

## **Section 1 - Create a Positive and Professional First Impression**

You never get a second chance to make a first impression. Because that first impression may last a long time in some people's minds.

It may make the difference between being accepted by a prospect as a useful person to talk to, and potentially do business with, or not. They may immediately accept us as a credible businessperson, or they may reserve judgement until they've seen and heard more from us.

We judge people all the time. We've been doing it since we were small. It's part of our survival mechanism.

So whether we're meeting someone for the first time for a sales meeting, or walking into a large meeting room about to make a presentation we'll be making an impression.

And if we're looking to influence, persuade or sell to people then we'd be wise to think about the first impression we give.

We make an impression in lots of ways. By the way we look. By what we do and how we do it. And by what we say, or ask, and how we do that.

What sort of impression do we want to make?

When we're selling, or influencing, or discovering people's needs we need to look as the prospect might expect us to look. Anything else and our prospect will spend time wondering who we are and whether they want to do business with us.

A large part of the impression we make will be what we say and how we say it.

Let's start by creating a Personal Credibility Statement. This says a lot about us and our organisation. And it should be said in about 45 seconds or less.

Notice that there's an open question at the end, to put the onus back onto the other person.

## Your Personal Credibility Statement

Who you are

What you do

How you add value

Your open question

**Other statements that you've heard that you like:**

## 3 Keys to *Appearing* Confident When We Present

### Key 1 – Stand strong

We know instinctively that stance is important. Just think of the way we use the word 'stand' in our language. Stand up for yourself. Take a stand. Stand strong in the face of adversity. Or conversely, stand down, on the back foot, taking a backwards step, retreating.

How we stand is clearly important.

And if that's true in life it's particularly true when we present. It's an important, maybe crucial, element as to whether people listen to and believe us when we're giving a presentation.

It's one of the first things that people will notice about you, subconsciously.

In the first few seconds of seeing you they'll also notice how you **look** (does your face say that you're pleased and confident to be there?), how you're **organised** (are you scrabbling around in your bag for your notes or getting your laptop to work?), what you're **dressed in** (does it look as though you've made an effort?)

They'll notice all of this in less than 10 seconds and probably come to a conclusion about you and your talk. And that's before you've said anything.

What message do you want to send to your audience? Strong, upright, reliable, trustworthy, confident?

We suggest a strong stance – feet hip-width apart, weight equally on each foot.

Some people mistakenly believe this means we want them to 'stand still'. In fact, it's nothing like standing still as you can still move the rest of your body. Nothing wrong with movement. But it needs to be purposeful. Just wandering or shuffling about when you're looking to make a strong point just doesn't work. It looks like you're not in control.

So, start strong. Then you can move to where you want to and stand strong again.

## **Key 2 – Use your hands and arms naturally**

Notice that experienced presenters use their hands and arms naturally, as they would if they were speaking one-to-one.

Our bodies, including our arms, hands and faces help us to communicate.

In fact, unless we're trained as actors, we can't help our thoughts and feelings showing in our face, body and hand and arm movements.

Someone once said that the body doesn't lie!

So it's ok to use your hands and arms to express yourself. We all have different ways of using our hands - some of us wave them around a lot, some of us like to keep them still.

But some hand and arm positions can have a negative effect, such as hands in pockets, arms folded, or hands behind the back.

The more open your posture is, the more your audience will respond positively

Two effective positions to try are either:

1. One hand resting in the other, palms upwards, just above waist height, and,
2. Simply down at your sides.

### **Key 3 – Engage with everyone, with your eyes**

Great presenters have an ability to make their audience members believe that they're just presenting to them, individually.

They do this by the way they tell stories and make their presentations come alive. They also do this by their eye contact with the individual audience members.

They engage people by looking into their eyes.

Look at people. When you first stand up to present, before you speak; for just a fleeting moment cast your glance around the room. Not too quickly, just long enough to say hello with your eyes.

And then again while you make your presentation.

Look at each person, at random, for about 3 seconds. And then move on to someone else in another part of the room. We're looking for a 'warm' connection. Not a 'cold stare'. Smile with your eyes.

And look at everyone, not just those who are looking or smiling at you. Get used to looking at the tops of people's heads.

Some would say that the only place to look, when you're not looking at your notes or your laptop screen, is in your audience's eyes.

And if that's difficult for you, then look just above the eyes at the forehead, they won't know the difference.

But if you look at people it will make a difference. People will feel that they know you. You'll be more believable and therefore more trustworthy.

## Coaching

If you were a professional athlete, tennis player or footballer you would expect to be coached. Coaching helps people move from being ok to being great. Coaching brings out the best in us. For sports professionals coaching is a 'given'.

