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How to Craft a Great One-Pager

By Sarah Sunu, Heather Mannix and Meg Nakahara

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Prepping for meetings is important in helping you to have a constructive conversation – especially when the person you’re meeting with may have very little time or knowledge of your field of study. Another way to help your information stick, even after the meeting is over, is to leave behind a one-pager. A great one-pager catches their attention, starts a conversation, and acts as a reference.

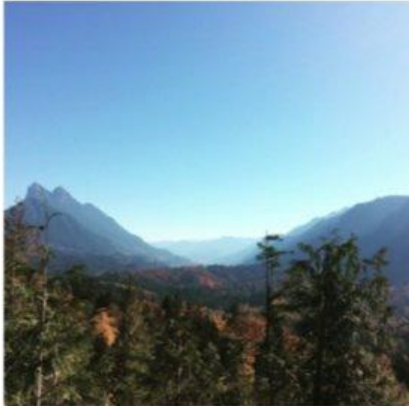
A one-pager is a summary of what you will be talking about – the bullet points or headlines. It provides all the key information in one place, in a digestible package. Since you're handing a physical copy to them, they'll have it easily accessible, and at minimum, they'll have to look at it for a moment after you leave, while they figure out what to do with it (though hopefully they'll find it a useful enough reference to keep)!

A one-pager is also helpful for them if they want to share it with others in their office – they don't have to just rely on their notes, if they took any, and you know it contains the key info that you wanted to share, so that if you aren't able to get to one of your top points during the meeting, you know that they'll still see it on the one-pager.

Policymakers get a lot of one-pagers, and you want to pique their interest so that they will contact you with follow-up questions. So have good content, articulate it clearly and concisely, and make sure it's easy to look at!

Below, we've put together an anatomy of a one-pager, so that you can see what to include, and we've also shared example one-pagers, with the kind permission of their authors.

Additional subtitle text here



Be sure to include captions that explain the relevance of any pictures or figures you use to your content, and provide attribution. All visuals should be high quality and large enough to interpret easily.
Image by Sarah Sunu, 2017.

Issue

Define your issue here in a concise paragraph or using bullet points (this can be adapted from the Issue & Problem sections of your Message Box).

- Key points are good
- Frame the issue in a way that matters to your audience
- Keep it concise
- Avoid jargon (throughout the leave-behind, but especially in

Impacts

Explain how the issue impacts your audience here in a concise paragraph or using bullet points (this can be adapted from the So What? section of your Message Box).

- Make sure the impacts are relevant to your audience
- Consider context and scale of the impacts you include—are they things your audience cares about/can do something about?

Why You Are Sharing This

What are the benefits of addressing the issue and impacts above (this can be adapted from the Benefits & Solutions sections of the Message Box). This is also where you will want to think about your comfort level with advocacy, and whether you want to support a specific course of action.

- What does your audience have authority and jurisdiction over (i.e. what *can* they do)?
- What do you hope they will do with this information?
- What additional context might be helpful as they are making a decision?

You may want to include your institutional logo here.

Your Name
Your Title & Affiliation
Your Phone Number
Your Email

Additional Tips For Throughout Your One-Pager:

- ▶ Start with the point, not with background or context.
- ▶ Be concise – headlines aren't just titles. They should add meaning.
- ▶ Don't talk down to the reader (avoid words like 'Clearly...' or 'Obviously...').
- ▶ Use good design principles: make sure that the font is large enough to read, and leave plenty of white space. Make it as easy to read as possible.

- ▶ Use color (but only 1-2 colors for formatting elements) and pictures/graphs where illustrative. Consider using colors that match your institutional logo, if appropriate, or otherwise neutral tones.
- ▶ For a polished product, try using Powerpoint, Pages, or Keynote (the same way you'd design a poster).

Getting ready for a meeting? We've shared a number of tips on the blog on how to prepare, from **sending a clear and concise meeting request**, to **using the Message Box** to figure out what is most relevant for you to share with the person you're meeting with, to thinking through your answers to the questions that you might be asked, including the sometimes nerve-wracking "**What do you want me to do about this?**" question. Meetings are a great way to build relationships and share how your work can be relevant to policy.

Example below from Dr. **Marissa McMahan**.

Changes in ocean temperature affect fisheries & fishing communities

Issue:

- Warming of the world's oceans is causing species ranges to expand or contract to avoid temperature stress.
 - The Gulf of Maine is particularly vulnerable to warming (Fig. 1).
 - Many species in the Northwest Atlantic are shifting northward.

Impacts:

- Ecological: changes in community structure, food web dynamics, and overall productivity of ecosystems (Fig. 2).
- Socioeconomic: shifting fish stocks impact industry stakeholders and fishing communities.

Potential Solutions:

- Consider distribution shifts in reauthorization of the Magnuson Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.
- Identify potential ecological and socioeconomic impacts of shifting species before they happen.
- Consider alternate methods for collecting data (e.g., partner with fishermen to monitor shifting species), especially for data poor stocks.
- Consider alternate management methods (e.g., dynamic management)
- Provide education/training to fishermen interested in harvesting new species.
- Consider strategies to generate interest in new species and ultimately market demand that will secure profitable transition from targeting historically abundant species to newly abundant species.

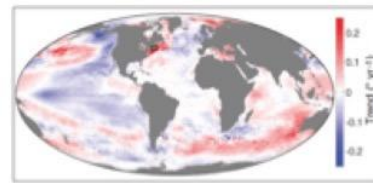


Fig. 1. Global sea surface temperature trends, 2004-2013. The Gulf of Maine is outlined in black. (Pershing et al. Science 2015)



Fig. 2. Black sea bass are commonly caught as bycatch in lobster traps as far north as ~~oldcoast~~ Maine. Preliminary data suggests that the presence of sea bass causes lobsters to move/forage less and consume less. There is also evidence that sea bass eat juvenile lobsters (McMahan unpublished data).