emotions you can always work with

"What's in it for me?" (WIFM)

"Oh, how sad :-("

"Interesting!"

"That's mysterious..."
Final advice

People don’t remember everything you said, but they always remember how you made them feel.
In research writing we are told not to resort to emotional arguments, but in the 3MT it is essential. Here's some emotions you can work with:

"What's in it for me?" (WIFM)
"Oh, how sad :-("
"Interesting!"
"That's mysterious..."

You need to convey your passion for your work too, but be aware of the possibility of 'topic fatigue' in the audience.
Story

Including a story can help you work in an emotional angle

Good stories include the following elements:

Characters (they don't have to be human)
A beginning, middle and end (not necessarily in that order)
Some kind of change or transformation
A "call to action"

Read this blog post "Story telling in business" for more ideas.
What should go on the slide

Resist temptation!

Don't rely on it as a presentation aide
Choose one 'hero' image or diagram
Title can be a question, or your actual title
Put your name and contact details on it
May the force be with you!

For more advice and ideas head to the Thesis Whisperer blog which has a section on presenting.
Before you leave!

Read about how to participate in the 3MT at ANU