And so it is with some businesses. Probably every top leader in a world business will have a coach whom they trust to help them to do more and more successfully. No-one can be good at every aspect of business.

Coaches watch the performance and together with their 'coachee' decide how it can be improved.

Coaching doesn't have to be formal. It may just be someone asking you if you'd thought of a different way of doing something, having noticed your performance. Or telling you how good you are at something.

You may not be working with someone you would call a coach, but you will be working alongside others who have different experiences, skills and knowledge to you, particularly if you're new to the business. They can provide a useful resource for you to improve your performance, if you're open to their suggestions.

And equally you can provide help to them, by using your observation skills in an area that you're skilled in, noticing what they're doing and asking them if they'd like some help. And telling them how good they are!

Over the next 2 days we'll be encouraging you to coach your colleagues because we know it will make a difference.

## **Your Vision as a Great Presenter**

Think of some of the great speakers you've heard or heard of.

People like Winston Churchill, Barack Obama, Martin Luther King, John F Kennedy, or other really good speakers that you've heard.

What are some of the qualities that they exhibit in their speaking?

So, what's your vision for yourself as a great presenter?

## The Sales Process

Understanding your Sales Process is a key in your effectiveness as a salesperson.

If you know where you are in the process, you can determine what you need to do to move the prospect(s) to the next step.

Clearly any sales process can only be a guide, as a prospect's readiness or willingness to share information or to go ahead with a deal, will not always be known to you.

What is your sales process?



Steps in the sales process	How do I know I need to move to the next step?	How do I bridge to the next step?

## Notes

## Section 2 - Effective Presentation – Questioning and Interaction

### Presentation Planning Sheet

Broadly there are 3 questions to ask yourself before you start planning a presentation:

- 1. Who is my audience?**
- 2. What is my point?**
- 3. How long do I have for the presentation?**

#### **1. Who is my audience?**

This is a question about your relationship with them and what they might be expecting? Do you know them, and if so, how well? Do you see them as your peers, or are they prospects? If you are known to them are you well-respected by them, or are you an unknown quantity? If you don't know them how could you find out about them? Could you ask someone who knows them, or could you ask a PA or secretary to the group? Do they usually make decisions, or do they recommend? If they do make decisions, how do they do that? Do they need a lot of detail, either technical or monetary, or are they more interested in the final outcome?

#### **2. What is my point?**

You will need to think carefully about this. When we work with major bid teams we coach them to work on their Key Message. Once you've got that established the rest of the content will fall into place more easily.

#### **3. How long have I got for the presentation?**

You will need to plan to present for less time than you have been given. This is because there is always some 'set-up' time, and any earlier speakers may have over-run their time. In addition you will want to leave time for a Q & A. If you were told, when you arrive at the venue, that you have half the time you were expecting what would you leave out?

## **Presentation Planning Sheet**

My Audience:

My Point:

Time for the presentation:

Opening –

Story –

My Point –

And the benefit -

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My Audience:

My Point:

Time for the presentation:

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## Opening your Sales Call – your Agenda Statement

Having a plan for starting your sales meeting is always useful.

Having a plan means that you've thought about your first few words, not just 'stumbling in' saying the first thing that comes to you!

This is called Rapport. Or getting in step with the prospect.

Some people believe, erroneously, that they need to impose themselves on the prospect in some way. In some way to 'make an entrance'.

It may be better to think of it as a 'first date', with all the thought and planning that you would probably employ before that.

Some would describe it as a 'dance'; a way of getting to know the other person, and a way of them getting to know you.

Imagine someone coming into your home asking difficult questions about your home or your way of life in the hope of selling you something. Wouldn't you be resistant to that approach?

Much better to spend some time introducing ourselves properly so that the prospect knows why we're there and the value that we may be able to offer.

<b>What do I need to do?</b>	<b>How do I need to be?</b>

Now let's think about the elements that need to be present in the first few minutes, and the words we might use:

## What are you selling? What are they buying?

At one level you may believe you're selling software and the access to some highly skilled technicians and engineers. At another level you may believe that you're selling a solution to a business problem that will help the prospect business achieve its goals.

As you'll know, you will be faced with a number of different 'buyers'. It's very unlikely that any one person will be able to give a final 'yes' to your proposition. In fact your prospect may, eventually, need your proposition to go before a committee or a panel to which you have no access.

But before you get to that point you know that you'll be speaking with End-users, Technical people, IT people, Commercial Buyers, Finance People, and people from the Executive Team.

Each of these may have a different view of what's needed, how it should be configured, and how much it should cost, etc. Let's have a think about what they're buying:

The Different 'Buyers'	What are they buying?



