

Quick Guide: Speaking in Meetings

Speaking in meetings and making mini-presentations in meetings can be nerve wracking at the best of times. Even experienced speakers can feel nervous and anxious when speaking at meetings. So here are the **top ten tips** to make sure your presentation is enjoyed and remembered by everyone:

- 1. Preparation is key.** Brief the administrator/minute taker on how long you will be speaking, and what about. Provide a copy of your notes/slides to attach to the minutes. Make sure you know what time you're on & how long you've got!
- 2. Be brief,** especially if it has been a fairly long meeting: attention levels decline after 90 minutes of meetings.
- 3. Speak fairly quickly.** Do not drone on about your topic. Get to the point quickly and express yourself accurately. Be prepared for questions.
- 4. Raise and lower your tone of voice.** Using inflexion helps their understanding of the topic and makes you interesting to listen to.
- 5. Keep calm, be fearless.** Remember you are the best person the firm has to put your point across at that moment in time. Carry in your head the authority that gives you. If you don't know all the answers, promise you will find out and get back to questioners.
- 6.** Use the **PROEP** principle to persuade or influence. **Proposal** – outline your idea clearly and concisely. **Reason** – good one(s) for your idea. **Objections** – why others might object and have your answers ready. **Evidence** – practical reasons why, where, when, how much etc. **Proposal** - repeat your initial idea, so your audience is clear about it all. All of this can be put across in about three minutes. And because this technique matches their inner thought process it has a better chance of being accepted.
- 7. Look and feel confident.** If you don't believe in what you are talking about, it will send the message that you don't believe.
- 8. Remember your body language:** Match what you say with your facial expression, tone of voice, body language and enthusiasm for your topic. Remember what actors say: if you cannot be sincere – fake it!
- 9. Summarise.** Keep it simple, and save some of your information to shine when it comes to question time.
- 10. Enjoy yourself!** The thought of speaking in a meeting may be daunting, but once you have done one, you will want to do more.

Compiled by Val Tyler