

Effective communication is two-way

- Acknowledge the role of values: Recognize that values shape practices and that the person you want to communicate with may have different values from yours; seek to understand the other person's values, and be willing to communicate about your values and how they impact your ethical decisions about research with animals.
- Acknowledge the role of feelings: Recognize that feelings color responses and that the person you want to communicate with may have feelings different from yours about issues related to research with animals; seek to empathize with the other person's feelings, and be willing to communicate about your feelings and how they impact the research that you do with animals
- Be respectful: Seek to learn and understand the other person's values and feelings; point out interests, concerns, and goals that you and the other person have in common.

Speak the right language

- Prepare: Create and rehearse talking points that address your research plan, goals, and message, and that respond to challenging or adversarial questions that you can anticipate; be ready to discuss legal requirements, rules, standards, and enforcement mechanisms.
- Start with your goals: Begin by making clear the end goals of your research and how they relate to shared values and interests, such as curing disease and improving quality of life for animals and people, before getting into specifics of what it takes to achieve those goals.
- Provide context: Communicate about the broader context of your research and its potential consequences for science, medicine, and policy; include the role that research with animals played in earlier developments and discoveries.
- Be open: Tell the story of your work and how animals are cared for, acknowledging areas that are difficult or ways you are working to improve further.
- Be direct: Use plain language; avoid jargon.
- Be concise: You can only count on having about 8 seconds, or about 20 words, to capture and hold a person's attention. If you succeed, you get another 8 seconds.

Encourage meaningful communication

- Use available resources: These include both institutional resources (e.g., leadership, research oversight bodies, communications offices, legal staff, and government affairs offices), and outside experts (e.g., other scientists with communications experience, research advocacy organizations, and the U.S. Animal Research Openness initiative).
- Be proactive: Do not wait until you are attacked before you tell your research story and engage with the public and the media.
- Communicate as one person with another: Let your personality and passion show, and do not limit yourself to being just a subject matter expert.
- Exit gracefully: Be attuned to when it is appropriate to leave a conversation, and have a closing statement ready for when a conversation is no longer contributing to meaningful communication.