Ladies and Gentlemen of the nation, it is with great disappointment I say that we, the scientific community, have failed you. We have hidden on our false intellectual pedestal. We throw around phrases like "you wouldn't understand" and when we do try to explain, we start so far down the rabbit hole, it might have been better if we did not speak at all. For that, we cannot blame you for your ignorance. We cannot blame you when you become complacent about the importance of science or the lack of support (read funding). We cannot continue to complain to our colleagues, preaching to the choir, because in this case, the choir is not above reproach.

We as scientists need to begin to cultivate relationships with our surroundings, not look down on them. We need to stop combating faith, but instead find common ground and work together (we are not enemies). We need to work with politicians, instead of always calling them out for their attack on science (again, we are not enemies). We must educate the public. The job of a scientist has changed. Each one of us is a scientific ambassador, whether or not we want to answer that call.

Above all, we need to stop saying "we need to" and simply just go "do." If your involvement is minimal with the public, it is likely that your impact will be as well. Please allow me a moment of clarification though, we all have gifts and we naturally like to work within them, but changing the status quo will require us to step out of our comfort zone. Some scientist are better in the lab than in the public eye, but if that is you, find a constructive way to express, or have someone else express, the value of your contribution. Some people are much better in the lab, and some can hopefully do as I am right now, which is sounding the alarm, leading the charge from the trenches, and not standing on the hill. Reach out and reach often.

Moving forward, and moving now, I have a task for you. Find your "why." Dig deep and truly reflect on why you do science. When you have it, write it down so you can draw inspiration from the reason. Next, express that to others. Notice I did not ask you to tell them what you do yet, or how you do it, I simply said just tell the why. If the public doesn't know why we do something, then they will never care.
what it is that we do. If you find and communicate your why, I will guess that they will want to know “the what” of your science. But again stand firm, and state first the why. Why is it important to them, why is it relevant to them? Frame your problem in such a way that the listener wants to know what can be done. Then and only then, should you tell them the “what” and “how.”

MDLJ