

“This better be
worth my time!”

5 TIPS FOR PRESENTING TO EXECUTIVES



EXECUTIVES ARE THE SIMON COWELL* OF THE BUSINESS WORLD

“You make me want to
projectile vomit.”



* Grumpy judge on American Idol [See >>](#)

IMPATIENT

CRITICAL

CAUSTIC

ULTIMATE JUDGE OF TALENT

“I think the word
you’re searching
for is HONEST.”



IMPATIENT

(some execs shoot presenters for sport)

CAUSTIC

ULTIMATE JUDGE OF TA



BUT REMEMBER

(and this is very important)

EXECS ARE ALWAYS **LOOKING FOR TALENT**

“I would say...you have
SOME potential.”

in fact

**MOST OF AN EXEC'S WORK
GETS DONE THROUGH
THE PEOPLE THEY HIRE**



AN EXEC'S SUCCESS DEPENDS ON
SURROUNDING THEMSELVES WITH

PEOPLE THEY CAN TRUST

PEOPLE WHO WILL HIT DEADLINES

PEOPLE WHO CAN AVOID MAJOR PROBLEMS

**AND THEY JUDGE YOU BY
HOW YOU PRESENT**

**CAN YOU HANDLE PRESSURE?
DO YOU KNOW YOUR BUSINESS?
ARE YOU AUTHORITATIVE?
ARE YOU CREDIBLE?
ARE YOU TRUSTWORTHY?**



IF YOU'RE THAT KIND OF PERSON,

“I could see you in the
recording studio
TOMORROW!”

**YOU CAN COUNT ON THE
EXEC'S FULL SUPPORT**



HERE'S 5 TIPS

TO HELP YOU NAIL YOUR NEXT EXECUTIVE PRESENTATION

“Let’s see what you’ve got.
When you’re ready...”



#1 GET TO THE POINT IN ONE MINUTE

EXECUTIVES ARE BUSY

TIME IS THEIR MOST PRECIOUS ASSET

**“I have 3 emergencies that
need my attention right
now.”**



DON'T WASTE IT

ARRIVE ON TIME

AVOID LENGTHY OPENINGS

GET TO YOUR POINT IN THE FIRST MINUTE

"I'm here to present our marketing plan. We want to spend \$1 million on channel incentives."

"Okay. Why?"



IF YOU DON'T

**THEY'LL INTERRUPT YOU AND START
ASKING QUESTIONS**

"I'm here to present our marketing plan. Now, as you can see from this SWOT Analysis, our strengths are in technical support and integration with existing infrastructure. Our weaknesses are in perceived cost and perceived technology lock-in.

Next slide please.

Awareness is trending up over the past four quarters, but...

"STOP!"



IN FACT, HERE'S AN IDEA FOR YOU

**AFTER YOU'VE SPOKEN FOR A FEW MINUTES,
STOP AND ASK THEM A QUESTION**

"I'm here to present our marketing plan. With this plan, we'll increase sales by 15% over the next 4 quarters..."



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"Do you think we're being aggressive enough?"

"Actually, I was just going to suggest..."



THEN YOU'LL APPEAR IN CONTROL OF THE MEETING

(while still letting the exec interrupt)

"Do you think we're being
aggressive enough?"

"Actually, I was just going to
suggest..."



QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT ASK

"Is this how you'd define success?"

"How important is this market to our long term strategy?"

"Do you agree we've prioritized our opportunities correctly?"

#2 TALK ABOUT PROBLEMS WINNING IN THE MARKETPLACE

EXECUTIVES LIVE IN A DIFFERENT TIME ZONE

THE FUTURE

“How can we turn this multi-million dollar company into a multi-BILLION dollar company?”



**THEY ARE ALWAYS THINKING
3 YEARS AHEAD**

HOW DO WE GROW?

HOW DO WE BEAT COMPETITORS?

HOW DO WE DEFEND PREMIUM MARGINS?

THEY WANT TO TALK ABOUT THAT!

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THEY WANT TO TALK ABOUT THAT!

(not what's **BROKEN** today)

HOW DO WE GROW?

