

Making Presentations

While some managers feel totally at ease delivering a presentation to large groups others would prefer to sit their Leaving Certificate rather than deliver a presentation. Here's a list of key tips to ensure that your presentation goes smoothly and professionally.

1. Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Know your audience; what do they currently know? What do you want them to take out of your presentation? Are you trying to persuade; inform; seek support etc• Ensure your venue, audio visual equipment etc is available• Structure your presentation logically – an introduction; middle and conclusion• Practice it a number of times before you present it and time it• Determine the key ‘takeaways’ – the key points you want your audience to remember when they leave the room.• Visualize yourself giving the presentation
2. Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make your opening lively and memorable – use humour advisedly. You may think it's funny but it may be offensive to your audience• Don't make the delivery too long or you will lose your audience – 20 minutes is usually enough unless it is a complex issue• Do not exceed your allotted time• Look at your audience – do not read from the screen and do not turn your back to the audience.• Don't focus on one individual to deliver the presentation.• Advise the audience at the start that you will be taking questions – either throughout the presentation or at the end.• Prepare your response to potentially difficult questions in advance. Also have a few closing comments in case there are no questions.
3. Body Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Slow your breathing down; it will help you relax• Smile (unless it's bad news!)• Make sure your body language is not aggressive• Keep fidgety movements to a minimum – no swaying from side to side; scratching etc• You can use hand movements to illustrate points• Don't hide behind a lectern
4. Multi - media	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keep overheads and slides to an absolute minimum• Do not overcrowd slides or use large unreadable diagrams• Use corporate images on your slides• Ensure you have hard copies of your presentation available in case the media system breaks down• Make sure that your handout matches the presentation – not an earlier version• Advise your audience that a hand-out is available at the end of the presentation or if you need them to follow complex information or

	<p>diagrams hand them out in advance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure your presentation is free of spelling mistakes; grammatical errors and jargon.
5. Post presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Follow-up on issues/questions that were raised during the presentation.• Evaluate your performance and the results of the presentation in terms of meeting your objectives.