## **Buying Motives:**

The differences between Corporate Buying Motives and Individual Buying Motives

## **A Reality Check – the customer’s perspective**

1. What does the customer want to achieve? (their goal)
2. Why is it important to them, and why now? (their motivation)
3. What are their key issues and challenges?
4. What have they done about it so far?

## **Presentation Skills**

One of major factors that brings a presentation alive is the level of energy exhibited by the presenter. How energetic are you when you present?  
How interesting are you to listen to?

See how high you can raise your level of energy in this next talk.

## Listening

Listening is probably the quickest way to improve your relationships and your sales skills

Someone once said “you never learn anything with your mouth open”.

So, if you want to learn, ask a good question, shut up, and then listen to the answer.

Most of us are not as good at listening as we think. See how good you are as a listener:

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### LISTENING SELF-ASSESSMENT

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Rating: 1 Most of the time 2 Frequently 3 Occasionally 4 Almost never

<b>Put an X in the appropriate column. Do you:</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
Tune out people who say something you don't agree with?				
Assume you know what the speaker will say and stop listening?				
Form a rebuttal in your head while the speaker is talking?				
Give the appearance of listening when you're not?				
Daydream while the speaker is talking?				
Finish sentences for people when they pause or stumble?				
Interrupt the speaker while they are talking?				
Fidget when people speak too slowly or become boring?				
Use the same response repeatedly in place of listening?				
Do other things while someone is speaking to you?				
Start moving away while someone is speaking to you?				
Prejudge the message because of what you know about the person?				
<b>TOTAL X's IN EACH COLUMN</b>				

## LISTENING SELF-ASSESSMENT (CONT.)

Rating: 1 Most of the time 2 Frequently 3 Occasionally 4 Almost never

<b>Put an X in the appropriate column. Do you:</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
Repeat in your own words what the talker has just said?				
Concentrate on what is being said even when you do not feel interested?				
Listen to the whole message – to what the talker is saying and to the non-verbal cues?				
Look at the person who is talking?				
Listen to the talker without judging or criticising (internally)?				
Use signals such as head nods and 'ah ha' to confirm to the speaker that you're listening?				
Check with the speaker that you have understood what they said?				
Recognise that words don't mean exactly the same to others?				
Check with the speaker the meaning of words you are unsure of?				
Take notes where necessary to help you remember?				
Put your attention on the speaker and ignore distracting influences?				
Ask the speaker to repeat if you do get distracted or lose concentration?				
<b>TOTAL X's IN EACH COLUMN</b>				

How could you become a better listener?

## Questions – the heart of the sales process

Questions play a very important part in the sales process. Even if it's a simple question such as 'how many would you like?'

Without questions to discover the prospect's needs and wants we have no option other than to give a standard presentation, which nobody wants.

Questions allow us to:

- ✓ Find out about the prospect's business: what they want to achieve, why that's important to them, how they're doing towards that goal, and what's stopping them achieving it quicker
- ✓ Understand who the competition is, and how much of a threat they are to us
- ✓ Decide how to pitch our solution and to whom. Good questions will elicit how they buy
- ✓ Establish our own credibility with the prospect. The better and more insightful our questions the more the prospect will realise that we understand their business and the issues they face. This leads to them 'opening up' more, and more quickly
- ✓ Establish a strong relationship with the prospect. Taking a genuine interest in the other person and their business or role will usually help to create a stronger relationship. A stronger relationship usually means more trust. And people will not open-up to us, and ultimately, buy from us without trusting us

## Open or Closed?

Open questions cannot be answered with just a 'yes' or a 'no'

Closed questions may produce a yes or no answer (not always, but if we want more than a yes or a no then it's better to ask open questions)

Both are useful in a sales presentation. But good open questions will usually produce more useful information than closed questions

Examples of <b>Open</b> questions	Examples of <b>Closed</b> questions
<p>3 that may give you a <i>shorter</i> answer:</p> <p><b>When</b> were you thinking of changing?</p> <p><b>Where</b> does the majority of your business take place?</p> <p><b>Who</b> are your main competitors?</p> <p>And 3 that may give you a <i>longer</i> answer</p> <p><b>What</b> made you choose your current system?</p> <p><b>Why</b> did you decide to move away from that?</p> <p><b>How</b> does that work?</p> <p><b>Tell me about</b> your future plans            Tell me about your business            Tell me about your role here            Tell me about.....</p>	<p><b>Is it</b> possible to have a copy of that organisation chart?</p> <p><b>Do you</b> know how many customer records you're holding?</p> <p><b>Would you</b> be able to get that to me tomorrow?</p> <p><b>Have you</b> looked at any other options recently?</p> <p><b>Could</b> you give me access to those records?</p>

Too many closed questions will make it sound like an interrogation

Too many open questions may leave the conversation too open

So you need a balance. Generally salespeople don't ask enough Open questions.

