

What to expect during an appointment with the Communication Lab

The BE Comm Lab was founded on the basis that effective science communication is critical for success in any future career. We believe the best way to learn science communication is by getting feedback on authentic tasks. As such, we employ a peer coaching model - our fellows are practicing engineers and scientists, first and foremost. We rigorously train our fellows to work with clients to communicate the science and professional goals creatively, accurately, and efficiently. Your fellow is generally not an expert in your topic or familiar with the details of your coursework. However, they are biological engineers, and will be able to talk about best practices for typical audiences in the field.



Making and preparing for your appointment

- Make an appointment at mitcommlab.mit.edu/be any stage of your working process -- from brainstorming your ideas to getting feedback on final edits.
- Plan ahead. Our scheduling system will not allow you to book an appointment within 24hrs of your intended appointment. Email us if you can't find an appointment that works for you. If there is no time on the calendar that works for you, email us and we try our best to accommodate all requests.
- Think about what you want to work on during your session. Bring 2 copies of whatever you are working on. If you need help printing, please let us know!
- If you think you need to reschedule, please give us as much notice as possible.



Meet

During your appointment

Meet your fellow in front of 56-211

Your fellow will ask you questions to identify what you are working on and what you hope to accomplish in the session



Read

Your fellow will take a few minutes to look at your document and will make a plan for the session

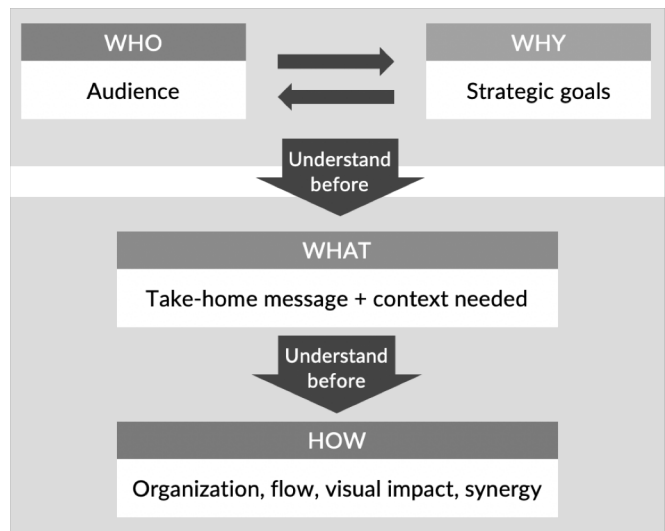
Make a 30 or 60 minute appointment depending on how much feedback you are looking to get



Discuss

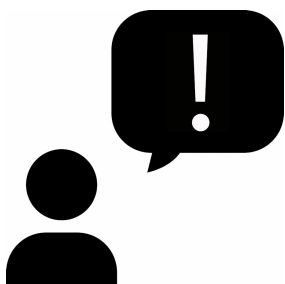
Your fellow will work with you to achieve your goal for the session and address your concerns.

Your fellow will highlight several themes that they notice and will provide you with tips to improve your work.



During your appointment, your fellow will help you figure out who your audience is and why you are working on this task (beyond the fact that you might have to for a class or because a professor asked you to!). Once you figure this out, they will help you to think about what to include and how to do this most efficiently and creatively.

Depending on how much time you have before your assignment is due and where you are in the process, your fellow will focus on the things that will help you accomplish your goals in the most efficient way possible.



After your appointment

- We hope you will go back and apply those tips to the remainder of your document.
- We would love to see you again, for this assignment or anything else!
- If you have any issues or questions, you are invited to reach out to the Communication Lab.

A few notes

- For most tasks, we recommend a 60 minute appointment. A 30 minute appointment equals ~15minutes of feedback. A 60 minute appointment is ~45 minutes of feedback.
- Your fellow is not trained to tell you what to do to improve your communication task. However, **they are trained to work with you to think through what would work best for you to communicate your work most effectively.** What works for you, may not be the best suggestion for the next person.
- If you miss three appointments, you will be locked out of our system.