



David B. Buller, PhD
Senior Scientist

*How to Discuss Your Research Idea and
Make It Compelling in 3-5 Minutes*

Goals of Presenting Your Research Idea

- To present the essence and significance of a research project.
- Enlist support from Program Officers and Institutes for moving the study idea to the next level in the grant application/funding process.
 - Does it fit the Institute's research mission and advance its research portfolio?
 - What other research is funded by the Institute related to your research idea?
 - How can your research aims and approach be shaped to be evaluated well in peer review and in funding decisions?
 - What is the best funding mechanism.

Preparing for the Research Presentation

- ❑ Read the literature, attend conferences and talk to colleagues.
- ❑ Review the Institute website, mission statements, and program announcements.
- ❑ Create a Specific Aims page.
- ❑ Outline your research presentation.
- ❑ Practice you research presentation.

Specific Aims Page

- ❑ State the health problem being addressed.
- ❑ Summarize the significance and innovation of the research.
- ❑ Present the specific aims (1-3 aims).
- ❑ Present hypotheses (optional).
- ❑ Briefly describe the methods, including design and primary outcome measures.
- ❑ Briefly describe the research team (optional).

The Research Presentation

- ❑ 3-5 minute conversational presentation.
- ❑ Logically-ordered with high impact.
- ❑ Connected to the interests of the Institute.
- ❑ Open the presentation with impact – consider a story, humor, aphorism, or question.
- ❑ Focus on your thesis statement – i.e., the specific aims of your research.

Format of Research Presentation

- ❑ What are the study aims?
- ❑ What is the need for, and significance of, the research?
- ❑ What is the research design?
- ❑ Who is on the research team?
- ❑ How does it relate to other published and on-going research?
- ❑ What makes the research innovative?

Prepare for Questions & Answers

- ❑ Invite questions.
- ❑ Know more about the research than what you share in your presentation.
- ❑ Restate questions if they are unclear to you.
- ❑ Answer questions directly with facts.
- ❑ If more than one audience member, be sure to take questions from all of them if possible.

Closing the Research Presentation

- ❑ Summarize the study and input from others.
- ❑ State "next steps."
 - ❑ Give estimate of when application is planned to be submitted.
- ❑ Confirm that you can continue to communicate with the project officer.
- ❑ Thank them for input.

Language and Delivery in the Presentation

- Use concise, clear, concrete, and consistent language.
- Use active voice, verbal intensity, and action words.
- Use familiar words and be careful with jargon.
- Be expressive.
- Speak moderately fast and avoid disfluencies.
- Make eye contact and move naturally.

Effective Listening During Q&A

- ❑ Listening is more than hearing - understanding, remembering, interpreting, evaluating and responding.
- ❑ Focus on understanding the main ideas – don't get lost in the details.
- ❑ Remember only significant details.
- ❑ Draw inferences from what you hear but keep an open mind.
- ❑ Block out distractions.
- ❑ Take effective notes.

Example Research Presentation

Example Research Presentation: Specific Aims

“Schools are more challenging than ever for prevention interventions, but they remain one of the few organizations in communities where most children can be reached.

The aims of my research are to test whether intra-organizational diffusion can be harnessed to create a climate for cancer prevention in public school districts, in this case for skin cancer prevention.

What do I mean by intra-organizational diffusion? I intend to show that we can initially convince school districts to implement sun safety for their outdoor workers. And, in so doing, school leaders and staff will realize that students are at risk for damaging solar UV and that sun protection actions for students are feasible, so they will also implement sun safety for their students.”

Example Research Presentation: Need and Significance

“This research will identify a new, effective approach to skin cancer prevention in schools. Many children receive large doses of solar UV and many children are sunburned every year.

Despite efforts by the CDC and Surgeon General, many schools still do not consider skin cancer prevention a priority. And, few are taking steps to protect children, even though they spend considerable time outdoors at schools when UV is high. By contrast, my research team convinced both private and public employers to adopt policies and take actions on sun protection of their outdoor workers in three trials funded by NCI.

Public schools are public employers and are responsible for maintaining safe work environments. So, they should respond favorably to a skin cancer prevention intervention for their employees, perhaps more so than they have to efforts promoting sun safety for students.”

Example Research Presentation: Research Design

“My team is proposing to test intra-organizational diffusion in a randomized trial with public school districts in California and Colorado. Districts will be assigned to receive our effective occupational sun protection intervention, or serve as controls. The intervention will be tailored to school work environments and advocate that districts implement sun protection for outdoor workers. We will also add components on sun protection of students.

In Implementation Science, this is a Type 3 hybrid effectiveness-implementation trial. The primary outcomes will be, first, the implementation of sun safety for students, that is policies and actions, and, second, the sun protection practices by students.

We will also assess workplace sun safety by the school districts and outdoor workers’ sun protection, as secondary outcomes. We expect that they will mediate improvements in student sun safety and indicate intra-organizational diffusion.”

Example Research Presentation: Research Team

“I have been studying both school and occupational sun protection interventions for a number of years and this research brings together both lines of study. The proposed research will be conducted by a team that includes Barbara Walkosz and Mary Buller, my collaborators on the occupational research, Kim Reynolds, with whom I’ve collaborated on school interventions, and Gary Cutter, my biostatistician colleague. We each have unique skills, including intervention development for students and workers, training and curriculum delivery, measurement of sun safety behavior by students and workers, policy coding and implementation assessments, and analysis of randomized trials.”

Example Research Presentation:

Other Research

“The proposed study will contribute to the literature on both school and workplace interventions for skin cancer prevention. While the recent Community Guide review has concluded there is sufficient evidence to recommend both types of interventions, this study will investigate how they can work synergistically and contribute to recent work on dissemination and implementation of evidence-based programs. Both issues have received very little attention in the skin cancer prevention field.”

Example Research Presentation: Innovation

“The most innovative aspect of the research is the idea of intra-organizational diffusion. If it works as I expect, we can first approach schools about skin cancer prevention for populations they feel are most at risk and for which they feel most responsibility, in this case their employees. With our foot-in-the-door, we can leverage this entry point to spread skin cancer prevention throughout the school district and protect students. And, intra-organizational diffusion is likely to work in other contexts, where organizational leaders may currently be willing to implement cancer prevention for some at-risk populations but reluctant to do so for others.”

Thank You

David Buller, PhD

dbuller@kleinbuendel.com