Listen to any of us in a sales meeting and you'll probably hear lots of closed questions (did you? would you? have you? is it? has it? could it?)

By 'closed' we mean that we're 'closing off' the prospect.

And beware of the open question followed immediately by a closed question:

*"How are you today? OK?"*

It sounds open asking for an opinion, but it's suggesting the answer is 'ok'.

Sometimes we need closed questions

For example, when we're suggesting options:

*"Which would be best, do you think –  
to start with all the current records or just those in the UK?"*

Or when we want to confirm something:

*"So, you're saying you don't know how much you're spending on  
maintenance?"*

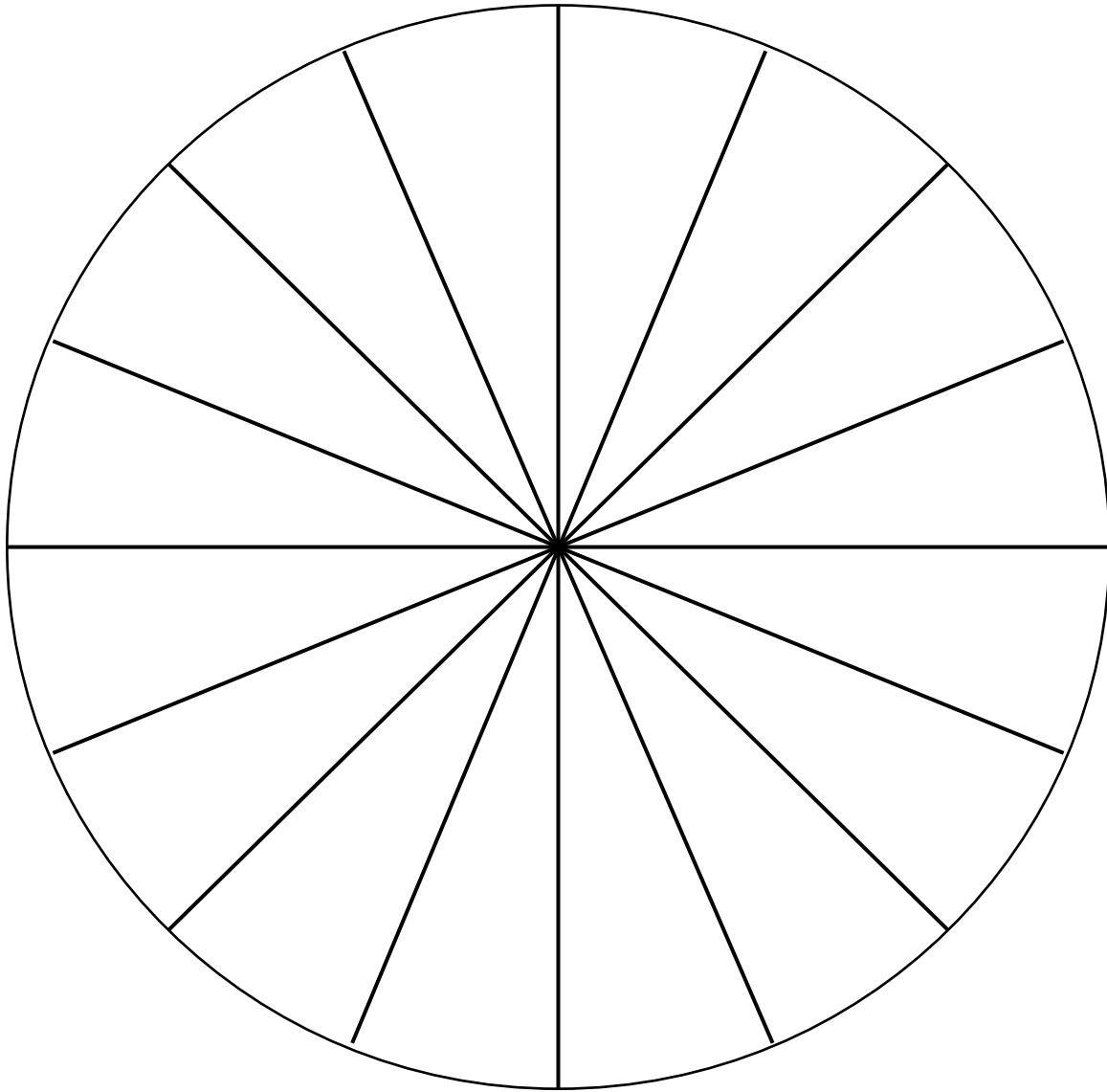
Or when we want to close on something:

*"Can I can go ahead with getting a contract drawn up?"*



## Areas of Questioning

Which areas of their business do you have questions about?



