

Flipped Science Fair Community Partnership – Lewis, et al. Appendix B. Workshop Follow-Up

The following email was sent to all graduate presenters following the mandatory training workshop, and could be adapted for future Flipped Science Fairs:

Dear Flip the Fair participants,

Thank you for your enthusiasm for sharing your research with the wider world!

We introduced our workshops Friday with the idea that at the Center for Communicating Science we help researchers make their communication more personal, direct, spontaneous, and responsive--and that we encourage researchers to add emotion, too. We encourage you to think about each of these elements that we explored during the workshop:

Personal: What parts of you, beyond your “researcher self,” are you willing to share with the people who attend Flip the Fair? What are some points of connection you might have with the children and others who will be attending?

Direct: We forget what others don’t know--and what we ourselves once didn’t know--as soon as we learn new words and concepts. How will you assess the language you use on your poster and in talking with kids to be sure it’s age appropriate? How will you be “on the level of” the kids, their developmental level but also their literal physical level?

Spontaneous: If you memorize what you’re going to say, it will sound memorized. Be confident that you know about your work and can talk about any piece of it that’s relevant at the moment! Remember that “spontaneous” does not mean “unprepared.”

Responsive: Each of the children with whom you interact will be a full and complex human being. Respect that! Communicate WITH them, not TO them. How will you discern what each child understands and then adapt your explanations and conversation to that understanding?

Add emotion: What brought you joy, piqued your curiosity, caused you to be fearful, and got you excited when you were a child? How can you use those memories to inform your communication with children at Flip the Fair? How will you convey your current passion for and joy in your work?

Responsibility: You all share responsibility for the experience the children have at Flip the Fair. How will you make them feel valued? What will make them eager to engage with you? How will you show them the respect we talked about? How will you invite them into the world of research?

Space: What do you know about the space you’ll be in? Its lighting? Its acoustics? How can you make this space most comfortable and inviting for you and for the children?

There’s no one right and perfect way to communicate. We look forward to all the wonderful approaches you’ll come up with!

Best wishes,

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