

Effective communication & Presentation skills



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Speakers

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What we want to talk about

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- What do I need to keep in mind when preparing the presentation of a legal issue?
- When presenting, how can I assure that I get the message across in the most effective way possible?

I. Introduction

- Effective communication & presentation skills are essential for your job as in-house legal counsel
- Persuading others is what you have to do on a daily basis, whether
 - you are speaking to a client/customer
 - updating your boss on a legal issue or
 - hosting a meeting
- People accept your recommendation based on trust!
- The tool to build up trust is effective communication and presentation

II.1. Preparation: The audience

- Learn as much as you can about your audience
 - What do they already know about your topic
 - How much will they want to know
 - Anticipate objections and/or tough questions
- How do they make decisions?
 - What is their background
 - What will they gain from your speech

II.2. Preparation: The timing

- Be aware that your management is always short of time
- Literally, you have two minutes to score with an audience
- In those two minutes you must captivate, motivate, educate
- If you are not able to build up trust in the first instance, you probably won't get a second chance
- Consequence: be short and be precise

II.3. Preparation: The structure

- Always structure your message
 - What is the problem
 - What is the solution
 - What are the arguments
- Make it simple; use a limited number of key points

II.3.a. When describing the problem

- Make sure that you really understood the problem
- If you are uncertain, don't be hesitant to ask
- Keep in mind: When listeners get a sense that you understand them, they tend to pay close attention to what you, as the subject matter expert have to say

II.3.b. When describing the solution

- Does your approach or recommendation make sense?
- Does it answer the listener's problems or issues?
- Is it pragmatic?
- Have you not only thought like a lawyer but also like a business man / woman?

II.3.c. When describing the arguments

- Tell the listeners why your idea would be of benefit to them
- Make sure that your points are clearly expressed and not filled with jargon / acronyms that only insiders understand
- Make sure that your arguments really support the solution
- Don't bore the listeners with highly sophisticated legal elaborations

III. Presentation: Key factors

- Listeners determine whether to trust you or someone else on specific key factors
- These factors are
 - Verbal factors (7%)
 - Vocal factors (38%)
 - Visible factors (55%)
- Vocal and visible factors are said to be much more important than content (see percentages)

III.1. Verbal factors

- Verbal factors relate to your message
- Does your approach or recommendation make sense?
- Are your ideas well supported?
- Do they answer the listener's problems or issues?
- Are your points clearly expressed?

III.2. Vocal factors

- Vocal factors take into consideration the voice
- Does it sound confident, sincere and professional?
- Is it clear?
- Can I understand it?
- Is it too soft?
- Is it too fast?
- Are there lots of non-words (ah/äh/hm)?

III.3. Visual factors

- Visual factors take into account your appearance
- You are dressed appropriately for the occasion
- You captivate the audience
- Your posture says you are interested and open
- You look people squarely in the eyes
- You back your points with strong gestures and the appropriate facial expression

IV. Summary

- Do not underestimate the importance of effective communication & presentation for your job as in-house counsel
- Prepare adequately; think about the audience and the timing as well as the structure of your message
- Present adequately; take into account the key factors: verbal factors, vocal factors, visible factors



Thank you!