## Dig Deeper for Issues, Goals, Impact and Payback

<p><i>What happens if you don't achieve/ resolve this?</i></p> <p><b>Payback (Don't)</b></p>	<p><i>What makes resolving this so important?</i></p> <p><b>Impact</b></p>	<p><i>If you do resolve/ achieve this, what will be the result?</i></p> <p><b>Payback (Do)</b></p>
<p><i>What other issues do you have?</i></p> <p><b>Additions</b></p>	<p><b>Prospect's</b></p> <p>← <b>ISSUES</b> or <b>GOAL</b> →</p>	<p><i>What else do you want to achieve?</i></p> <p><b>Additions</b></p>
<p><i>What might stop you resolving this?</i></p> <p><b>Problems Barriers Failures</b></p>	<p><i>Tell me more about that.</i></p> <p><b>Details</b></p>	<p><i>What resource do you have available to work on this?</i></p> <p><b>Initiatives Achievements Enablers</b></p>

## Green Questions/Red Questions

Some questions are easier to ask and answer than others.

**Green questions** are those that are easy to answer for the prospect. For example: general numbers in the business, e.g. customers, staff, overall turnover, lines of business; locations of offices; the structure of the business; what they do; competitors; and so on

**Red questions** are those that are less easy to ask and answer until you have established a level of trust. For example: profit margins; budget to spend; areas that are not working; systems or projects that have failed; money wasted; effectiveness of colleagues and Board Members; future growth plans; and so on.

Green Questions	Red Questions

What are some of the great questions that you've heard?

## Trial Closing

This is a very powerful technique which seeks out the prospect's thoughts about your proposition.

A close asks for a decision. A trial close asks for an opinion.

Probably the best-known ones are "How does it sound?" or "How does it look?", or "What are your thoughts?"

Broadly there will be 3 possible answers:

1. "Not sure" or "I don't think it will work for us" (a 'cold' response)
2. "Sounds interesting" or "Tell me more" (a 'warm' response)
3. "Very good, I like it" (a 'hot' response)

For the cold response you will want to ask "what makes you say that?" and then respond to their doubts.

For the warm response you can ask a more specific trial close – a hypothetical close – "If you were to go ahead, would you be looking to include all areas of the business?" The response to that will indicate how 'warm' they are.

Obviously, to the request "tell me more" you'll want to ask "what more would you like to know?"

For the hot response, you can probably close, e.g. "so when would you want to go ahead?", or maybe "what else do you need to know?" or maybe "who else will I need to speak to right now?"

## Notes

## Section 3 – Increase Personal and Company Credibility

### Customer Stories:

Customer Success Stories provide probably the best evidence that your offering is valuable. In a sense they are independent verification that improvement is possible. They are much more believable than just your words about your offering.

Customer name:

What they do:

What was their problem or opportunity:

Why that was a problem or opportunity:

What you did:

The outcome:

How they felt about it:

Your question:

## Presentation Structure

Having a good structure for your presentation is important for 2 reasons:

1. It gives you a structure to prepare your presentation (helps to get your thoughts in order)
2. It helps the audience to follow what you're saying

A good Pitch Presentation Structure which has helped people win many millions of pounds' business is **VISTA**.

**V**ision – their vision for their business, or the area which we're concerned about. Remember to use their words, exactly! And why their VISION is important to them.

**I**ssues – the issues, problems and challenges they'll face to achieve the vision. Bring in those they've told you about in your discovery, and your own experience of similar situations – this makes you more valuable to them. Dig the hole for them.

**S**olution – your solution – how you can help, what you will do, what have you done for other, similar, businesses, how your solution will overcome the problems and help them to achieve their vision

**T**angible Benefits – how they will benefit, specifically, from your solution

**A**ction – what needs to happen to get going on this

You'll want to add:

- ✓ an **OPENING** – use **KICK** (see page 36),
- ✓ a **CLOSE** (see page 49), and, of course, some time for
- ✓ the **Q and A**

Using VISTA gets us away from starting with a 10-minute (sometimes longer) presentation of our business, how big it is, how long we've been going, some of our biggest customers etc. The prospect is rarely interested in all that. Later they may be, but right now at the beginning they're probably much more interested in what we can do for them.



## Notes

## Alternative Presentation Structures

There are many different structures you can use. From the logical (e.g. A to Z, or the smallest to the largest, or the figures for the last 10 years) to the creative.

For a business audience you'll probably want to be more logical, unless you're wanting to 'wake them up'. Please note that logical does not equal 'boring' – see videos of Hans Rosling's brilliant technical presentations.

