



JSNN



Joint School of
Nanoscience and Nanoengineering

JSNN Seminar Series – Spring 2026

“How to Sell an Idea”

Mr. Sidd Chopra

LookWiser

Friday, February 13th at 11:00 AM

Abstract

What is the value of an idea if it can't be communicated effectively? Every breakthrough –scientific, technical, or social– depends on someone convincing others that it is worth pursuing. Yet funding agencies such as NSF or DoD, major foundations, and venture capital firms all report the same problem: brilliant research too often never reaches the real world because the people behind it struggle to communicate its value. In this presentation and its associated workshop, participants will build a compelling personal or funding pitch using techniques proven in high-stakes, competitive environments. Drawing on insights from top innovators and leading researchers in neuroeconomics, cognitive psychology, and behavioral science, attendees will learn how to speak to decision-makers, government officials, investors, and customers who can turn your idea into impact. Walk away with a pitch you can use immediately, and the tools to make sure your next big idea doesn't get ignored.



Biography

Mr. Sidd Chopra is an entrepreneur, veteran IT professional, author, award-winning speaker, and the CIO of a medical practice. He has developed critical systems for the Neurotoxicology Department of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the SAS Institute, the U.S. Army, and several Fortune 100 companies. He leverages his knowledge of technology and communication to help safeguard the U.S. workforce from cybercriminals as a volunteer Project Lead with the National Initiative for Cybersecurity Education (NICE) and he is the founder (in 2023) of *Presentation Proving Ground*, a not-for-profit group of communication experts that provides scientists and thought leaders with a safe space to test their messaging and presentation skills (<https://www.lookwiser.com>). He received a B.S. degree in Computer Science from North Carolina State University and subsequently completed a “Tackling the Challenges of Big Data” Certificate from MIT (2015).