

# Say What?

Communicating Complex Topics

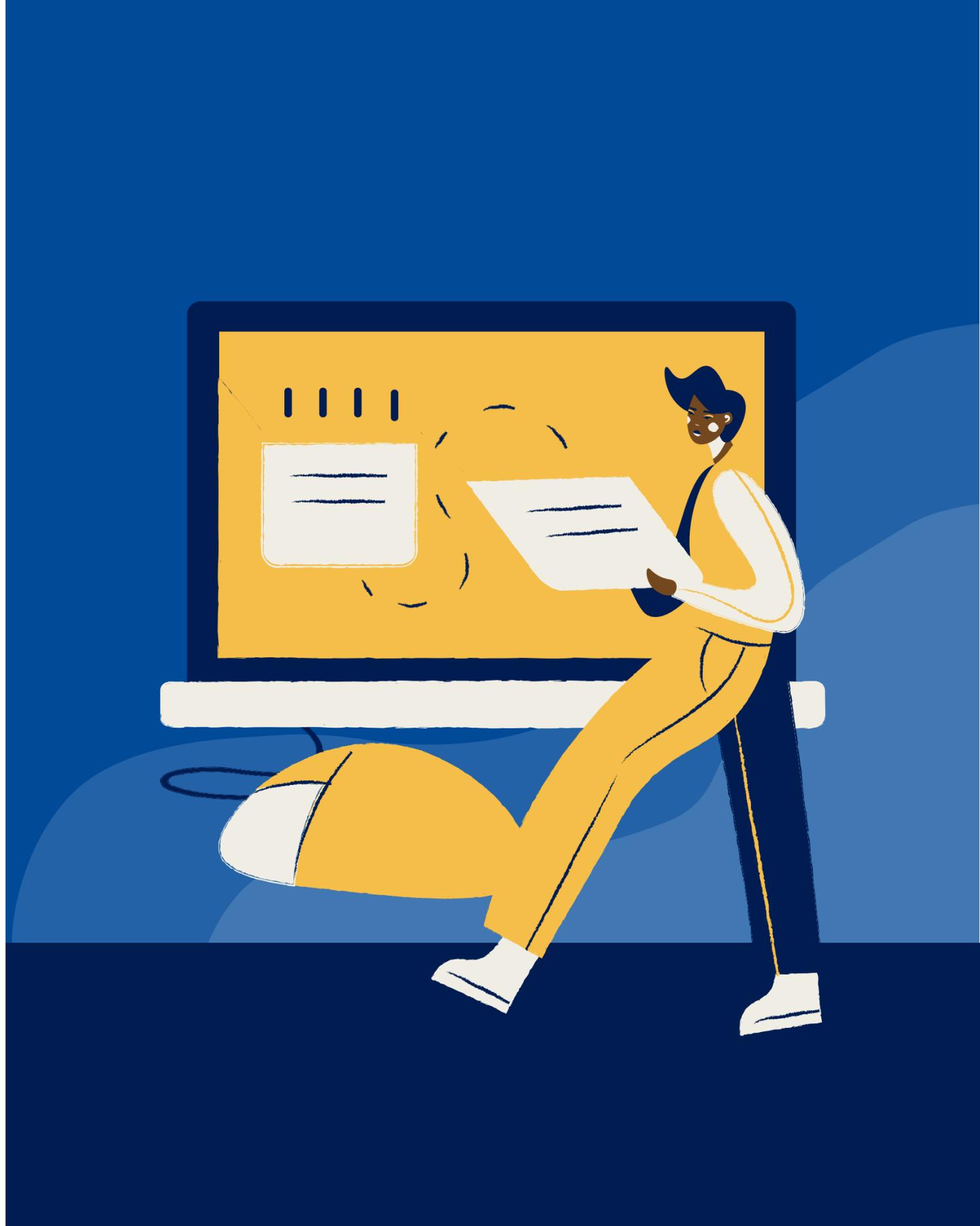
**S. Robin Elgart, Ph.D.**

Space Radiation Element Scientist  
NASA Human Research Program



# Radiation is Hard

Communicating it, can be even harder



# Things to Think About

**Focus on your audience...**

... and their *EXPERIENCE*

**Practice thoughtful restraint**

Prioritize the message over completeness

**Find your squad**

Get constructive feedback



# Focus on Your Audience's Experience

what is  
experience?



