

CCCO HR SWAP MEET

TOP 10 TIPS: Presentations with Pizzazz

Micheline McKay, Executive Director, Opera.ca; Cultural Consultant

1. Know your material. To be convincing, your audience must have confidence in you and the information you are presenting. Be assertive and knowledgeable in the facts you are imparting. Don't go down roads that you are unsure of. If you do get caught without the answer, say so, and promise to get back to the individual. Bafflegab rarely works.

2. Start with an outline; ensure a thread throughout. Tell them what you are going to tell them; tell them; tell them what you told them. In this regard, beginning the preparation of your presentation with an outline is key. From there, you can follow the logic, and adjust as necessary.

3. Know your audience and the context the presentation is being delivered in. Different audiences demand different approaches. Speaking to a board of directors is different than addressing a larger audience. Get an understanding of the environment you'll be presenting in, including the room set up, well in advance. Even if presentation is a small informal setting, it's important to always put your best foot forward.

4. Be yourself. Chances are, that doesn't mean being funny. Some people are born orators or comedians. Most are not. Know your strengths, and work to full advantage.

5. PowerPoint presentations should be consistent in style and reflect your organization. The technology available makes it very easy to impart information effectively. Use it to full advantage to impart the style, image and essence of your organization.

6. Keep slide information concise and uncluttered. Use only key information and facts. Keep font size large and simple. (Arial or similar) Don't force your audience to concentrate on the slides, instead of concentrating on you the presenter.

7. Use statistics effectively; this probably means sparingly. Long lists of numbers become tiresome. Moreover, very few people can actually hold on to information delivered in that way.

8. A picture is worth a thousand words. Graphic elements, like bar or pie charts, often communicate the essence of key information far more effectively than lists of numbers. PowerPoint is very helpful in this regard.

9. Rehearse. Rehearse again. Your audience is investing their time and interest in attending your presentation. Ensure that you live up to their expectations with a well formulated, relaxed and clear presentation, minus the glitches.

10. Get there ahead of time to ensure AV equipment is working and you know how it works. Have a back up plan. Murphy's Law reigns in all matters technical around presentations. Never assume you'll just plug your computer in. You owe it to yourself and your audience to ensure the presentation gets off to a great start!