You have the choice of what structure to use.

Be aware if you depart from any 'accepted structure' it may make it harder for the audience to follow what you're saying, and you may be criticised for not following protocol. You do not want to provoke the comment "where are you going with this?". This is a signal that the audience is not comfortable with your presentation and you are left at a disadvantage, having to convince them to continue to listen to you.

So having decided on your structure, what content should you choose?

**First**, decide the main point of your talk

Why are you presenting to this particular audience?

When we work with major bid presentation teams, we coach them to fine-tune to the one major point they would like the audience to focus on. We call it the 'key message'.

What is your major point? What is your 'key message'?

This will require thought, and possibly discussion with colleagues, to get clear.

**Second**, decide what secondary points you need to make to back up your key message.

Only include those points that are necessary to lead to, or make, your key message. (Many audiences of professional people are short of time and will not appreciate examples or points not completely relevant to your presentation.)

Experts say that an audience will only remember a maximum of 3 points. Whether this is true for any particular audience you will want to only use the minimum number of points that can produce a result for you. Remember, all secondary points lead to the main point or key message.

**Third,** bring the points alive.

The essential points in any talk can be spoken in a few moments. But if those points aren't explained in a way that people can understand them your audience will be left confused and you will not get the result you want. You must bring your points 'alive' through stories, illustrations and examples.

Ask yourself:

- **What stories can I tell?**
- **What visual examples can I use?**
- **What analogies or metaphors could I employ?**
- **What statistics or charts would be helpful?**
- **What exhibits would really make the presentation memorable?**

## Open Your Presentation with Impact

Your opening is a vital element in any presentation. It makes the connection between you, your content and your audience. The stronger the connection the more likely you will have the audience on your side from the word go.

In the first few moments of your presentation your audience will want to know 3 things:

- What they are going to hear
- Why that's important to them
- Who you are

For maximum impact we recommend you use the KICK process. This makes sure people are listening and are interested from the start. This shouldn't take much more than 1 minute to deliver.

The **KICK** process

**K** = Key message – if you had to give your presentation in 20 seconds what would you say? This is your KEY MESSAGE. It might be positive (“you can achieve your goal of doubling your business in 2 years without a significant additional investment in manpower”), or it might be negative (“unless you act now you will lose your place at the top of your market”).

**I** = Importance – why is this message important to your audience – what will it mean to them?

**C** = Credibility – your company's credibility first – what experience do they have in delivering on the key message. And your personal credibility – what do you bring in helping your company deliver your promise?

**K** = Keep them interested by telling them what they're going to hear, and how the presentation will work, when they can ask questions, etc

Additionally, a short anecdote, an object, a picture, a startling statement, a provocative question, a short video clip or a short piece of music may well add dramatic impact. This would probably be introduced before and would link into the KICK process. This must be well thought-through and practiced!

But whatever you choose to do we recommend that you follow the (mostly) unspoken request of a busy audience to: GET ON WITH IT!

Make an impact with your opening

The **KICK** Worksheet

**K**ey Message:

**I**mportance:

**C**redibility:

**K**eep them interested by telling them what they're going to hear:

(Bridge) So, let's start by

## Notes

## Section 4 – Present Complex Information Clearly

### Analogies and Metaphors

Use Analogies and Metaphors to make a complex point simply.

An analogy uses the **known** to describe or explain the **unknown**.

Metaphors make a comparison. They are powerful techniques for simplifying something that is complicated to make it more accessible.

Some of our favourites are:

**“The pressure that a chiropractor uses on a baby is about the same pressure you would use to test a ripe tomato.”**

(sign in a Chiropractic clinic to encourage parents to bring their babies for treatment.)

**“Trying to understand the Universe is like trying to explain television to your cat. No matter how clever the cat is, it’s not going to get it!”**

(a broadcaster describing the complexity of the Universe.)

**“Life is like riding a bicycle, to keep your balance you must keep moving”**

(Albert Einstein)

We can see how, in a few words, other people can understand what we mean when we’re discussing a complex idea, or something that is hard to grasp.

Now find your own analogy or metaphor in an everyday object. A bottle of water represents what, for example?

**‘In the same way that this bottle enables fresh water to be easily transported to where it’s needed, so our software is easily installed on any computer on the network.’**

## Your Analogy or Metaphor

In the same way that.....

Others that you like:



## The Technical Presentation

When it's done well the Technical Presentation can be imaginative, informative, absorbing and even inspiring.

When it's done badly it can be boring, confusing and irrelevant.

The key to success lies in knowing who the audience is; what they want/ need to hear; how to present sometimes very difficult material in a way that they say "I get it!"; and good preparation.

