# Novozymes SciMatch
# Tips & Resources for Scientists

**Thank you** for volunteering to participate in the Novozymes SciMatch program! It's understandable if you are a little apprehensive to head back to middle school. But, don't worry, we wouldn't send you in unprepared! Please consider the following tips and suggestions as you begin to plan for your classroom visit.

5 Keys to a Successful Classroom Visit:

1. **Know your audience:** Use plain language. Try to avoid using jargon and technical expressions without explaining what they mean. This is not a lecture; it should be a fun conversation. Middle school students LOVE to talk.
2. **Tell your story:** What were you like when you were in middle school? How did you get interested in science? What do you love about your job?
3. **Make it as interactive as possible:** Is there a technique or activity that students can replicate in the classroom? Do you have photos, images or samples of real tools from the field that you can share?
4. **Make it real and relevant:** Why should a middle school student care about what you do? In what ways does your career or research impact them or their lives? Explain why your work matters.
5. **Relax:** Be yourself and have fun!

As you are planning your presentation, set an agenda and schedule that is fast-paced and holds students' interest. For classroom visits we offer this basic formula:

- Introduce yourself. You may want to begin with an **icebreaker** to warm up and set the tone—something interactive and fun. This can be as simple as introducing yourself by name and sharing an interesting fact or playing "Two Truths and a Lie."

- Share a **personal story**. Students are eager to hear about your dreams as a child, a humorous anecdote about when you were their age, what attracted you to your career or how you dealt with challenges along the way. Students need to connect with <u>you</u> in order to connect to your career.

- **Explain what you do** and how your work fits into a larger context. Use simple language instead of jargon or technical terms that may be over students' heads. Demonstrate connections between your work and students' lives. Be sure to bring visuals and artifacts, like examples of tools, specimens, etc. that students may interact with.

- Jump into a **hands-on** activity. This helps keep students engaged and offers a snapshot of your work.

- Before you know it, your visit will be almost over. Make sure to leave some time for any **final questions**.

**Questions to consider:**

What path did you take to get to your current work? What is your long-term career vision? How have your career and career vision evolved over time?

What initially inspired you to focus on this area?

What are the major research questions in your field or subject area?

What is the basic research question behind your work? What are the key concepts, sub-questions, or anything else you deem particularly important?

What assumptions and breakthroughs form the basis of your current work?

How has your field evolved over time?

What are the big "unanswered questions" in your field of work?

What techniques, methods, or processes are used in this field?

Which do you use on a daily basis?

Why is your work important? How is it relevant to day-to-day life?

Why are you personally interested in this area of study?

What absolutely fascinates you the most about the topic you study?

**Additional Resources for visiting scientists:**

http://www.nationalacademies.org/rise/roles1a.htm (*Sharing Science with Students: A Survival Guide for Scientists and Engineers* provides quick and easy teaching tips and youth development characteristics to help guide your visit developed by the North Carolina Museum of Life and Science)

http://www.techbridgegirls.org/index.php?id=29 (A guide for classroom visits written for a similar program geared towards girls called *Techbridge* out of Chabot Space and Science Center in Oakland, California)