## A Person's Background

noun: "practical knowledge, skill, or practice derived from direct observation of or participation in events or in a particular activity"

---

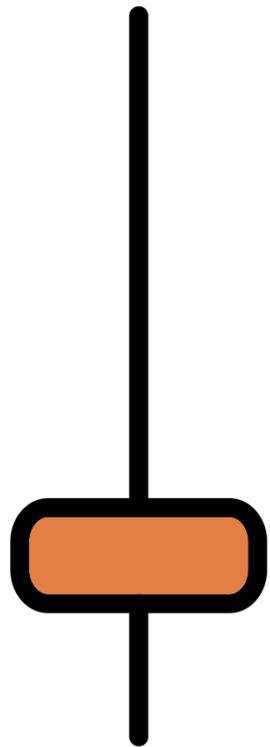
## A Person's Perception

noun: "the way that something happens and how it makes you feel"

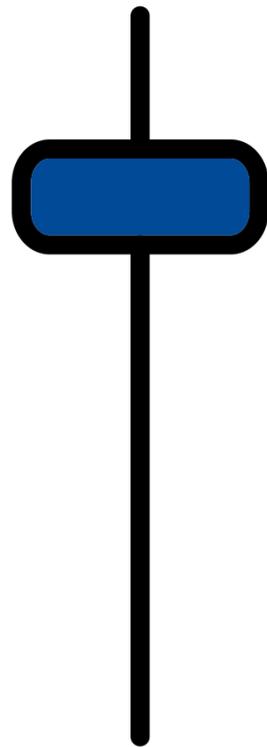
People rarely remember what you say –  
more often they remember how they **felt**

# Practice Thoughtful Restraint

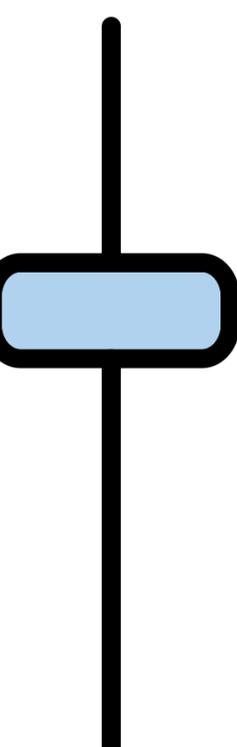
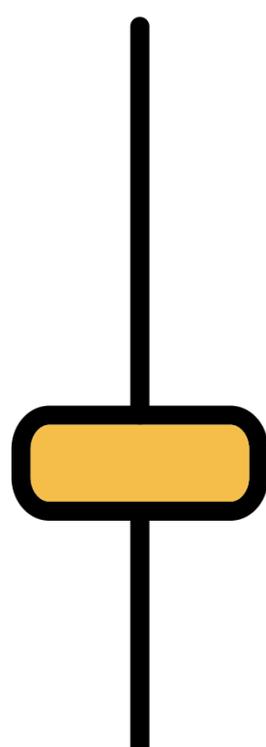
Background



Methods



So What



Visuals

## Clarity

Focus and narrow to the **KEY** messages

---

## Need to Know

What REALLY needs to be **understood**

---

## Details can be distracting

Don't try to squeeze in too much information

# Find Your Squad



## Opinions are like Bellybuttons

But they are not all equal or matter

---

## Circle of Trust

Find those that matter to YOU and actively seek and accept **constructive** feedback

---

## Like What you See?

Note what you find particularly effective in the work of othe

# Words of Caution

Avoid slips, trips, and falls

## Jargon

Avoid at all costs

## Credit

Apply liberally

## Nerves

It's OK!

## Graphics

Understand rights



# Resources



AAAS Communication Toolkit:  
<https://www.aaas.org/resources/communication-toolkit>



Killer Presentations by Chris Anderson (curator of TED):  
<https://hbr.org/2013/06/how-to-give-a-killer-presentation>



Trainings and Resources:  
<https://500womenscientists.org/comms-toolkits>

# Resources



ASBMB Art of Science Communication Course:  
<https://www.asbmb.org/career-resources/communication-course>



Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science:  
<https://aldacenter.org/>



# Thank You!

[shona.elgart@nasa.gov](mailto:shona.elgart@nasa.gov)