There are a couple of obvious don'ts:

- Don't deliver more detail than the audience either want, need, or can cope with.
- Don't be a bore – the expert **knows** everything; the bore **tells** everything,

The big question is: How can I bring it alive?

5 typical audiences for the technical presentation:

- ✓ Novice: first exposure to the subject, but doesn't necessarily want over-simplification
- ✓ Generalist: aware of the topic, but looking for an overview, understanding and major themes
- ✓ Managerial: in-depth, actionable understanding of intricacies and inter-relationships with access to detail
- ✓ Expert: wants more exploration and discovery, and less storytelling with great detail
- ✓ Executive: only has time to glean the significance and conclusions of weighted probabilities

Sometimes we can learn from good salespeople. Successful salespeople will only tell enough about their product or service to allow people to buy.

They don't want their prospects to become experts, because the more they know the more they will question. Great salespeople spend more time asking great questions than telling.

What's the **story** of the data or the technical information. Without a **story**, people will find it hard to get to grips with stuff you know inside out.

Find or create great visuals which will help your explanation. You don't always need to use slides – experiment with objects as well or use a whiteboard or a flip-chart.

You will be more impressive if you can demonstrate your interest in and understanding of the prospect's business than if you just deliver a detailed pitch without reference to it.

In fact, these may be the classic unspoken words from your audience:

"I don't **care** how much you **know** until I **know** how much you **care**".

Make sure your presentation relates to your audience and their business.

## Section 5 – Responding to Questions and Objections with Confidence

### The Q & A

In any presentation it's usually the Q & A time that the audience will get to test you. So be prepared for it. Do as much prep for the Q & A as you would for the presentation.

It's the questioner who has control in a situation. Don't give away your control by being unprepared.

If you frequently present on a particular subject, you will know the questions that usually get asked. Prepare for them; have an answer ready.

But you also need to consider **THIS** audience and their needs and concerns. Don't be taken unawares by an unusual question, or a particular concern that you could have spotted was likely to be raised.

And you may want your audience to ask questions at any point in your presentation. If so, tell them that. And then be prepared for them.

And remember, with questions you have 4 choices:

- ✓ **Answer** the question when it's asked (we give you a process for answering in the next few pages)
- ✓ **Ignore** the question (in a clamour of questions e.g. in a large and noisy gathering, you may choose to ignore a question that you have heard but prefer not to answer at this time)
- ✓ **Defer** the answer (until later in the presentation, or after the presentation)
- ✓ **Ask a question** in return (this is the classic sales response: e.g. if the question is "how quickly can you install the programme?", your response might be "very quickly; how quickly do you need it?")

Work out the typical questions you might get as you describe the Kofax proposition. And with your group come up with some credible responses:

Possible Questions	Possible Responses

Use **CLARITY** to answer questions successfully

**C** = Call for questions (“that concludes my presentation, I’m sure you have a number of questions, who has the first?”)

**L** = Listen to the question. Really listen to what’s being asked. Look at the questioner, and nod gently if you understand what they’re asking

**A** = Acknowledge the questioner. Maybe say ‘thank you’, or just nod. Don’t just turn away and answer. Treat it like a conversation with this one person, just for a moment

**R** = Repeat the question, if necessary. If you need a moment to think, or if you need to check that you understand the question, or if the questioner is quietly spoken and maybe not everyone will have heard them

**I** = Include everyone in your answer. *Don’t* just stay with the questioner. But use your judgement here. If the questioner is the boss or a key player and they’ve asked an important or challenging question you may decide to focus your answer on them.

**T** = Test for satisfaction (“did that answer your question?”). Sometimes you know you won’t have answered the question. In which case you might want to say “I know that hasn’t answered your question. I will find an answer for you this afternoon and let you know”. And sometimes you will not want to check whether you’ve answered the question as you don’t want another one from that audience member.

**Y** = Get a “yes” and move on. “Who has the second question?”

## Objections

There is an old saying that “the man who doesn’t kick on the price isn’t interested”. An audience with tough questions, objections and challenges may be more interested than you might think. They may be testing you or wanting to have important questions answered. Treat them with respect and don’t give up.

Here’s an important point about objections:

You don’t have to answer all the objections a person might put up. People buy in spite of objections. Nothing is perfect. For example, you may have bought a house or apartment despite parts of it that you would have changed if you could. But you bought it anyway.

Your job is to find out if the objection is a ‘deal-breaker’, or if it’s just a general query. If it’s potentially a deal-breaker then it must be handled and overcome.

