

SEVEN KEYS TO A PERSUASIVE PRESENTATION

The goal of the business presentation is to persuade your audience to achieve your objectives and long term goals. Business presentations have the unique opportunity to communicate the strength of your solution with an interested and captive audience. In the hundreds of presentations I have seen and worked on, my experience has been that most presentations are compromised by the errors of “Too much” and “Too little”. These oversights are commonplace and illuminate why it is essential to implement these seven keys to build the persuasive presentation.

1. Too little about them

The audience’s needs, interests, motivations and aspirations should always be considered first.

An effective presentation is user-centered. While the presenter’s need - is to sell their proposition - the audience is looking for answers to their problems, and how your proposition will solve those problems. In short, you understand your audience, what’s top-of-mind for them and that understanding defines how you position and communicate your proposition.

RESEARCH YOUR AUDIENCE

2. Too much about you

The objectives of the presentation are all too often, all about your product and services, and not in alignment with the needs and motivations of the audience.

The benefits to the audience - are what the audience is after. The goal of the presentation should always address the issues facing the audience - in a way that is insightful and relevant.

GENERATE INSIGHT

3. Too much content

The majority of presentations cover so much ground, at such a low altitude that the trivial is elevated as meaningful, and so, the meaningful becomes trivial.

The major points of the presentation are buried under the sheer weight of content. You have confused them and lost them along the way. The once interested audience - becomes disinterested. Infatuation turns to frustration. Further interest in the company is diminished and the reputation of the brand, tarnished.

DISTILL YOUR CONTENT

4. Too little focus

The presentation has not articulated the structure and scope of the presentation, clarified what will be presented and then summarized with clarity - the major points.

Unfortunately, the major points, the real opportunity of the presentation are never grasped by the audience. The solution is to think of it as a summer drive in the car: explain where we're going, how long it will take, points of interest along the way and our final destination - the ride is more pleasant, and the mind more attentive and the trip - far more memorable.

STRUCTURE YOUR PRESENTATION

5. Too much fluff - Too little substance

Professionals are looking for information and insight. In short, they want astute solutions to tough problems.

While animation and graphics can be key for audience engagement at a visual level, they are no substitute for research, insight, content, structure and strength of solution. Graphics are not persuasive - content is.

MORE THAN A PRETTY FACE

6. Too much time

People are crying out for simple solutions to complex problems. They don't want to "chew the fat", they want: "just the skinny." Give it to them.

An expert can summarize a topic in two sentences, while a summary by a novice can take two pages.

It takes time and effort to simplify, but it is worth every minute.

KEEP IT ELEGANTLY SIMPLE

7. Too little cohesion

Too often a unifying thread or theme is absent and the opportunity to tie the presentation together in a cohesive and memorable manner is missed.

Despite your presentations topics complexity, if it implements a theme or metaphor, it will allow your audience to grasp the significance of your solution, without having to understand all of its inner workings.

A unifying, memorable theme inspires further reflection and the call to action.

MAKE IT MEMORABLE