



Making Powerful Sales Presentations

How many of you have ever delivered a presentation to a large audience? How did it feel? Were you comfortable? Confident? Pumped? Or were you unsure? Uncertain? Maybe even a bit nervous?

The presentation stage is arguably the most important single event in a sales engagement - your moment to shine. All the work you've done leading up to the presentation will have been for naught if you don't knock your audience out with a convincing presentation. So it's important to know how to both structure a presentation, and how to deliver it effectively. That's what we'll learn in today's Sales Tip.

Six steps to a powerful presentation:

1. Structure your presentation with a distinct opening, body, and conclusion. Your opening should begin with an **ice-breaker** that will grab their attention. It should be motivational, engaging, or attention-getting (asking a question is usually a good way to grab an audience's attention off the bat). Then continue with a brief **overview**, introducing the theme of your presentation, and one or two major points. In addition to setting the stage for what's to come, this will be helpful to those in the audience who have not been intimately involved in prior discussions (often times people are pulled in at the last minute, or just decided to drop in and see what's going on).
2. Introduce yourself, your company, and the qualifications of both. This raises the audience's confidence that they are working with reliable, competent professionals they can trust.
3. Demonstrate your understanding of the customer's challenges and goals. As you move through your presentation, focus on *only those capabilities of your product or service that address these challenges and goals*. Resist the urge to talk about everything your product can do - no matter how proud, no matter

how excited you are about it, your audience won't care about those capabilities that have no bearing on *their* issues.

4. Use visuals, statistics, and props, stories, anecdotes, and quotes to liven up your presentation and connect with your audience (most of what an audience remembers is what they *see*, not what they *hear*).
5. Involve and engage your audience. *Do not hold a "Q&A" at the end of your presentation.* Encourage questions throughout it - when your prospects are hungry for answers - and not at the end, when all they're hungry for (and thinking about) is lunch or dinner.
6. Prepare and deliver a powerful and convincing conclusion. Recap your solution, reminding them what life would be like without it, and ask for the business. Get agreement from your prospect on next steps and time frames, including what your prospect should do immediately after the meeting, and in the days and weeks ahead.

ACTION ITEM

Review your existing presentation. Does it contain all the elements of a knockout presentation presented above? If not, add the ones that are missing. Then ***rehearse***, until the process and the techniques feel comfortable. It may take some time, but it will be well worth the effort. The result will be more heads shaking up and down in agreement with you, and fewer just looking down at their wristwatches and PDA's.

Good Selling!