Here is a methodology for answering objections:

1. Listen/empathise
2. Question/Clarify/Quantify
3. Confirm your understanding
4. Address/neutralise the objection
5. Check for agreement

Perhaps the most important part of this process is your genuine listening and desire to understand what the prospect is saying. Corporate prospects are unlikely to be convinced for long by a clever sequence of well-rehearsed words. Particularly in a major business where your prospect may well need to be truly convinced themselves in order to convince others to accept your proposition.

If you find the same objections are coming up time and again then put them into your presentation (not of course, as objections) and make the beneficial case for them. In other words, bring the objection up yourself and make it a reason for buying.

What are typical objections that you receive, and how could you answer them?

Possible objection	Possible response

## Challenges

Most of the questions we get in a business presentation will be 'requests for information'. Sometimes the question may be more of a 'challenge' – to you, your organisation, your understanding or your proposition.

Depending on the attitude of the challenger and the forcefulness of the challenge you may feel that you're being attacked personally. At this point you need to rise above the challenge and not let your feelings get in the way of a good response. Here are some examples of challenges:

The Challenge to:	May be expressed as:
Your presentation – it's missing something	You've forgotten something. What about.... Or Why are you showing us this when we asked about....
Your facts and figures – are wrong or misleading	Your figures are wrong. We don't have..... Is your presentation based on those figures?
Your conclusions	We don't agree that your proposition will meet our needs
Your organisation	You haven't shown us that your organisation has the necessary experience to handle this initiative
Yourself	(rarely spoken) we don't think that you have the necessary experience to help us, (or) we don't want to work with you.

A good response to any challenge is to ask a question. You might want to 'cushion' your response first, e.g.

"I'm sorry to hear that. May I ask what makes you say that?"

This response asks the challenger to explain in more detail what they're saying. It gives you time to understand exactly what is being said, and time to come up with a credible response. Even now, you can use a hypothetical test in your response.

"so, if we were able to satisfy you on that point, you'd be willing to see us as a potential supplier?"



## Closing

What do you want the audience to do as a result of the presentation?

A good closing will leave the audience with a sense of completion, with an opening for their next action as a result of the presentation.

Good closings elicit a figurative or actual standing ovation (unlikely, of course, in a pitch situation!)

Here are some ways of closing that can be used alone or in combination:

### SUMMARISE THE KEY POINTS

- Keep them simple and powerful. Do not add anything new.

### USE A QUOTATION

- Ensure it is a good fit with what you've said and shown.
- State it clearly, accurately and know/state who said/wrote it
- If you opened with a quotation then use it to close

### CALL FOR ACTION

- A passionate or heartfelt appeal to the audience as a result of what you've said and shown.

### THROW DOWN A CHALLENGE

- Many people cannot resist a challenge that is soundly based, and sincerely and passionately delivered.

### CLARIFY NEXT STEPS

- In a presentation that is part of a process leading toward a sale (to an internal or external customer), clarify where the audience has got to, agree next steps for them, for you and/or for your company.

### ASK FOR A (YES) DECISION

- Lead them, logically and emotionally to a "Yes" decision.
- Make it easy for them to say "Yes".
- When you get your "Yes", be ready with an appropriate next step.
- If there is silence (hesitation), be ready with a good question.
- Be prepared for "No". What question could loosen the logjam?

### THE SIMPLEST CLOSE

- Simply say "Thank you".

## Notes

## Section 6 – Inspire People to Embrace Change

### Inspire People to Change

What makes people change? We'd probably agree that it's not possible to make people change. We can show or create an environment in which people want to change what they're doing.

Inspiring, influencing or persuading people to change is challenging.

How easily an executive group is persuaded to a particular course of action will depend on a number of factors. These will include:

- ✓ How important the proposed change is
- ✓ Whether the group have recognised the need for change
- ✓ What the risks are versus the benefits of making a change
- ✓ How well the case for change is presented
- ✓ What other options do they have
- ✓ What will happen if they do nothing
- ✓ Who is delivering the proposal, i.e. do we know and trust them

If you want your presentation to be persuasive ask yourself the following:

1. Will this audience respect me and my organisation? If they don't know me how can I quickly demonstrate my credibility?
2. Will this audience believe me? How can I demonstrate that this solution will work? Am I convinced it will solve their problem? Where else has it worked?
3. Will they trust us? How do we come across to them? Have I got evidence that we're trustworthy? Have we done everything we said we would?
4. What is the logical argument for taking the action we propose? Can we explain it simply enough for those who are not technical to understand it?
5. What is the emotional argument for taking action? Will our proposition achieve their desired outcome? What's the cost of not taking action? How can we get them to want to move forward? How can we move them?

## Final Thoughts

What I've gained this week

What I'll do as a result

The value to me when I do that

When I will start

Who would help/support/encourage me?

**Congratulations!**