

NEED, APPROACH, BENEFITS, COMPETITION (NABC) MODEL



HELPFUL LINKS

<https://ahappyphd.org/posts/pitching-nabc/>

<https://hbr.org/2020/11/innovation-for-impact>

<https://nielschrist.wordpress.com/2012/07/13/the-nabc-method-standford-research-institute-sri/>

WHAT IS THE NEED, APPROACH, BENEFITS, COMPETITION (NABC) MODEL?

The Need, Approach, Benefits, Competition (NABC) model is a tool used in developing and presenting ideas. It was created by SRI International (formerly Stanford Research Institute) and used in the production of numerous products, including Siri and HDTV(1).

NABC assumes that an innovative idea must create value by solving problems better than the competition, but it is also applicable in academic settings. It has been shown to be beneficial in communicating what is expected of students in courses (2), is helpful in instilling a value-creation mindset for engineering students (3), has benefits for helping faculty frame grant proposals (3), and is a useful framework for doing interviews to help identify community needs (4).

Dr. Luis Prieto suggested a more academic model of NABC, called the N(Q)ABC, that is helpful in presenting what your research is about (the “elevator pitch”), getting targeted feedback in each area, and incorporating your research question (5).

1. Carlson, C. R. (2020, November 1). Innovation for Impact. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2020/11/innovation-for-impact>
 2. Tryggvason, G., Schaufeld, J. J., & Banks, M. (2010). Teaching engineering innovation and entrepreneurship early in the curriculum. *The Journal of Engineering Entrepreneurship*, 1(1), 42–50.
 3. Carlson, C., Polizzotto, L., & R. Gaudette, G. (2019). The “NABC’s” of Value Propositions. *IEEE Engineering Management Review*, 47(3), 15–20. <https://doi.org/10.1109/EMR.2019.2932321>
 4. Krüger, S., & Rustad, G. C. (2019). Coping with Shame in a Media-saturated Society: Norwegian Web-series Skam as Transitional Object. *Television & New Media*, 20(1), 72–95. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1527476417741379>
 5. Prieto, L. PhD tool: Pitching your research with the NABC model. (2019, May 20). <http://ahappyphd.org/posts/pitching-nabc/>
- Acknowledgment: Images were provided by the Anthro Illustrated project (<<https://anthroillustrated.com>>). We thank the Anthro Illustrated team for these resources.

APPLYING N(Q)ABC IN RESEARCH SETTINGS

NEED What is the need or problem that your research addresses? Why does your research matter?

Example:

My research innovates a new method...
My research addresses a gap in the literature...
My research examines why [thing] happens...

COMPETITION How have other scholars addressed this so far?

Example:

Summary of your lit review

QUESTION Your research question will often build off the needs and competition summaries.

Example:

State your research question

APPROACH What are your research methods? Include any additional hypotheses here.

Example:

Summarize your methodology and analyses plans

BENEFITS What are your expected (or discovered) benefits? How does your research compare with previous literature?

Example:

Summarize your methodology, and how you will analyze your data

USING N(Q)ABC IN RESEARCH PROPOSALS

The N(Q)ABC model integrates smoothly into the structure of a research or grant proposal. Consider using this structure:

Need: The background for your question. Why is it important?

Competition: The context for your question. What theories or methodologies are currently used? What does the literature say?

Question: The research question.

Approach: The methodology section.

Benefits: Your summary and what your research will contribute.

