

A portrait of Dr Anna Ploszajski, a woman with short blonde hair, smiling warmly. She is wearing a dark blue top and a necklace. The background is dark and out of focus.

Presentation Skills for Researchers

with Dr Anna Ploszajski

Presentations and public speaking are par for the course in any successful research career, be that at conferences, viva exams, or investor pitches. Back at the beginning of my materials science PhD, I was petrified of such events. I felt that I was someone who was just no good at public speaking, and I was worried that it would hold me back in my career.

Fast forward ten years, and I am now a professional science presenter, comedian and storyteller. I have performed stand-up comedy about materials science at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, done a TEDx talk, and been invited to speak at academic and industry conferences across the UK and Europe. I no longer get nervous stepping on stage. In fact, I actively love it!

So, what changed? Well, public speaking is a learnt skill. Okay, a tiny number of people might be natural-born speakers, but for the vast majority of us, feeling comfortable giving strong presentations is something we can learn through theory and practice. I'm living proof of that! And I'm excited to teach these techniques to others.

In this three-part training series, I will give you the skills you need to speak **confidently** and **engagingly** to any future audience, be they professionals or the public. We'll cover how to tailor your message to your audience, how to structure a presentation like a **creative** story, and I'll provide practical tips on body language, voice and performance to increase the **impact** of your words.

There's no prior experience of presenting required – this training is for everyone from folks who detest public speaking, to regular presenters looking to step up their game to the next level.

To discuss how I can help you or your researchers become confident public speakers...

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About the Training

PART 1: AIMS AND AUDIENCES

In this workshop, we'll be going through the planning process of any presentation, by identifying our aims and tailoring key messages to different audiences. By the end, participants will feel confident in how to approach presentations in all sorts of different scenarios, and their message will be pitch-perfect for any future audience.

PART 2: STORY AND STRUCTURE

In this workshop, we'll be covering the theory of how stories are structured, and put it into practice with useful career examples. By the end, participants will be able to pick out the archetypal story elements of almost any movie they've ever watched, and have the tools to automatically structure their content like a story, be it a conference presentation, job interview or investor pitch.

PART 3: BODY LANGUAGE, VOICE AND PERFORMANCE

This workshop is all about doing it. I'll share practical guidance on how to use the body and voice to your advantage, and tips on using the room to full effect. By the end, participants will write and perform a one-minute presentation on their work, with tailored feedback of their strengths and things to work on going forward.

The workshops can be split over a number of weeks, or done together on a single day. Participants will walk away from the sessions having drafted a compelling introductory presentation about their work which can be used at job interviews, networking events, conferences and more.

Testimonials

"The most valuable thing I got from Anna's training was the idea of structuring presentations as stories with different 'acts' and how this can really engage and relate to a diverse audience. It really benefitted me in reconsidering how I view my project data overall and I will definitely be implementing it, not only for my future presentations, but also in my writing. Anna was professional but approachable and friendly and the training day had a relaxed and encouraging environment throughout. I would recommend her!"

- Dr Georgina Starling, Postdoctoral Fellow at UCL and the Francis Crick Institute

"Anna delivered a fantastic masterclass for our staff. Despite being online, the session was practical, interactive and entertaining, with exercises for the group and plenty of discussion. A real highlight was Anna's fantastic storytelling section – demonstrating the importance of messaging, structure and tone, whilst gripping us all with her adventures swimming the channel! Anna is brilliant to work with – professional, personable and keen to understand and tailor the session to meet the needs of our group – we will definitely ask her to be involved in future sessions."

- Dr Amy Seakins, Engagement Manager at Imperial College London

Past clients

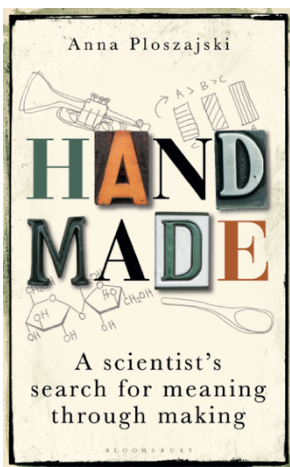




Dr Anna Ploszajski

Materials scientist | Storyteller

Dr Anna Ploszajski is an award-winning materials scientist, writer, presenter, podcaster, performer, trainer and storyteller based in London.



Anna channels her passion for materials science by storytelling with materials on the screen, radio, stage and page; her first book, [Handmade: A Scientist's Search for Meaning Through Making](#), is out now. She has also been published by [The Guardian](#), [The Times Higher Education Supplement](#), and Materials World. Anna can often be found London's pub basements performing stand-up comedy about materials and making. She also frequents science festivals across the country entertaining families with [demo-packed shows](#). Anna's podcast, [Handmade](#), features weekly chats with artists, makers, movers and shakers all with a love of materials.

"Anna is a true original, an impressive talent. She is a fantastic communicator who brings a fresh approach to materials science. Entertaining and enlightening in equal measure."
– Professor Mark Miodownik

"Anna is almost unique in the UK; a young woman in engineering who's accomplished and intelligent but also hilarious, brave and willing to challenge orthodoxies in amazing ways. Oh, and she can do it all on stage too." – Dr Steve Cross

Having developed her own unique blend of autobiographical and technical science communication, Anna now trains professional scientists, engineers and school students in the art of scientific storytelling. She has won numerous prestigious industry [awards](#) for her work, including Young Engineer of the Year by the Royal Academy of Engineering, and the Silver Medal from the Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining. In her spare time, Anna plays the trumpet in a funk and soul covers band, and goes on adventures in Alan, her camper van.

Find out more at www.annaploszajski.com.

