



How to deliver a great 5 minute Presentation

Short presentations at business events are increasingly popular so here are some tips and ideas to help you make the most of your 5 minute opportunity.

Rule One : Don't go over on time.

A 5 minute presentation should be just that. Not 6 minutes or 7 minutes or 10 minutes. 5 and only 5.

So how can you ensure that happens?

Firstly practice the presentation to take no more than 4 minutes. That will give you a one minute buffer on the day when your enthusiasm leads to elaboration which adds to your time.

Secondly don't bumble around at the start - get straight in with an audience engaging statement, question or observation. Practice your first 15 seconds more than any other part of your presentation.

Rule Two : Apply the same structure to a 5 minute presentation as you would to a 25 minute one.

That means a strong start that outlines what's coming up, a maximum of 3 key messages followed by a positive summary with an outline of the next steps you want the audience to take. All of those are possible in 5 minutes. Most 5 minute presenters don't have a summary / next steps - often because they run out of time or they think its not a necessary part of a 5 minute presentation.

Rule Three : Don't waste time at the start talking about yourself or your company

'But isn't that why I'm presenting?' I hear you ask. As a member of your audience what I most want from your presentation are the following:

- Things I don't know, but ought or need to know, that will help my business
- How your product or service is going to benefit me or my customers

- Create for me a sense of momentum - 'that's a good idea I need to do that'

Achieve that and your audience will want to engage with you after your presentation.

If you spend 2 over 3 minutes of your 5 going on about how great you are, how many awards you've won, and then list your entire product or service range your audience will quickly switch off.

Presenting is all about audience engagement.

Rule Four : Allow twice as much preparation time for a 5 minute presentation as you would for a 25 minute one.

Its easy to think - 'it's only 5 minutes I can easily fill that so I won't need a lot of prep work.'

And that is the problem. It's actually much harder to create a great 5 minute presentation than it is to create a great 25 minute one.

Generally presenters try and cram far too much into 5 minutes - hence the overrun on time most experience as well as the audience thinking 'What actually am I supposed to take-away from this?'

The key is to be a ruthless editor.

Every word, every image, every slide has to earn its place in a 5 minute presentation. You can get away with 'fluffy' content in a 25 presentation- not so in a 5 minute one.

One of the dangers when presenting as mentioned in Rule Three is thinking you need to cram in everything about your organisation and its products and services.

Rule Five : Check the venue and equipment

If you've only got 5 minutes to make an impact you need to use the venue you will be presenting at and the equipment available to your advantage.

That means checking in advance the size of the screen, the positioning of the projector, how you will link to the projector, the microphones if any, the audience seating arrangements.

If you are faced with a screen that is disproportionately small to the size of the audience, which is often the case, then you don't want to be showing words on your slides that few in the audience will be able to read.

Don't forget if there is only a fixed position microphone every time you move away from it or turn your back on it the audience may no longer hear you clearly. If you are to use a lapel mic get it all rigged up before you are due to present.

Rule Six : Don't use A4 notes

If I see a presenter take the podium for a 5 minute presentation armed with A4 notes I immediately think three things:

1. They don't know their subject hence the need for the big notes.
2. They haven't done any practice so will be using a word for word script.
3. With that many notes they are bound to take more than 5 minutes.

Use a postcard as a safety net with a few prompt words on it. One maybe two postcards is all you need for a 5 minute presentation. Any more than 2 and you now have a script not a prompt.

Rule Seven - have a Plan B if the equipment fails

It's worth practicing the presentation without slides just in case. If you have a couple of props you could use have those on stand by.

You could of course ditch the slides completely. You will stand out if you do that, you will have no worries about screen sizes to contend with or equipment failing during your presentation. And you will get noticed and remembered as the person who didn't use slides.

Final Rule : Look as though you are enjoying delivering the presentation.

Most people don't like presenting, mainly because they don't do it very often so it can feel unnatural and outside of their 'comfort zone'.

Your audience though wants to be enthused by whatever you are presenting - otherwise what is the point of presenting?

So for 5 minutes, regardless of how you are feeling on the outside, give the impression you are enjoying presenting. It will have a positive effect on your audience who are used to sitting through their fair share of dour, boring, uninteresting presentations!

And you'll feel good as well!!

If you want to make the most of your **presentation opportunities and/or win more sales pitches** you can reach me, Trevor Lee, on 07785 390717 or via trevor@trevorleemedia.co.uk

For more presenting tips and advice check out my website : trevorleemedia.co.uk

And my podcast which also lots of presenting tips

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