Explaining Complex Technical Topics to Researchers

Jacob Fosso Tande, Ph.D
Research Computing Administrator
University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Virtual Residency Workshop 2020
What it Takes

- Complex Topic and Researcher is an interesting mixture.
- Subtlety is required.
- Humility is a force
- Knowing your interlocutor is an impetus
- Preparedness is your key.
- Your choice of words makes the difference
Explaining should not be ...

Explaining should not be ...

---

Just because you are right, does not mean, I am wrong. You just haven't seen life from my side.

Painting the Picture

Accurate picture as much as possible relying on Commonality.

- Operators: Theory Versus Experiment
- Basis Sets: Chemist Versus Physicist
- Secure Computing Environment:
  - Concept Versus Reality
    - Shield vs vault
Hard-Coded Misconceptions

Dipole Moment has a Magnitude and a Direction
Hard-Coded Misconceptions

Spartan

GaussView
Ending the Encounter

- Express appreciation for the discussion.
- Be forthcoming about your shortcomings.
- Note Questions you couldn’t answer.
- Follow up with clarifications or with additional information.