



Institute for
Research on
Poverty

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Why We Do What We Do: Communicating about Your Work and Making a Difference

Hilary Shager

Hilary Shager



For more information on Hilary Shager and her role, visit:

<https://www.irp.wisc.edu/staff/shager-hilary/>

- Associate Director for Programs and Management Researcher within the Institute for Research on Poverty at UW-Madison
- Received Master of Public Affairs from the La Follette School at UW-Madison
- Received Ph.D in Public Policy from UW-Madison

Today's Goals

- **Think** about why you do what you do
- **Communicate** effectively about your work
- **Find resources** to help you do your work
- **Connect** with the community to make change
- **Make a difference** in the health care field

Elevator Speeches

- What is an elevator speech?
 - A brief, persuasive speech that you use to spark interest in you, your work, or organization
 - A good elevator speech should last no longer than a short elevator ride of 20 to 30 seconds, hence the name



Let's try it!

- What should an elevator speech include?
 - Your name
 - 5-7 word tag line about who you are and what you are looking for in your career
 - Brief explanation of your current internship
 - Why you want to work in the health sciences field

Go ahead and write down the answers to your elevator speech and give it a try or two out loud to yourself. The more practice, the easier it will be.

Health sciences in the news

More Americans pay for ACA health plans, despite Trump administration moves to undercut law

World Health Organization says video game addiction is a disease. Why American psychiatrists don't

Out-Of-Pocket Costs Put HIV Prevention Drug Out Of Reach For Many At Risk

Shortage of psychiatric hospital beds shortchanges American children

What are you passionate about?

- Take a few minutes to write down:
 - What health sciences issue are you most passionate about?
 - What do you know about that topic?
 - Where did you get information about the topic?
 - What else would you like to know?
- Here is a good resource for current happenings in the Health Sciences:
<https://www.sciencenews.org/topic/health-medicine>

Education vs. Advocacy Approach

Advocacy Approach	Education Approach
Aim to persuade	Aim to inform
Lobby for single policy option	Build understanding of range of policy options
Handpick studies that reinforce principles, positions, and political preferences	Offer evidence on all sides of an issue
Examine options in light of own values	Present objectively, stripped of personal judgement
Limit work to like-minded coalitions	Work w/groups from different political persuasions
Expert makes decision	Decision left to policymakers
Lobbyists, advocacy organizations, some think tanks	Family Impact Seminar, Legislative support agencies (federal & state)

Which approach will work best for you?
Consider how your passions align.

When does the education approach work?

- Responds to what policymakers say they need
 - Timely, accessible, credible
 - Cost-benefit info, localized info
 - Not just MORE information
- Consistent w/scientific method
 - Surprise can be good
- Fundamental to long-term commitment to working with policymakers
 - It's about *trust*
- Opportunity for consensus building
 - Information source not automatically “written off”

What are some good sources of information?

- Federal
 - US Government Accountability Office (GAO), Congressional Research Service, Congressional Budget Office (CBO)
- Wisconsin
 - Legislative Fiscal Bureau, Legislative Audit Bureau, Legislative Reference Bureau
- Local
 - Who are the local advocacy groups and service providers or professional organizations?
 - Finding these is a great place to start to learn more and to further explore your passion!

Evidence-based policy collections

- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
<http://captus.samhsa.gov/print/prevention-practice/defining-evidence-based/samhsa-criteria>
- What Works Clearinghouse (Department of Education)
<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Document.aspx?sid=15>
- U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, Home Visiting
<http://homvee.acf.hhs.gov/document.aspx?rid=4&sid=19&mid=6>
- National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse: Promising Practices
<https://www.fatherhood.gov/content/nrfc-promising-practices>
- Washington State Institute for Public Policy
<http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/BenefitCost>
- CA Clearinghouse for Evidence-Based Programs and Practices
<http://www.cebc4cw.org/>
- What Works for Health (WI):
<http://whatworksforhealth.wisc.edu/>

What else is important?

- Building relationships
 - Consider who is your audience?
 - This should shape your approach – for example, what type of questions do you ask? How do you reach out (in-person, email, text, etc.)?
- Active listening
 - Consider the kind of change that is possible
- Connecting with the community
 - Who are your potential partners, advocates, or supports?
- What's the best forum?
 - Op ed? Testimony? One-on-one meeting?

Opportunities to work with the community at UW

- Service learning
 - <https://www.lafollette.wisc.edu/outreach-public-service/service-learning>
- Institute for Research on Poverty
 - DreamUP WI: <https://www.irp.wisc.edu/dreamup/>
- Morgridge Center volunteering
 - <https://morgridge.wisc.edu/students/>
- SuccessWorks (Career Services)
 - <https://careers.ls.wisc.edu/health-and-wellness/>

What is your action plan?

- RE: your topic
 - Clarify: what do you want to change?
 - Who is your audience?
 - What information do you need to make your case?
 - Where will you go to learn more?
 - Who do you need to connect with in your community?
 - What's the best forum or product for you to make your point?
 - What are your next three steps?
- Take time to establish your action plan by answering the questions above

Follow your Action Plan

- Don't be afraid to share your action plan with others, such as your friends, family, teacher, or employer
- Try to consider how your actions today fit into your action plan
- Your action plan is a road map to help you get to where you want to be
- Your action plan can change, so always be sure to revisit it