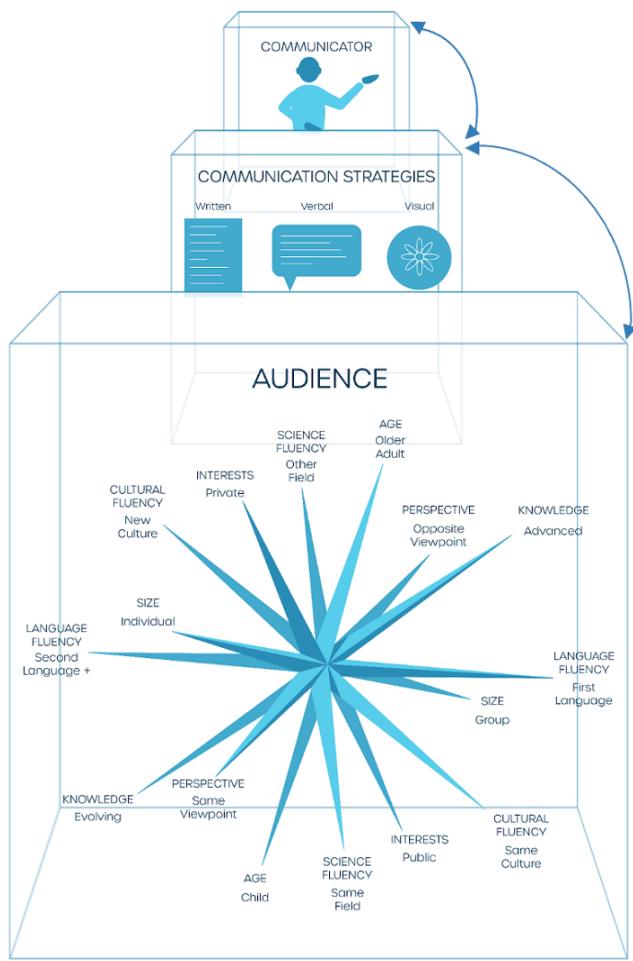


Mah-Baral Communication Framework



This framework provides an approach to thinking of the key elements in any communication act.

Communicator:

Recognizing your persona, biases, and style as a communicator.

Communication Strategies:

What you choose to say (the key SIMPLE message)

How you choose to say it (the verbal and non-verbal cues, as well as the medium you choose, be they verbal, written, or visual)

Audience:

Knowing and respecting your audience is the foundation to every approach in communication.

Feedback loop:

Reassess your communication strategies and reflect on your baseline communication style iteratively as the audience evolves.

Messaging – Keep it “SIMPLE”

- **S:** Summarize the Point – The “so what” component of your message
- **I:** Identify Key Messages – What is the main takeaway?
- **M:** Make it Simple – Clear, concise, and easy to understand
- **P:** Put it in Context – Think about your audience!
- **L:** Leave a Lasting Impression – Ensure the message resonates
- **E:** Engage the Audience – Encourage thought, action, or reflection



Feb 5, 2026

Volt-Age Foundations of Science Communication

Readability Checker

- [Readability checker](#)



Finding Collaborators & Partners – Communications Best Practices

Before the meeting:

- Research who you're meeting (industry, policymaker, funder, etc.).
- Have a clear ask (e.g., increase funding, policy changes, start a collaboration).
- Prepare a leave-behind document (1 page max!) with key points and contact info.

During the meeting:

- Start with a connection: "Did they ever rebuild the library in our alma mater? I loved that place."
- Tell your story with your ask and be concise—officials have limited time.
- Focus on solutions rather than just problems.

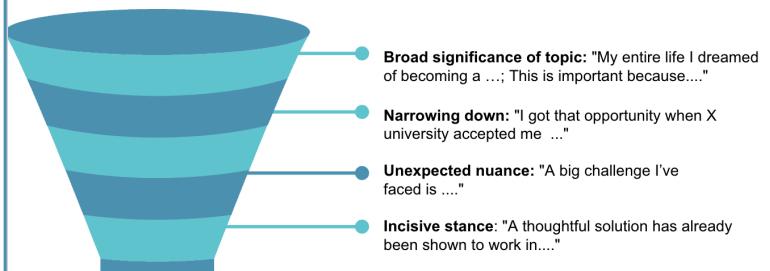
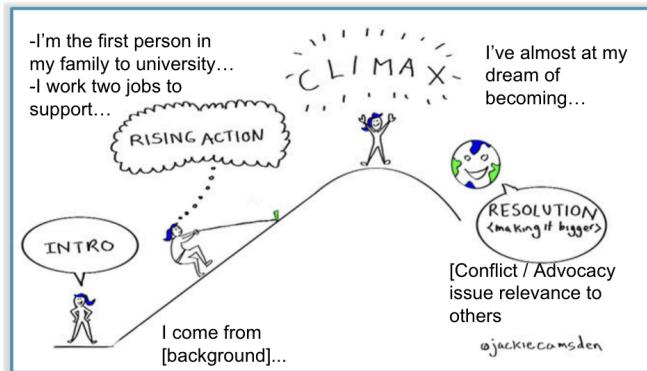
After the meeting:

- Send a thank-you email.
- Follow up on any requested information.
- Stay in touch: If there's a relevant topic, discussion or opportunity, reach out again.

Personal Connection Examples

- Hello [name]. I saw you present on [X] at [University]. And really loved what you had to say about [X], in particular, [Z] really resonated with the students. That is the University I am representing today.
- [Name], I saw you're an alumni of [University]. [University cheer]. Did [University inside joke].
- Thank you for supporting [policy]. It's made a personal difference in my life in [x] manner..

Storytelling Formats



Logline Format = Protagonist + Struggle with Antagonist + Stakes

Leaving the Door Open Examples

- You may be interested to speak to my larger team - we have been working on this problem for the last year. We have a big event on [Date]? We would love to have you or a member of your team see us in action.
- That's a really great question, and I'd like to give you a good answer. We will leave you this one-pager and contact you on [Monday] to talk more about this.

Pitching Frameworks

All frameworks have been adapted for a research lens.

1. Problem-Solution-Urgency-Hope/Ask

	Problem	Solution	Urgency	Hope or Ask
Explanation	What do you seek to address or fix?	What do you and others plan to do (or have done) about the problem?	There are a lot of competing issues. Why is this important to address now?	What do you hope will ultimately happen or be different because of this work? OR What do you ask your audience to do next?
Example	One of the biggest challenges in [area] is [problem],	My work addresses [problem] by [solution], which	It's crucial to address this now because [reason], or we risk	I'm asking for your support to help us [action], so we can achieve [goal].

	and it's affecting [group/people].	results in [benefit].	[negative outcome].	
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2. Situation – Task – Action – Result ([STAR Method](#))

	Situation	Task	Action	Result
Explanation	The broader problem your organization is trying to solve.	Of that broad problem, the specific part you are addressing..	Your organization's journey or advocacy.	What happened and what you learned.
Example	The situation we are facing is [briefly describe the context or problem].	The main goal was to [objective], which would solve [specific problem of situation]	We took the following actions: [list of actions], which involved [specific steps].	As a result of our efforts, we achieved [positive outcome].

Bridges & Boomerangs

- Particularly helpful in response to challenging or unexpected questions
- Main goals
 - Redirect or pivot the conversation to your takeaways
 - Maintain narrative under pressure
 - Reinforce your key takeaways
- Format
 - A - Acknowledge the question
 - B - Bridge to smoothly transition towards your key message (“What I can tell you is...”, “What most people want to know is...”, “Another thing to remember about...”)
 - C - Control the narrative
 - D - Dangle a new piece of information (optional)