

Presentation Tips

Foreword

Whether you are representing a company with 1 or 100,000 employees, when presenting to a client YOU may be their first experience interacting with the company. It doesn't help if you have hundreds of engineers in Singapore and an amazing technology center in the USA. YOU will be seen as the gatekeeper connecting those impressive resources to the client and if they don't believe that YOU are up to the task, they may choose to work with a different company.

Be Yourself!

At the end of the day the client isn't attending your presentation to be entertained. They are there to evaluate whether or not they would like to do business with YOU and the company you represent. If your natural style is to be light hearted and upbeat then use this to your advantage. If you are a bit more reserved then don't try telling jokes to break the ice, if the audience doesn't laugh it may throw you off. Be yourself.

Be Prepared

If possible, confirm who will be attending, their backgrounds and the time allotted for the presentation.

- Taylor your presentation to the audience. If you are selling drugs that reduce obesity in dogs, cats and horses and you know that your audience will exclusively be stable owners, focus your presentation on the drugs for horses. Don't overwhelm the audience with information they would not be interested in. Keep in mind that although you work with your products daily and think they are simple to understand, your audience may not.
- Understand your audience's drivers. Do they want to sell more, save time, reduce costs, make more informed decisions? Don't focus on details that your AUDIENCE will find irrelevant. You may be proud of the fact that you have used nanotechnology and cutting edge science to produce your product, but your audience will be more interested in what's in it for them, i.e. how will it save them time, help them to sell more, reduce their costs, allow them to make more informed decisions etc.. Focus on 1 or 2 points that you would like the audience to remember.
- Do at least one dry run of your presentation to get your thoughts together and the timing correct. Do not turn up to the meeting with a presentation you have never seen and ask the audience how much time you have. First impressions last, and their first impression would be that YOU are unprepared. Unfortunately this first impression may automatically be associated with the company you represent.
- If you aren't already, then become an expert on everything you are about to present. Try to predict what questions the audience may ask and make sure you have answers for them. If you are pressed for time and don't understand certain details of what you have to present, then remove them if possible. It is ok to say that you will get back to audience later with an answer, BUT not for every question.

Be creative, be yourself, get your message heard!



Look, Listen and React to the Audience

- This is easier said than done, but when presenting you need to keep engaged with the audience. If people look disinterested or confused you may need to stop and ask the audience whether they are following you. It's a complete waste of time presenting for 2 hours only to find out that no one understood what you were talking about.
- Do not be condescending, even if you are the smartest person in the room you probably will not sell anything if you make everyone else feel stupid.
- Bringing a 'neutral' observer can be extremely helpful in the situations above. He or she can read the audience and pose questions to you that will steer your presentation in the right direction. Make sure to choose an observer that doesn't have exactly the same opinions and traits as you do.