Dr. Nick Magliocca, assistant research professor at SESYNC, won a prestigious award for the best presentation by a junior researcher at the 2017 Agent Based Modeling Symposium last week. The symposium brought together 100 researchers with the goal of transforming the science, technology, and application of agent-based models (ABMs) in the context of social, human-environment, and life sciences. The symposium was held in San Diego, California and sponsored by the National Science Foundation.

The ABMStar award was given to early-career researchers with the best poster and oral presentations at the meeting.

When I asked Dr. Magliocca the secret to his success, he referenced Nancy Baron’s book, Escape from the Ivory Tower, as a good source for tips on how to create a more compelling scientific presentation.

“As a researcher I sometimes get caught up in the details of my work, but the book gives advice on how to focus on the big picture,” Magliocca said.
The book introduces what is referred to as the message box, which helps researchers think about why other people, and policymakers, might be interested in their research. The message box helps presenters focus on a few key messages that will be most salient for their audiences.

The author explains the sections as follows:

**Issue**: In broad terms, what is the overarching topic or issue?

**Problem**: What is the specific problem or piece of the issue I am addressing?

**So what?**: Why does this matter to my audience?

**Solutions**: What are the potential solutions to the problem?

**Benefits**: What are the potential benefits to resolving the problem?

Dr. Magliocca will be teaching a course in agent-based modeling this summer. To learn more about his research, [click here](http://www.sesync.org/users/nmagliocca [4]).

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