HOW DO WE BEAT COMPETITORS?

HOW DO WE DEFEND PREMIUM MARGINS?

SO **DON'T** FOCUS ON PROBLEMS AFFECTING YOU TODAY

"Customer satisfaction is down
about 3% this quarter."

"Ted's team is supposed to be
working on that."



**FOCUS ON PROBLEMS THAT WILL AFFECT
THEM OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS**

AND HOW THEY'LL WIN IN THE MARKETPLACE

"Customer satisfaction is down
about 3% this quarter."

"If we're going to grow 15% over
the next three years, we need to
hold onto our existing customers."

"I agree. What do you
recommend?"



HOW ARE YOU GOING TO HELP THEM

SELL FASTER?

RETAIN EXISTING CUSTOMERS?

CAPTURE NEW CUSTOMERS?

INCREASE CUSTOMER SATISFACTION?

REACH NEW MARKETS?

DEFEND HIGHER MARGINS?

TAKE THE COMPETITOR'S CUSTOMERS?

FIND NEW DISTRIBUTORS?

CREATE DIFFERENTIATED PRODUCTS?

HOW ARE YOU GOING TO HELP THEM

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TAKE THE COMPETITOR'S CUSTOMERS?

FIND NEW DISTRIBUTORS?

CREATE DIFFERENTIATED PRODUCTS?

NOT JUST SOLVE TODAY'S PROBLEMS

**#3 SELL A VISION BEFORE DISCUSSING
THE DETAILS**

NEW PRESENTERS MAKE A **BIG MISTAKE**

THEY ARE IN A HURRY TO TALK ABOUT WHAT
THEY WANT TO DO BEFORE THE EXEC IS
BOUGHT INTO THE VISION

"We need to invest \$1 million in a
big public relations push."

"One million?
That's a lot of money."



EXECS ARE BIG PICTURE PEOPLE

THEY WANT TO KNOW WHY BEFORE GETTING TO THE DETAILS

"Yes. Shudder Chapstick is the agency of record. They aren't cheap."

"What about WBBC? They'd probably do it for half."



**INSTEAD, FOCUS ON GETTING THE EXEC
NODDING AT THE VISION**

THEN MOVE INTO THE DETAILS

"The press is ripping us apart. Our sales guys say it's really slowing the sales cycle."

"So what are we going to do about it?"

"We need to get some of the key papers on our side. Like the Wall Street Journal and USA Today."

"Good thought."

"We've found an agency with good contacts at both papers. We can probably have features printed within 4 weeks."



NOW THE EXEC IS READY TO MOVE INTO THE DETAILS

"We've found an agency with good contacts at both papers. We can probably have features printed within 4 weeks "

"DO IT! GO!"



#4 LEAD WITH STORIES, NOT DATA

EXECS ARE SMART PEOPLE

THEY RESPECT DATA

“You have the most votes...”



EXECS ARE SMART PEOPLE

THEY RESPECT DATA

BUT THEY TRUST THEIR GUT

“But I think we’ve learned that having the most votes does NOT guarantee a big career.”



**THEY KNOW DATA IS OFTEN INCORRECT,
INCOMPLETE OR EVEN BIASED**

**SO THEY LISTEN TO THEIR OWN INSTINCTS
WHEN MAKING BIG STRATEGIC DECISIONS**

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“What are CUSTOMERS saying?”

“What are COMPETITORS doing?”



**THEY KNOW DATA IS OFTEN INCORRECT,
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**SO THEY LISTEN TO THEIR OWN INSTINCTS
WHEN MAKING BIG STRATEGIC DECISIONS**

“What are CUSTOMERS saying?”

“What are COMPETITORS doing?”

“What do our LARGEST PARTNERS think?”



SO LEAD WITH STORIES THAT APPEAL TO GUT INSTINCTS

"Our biggest partner is getting
into this space."

"I know AI. He's a smart guy."



SO LEAD WITH STORIES THAT APPEAL TO GUT INSTINCTS

"Our biggest partner is getting into this space."

"I know AI. He's a smart guy."

USE DATA TO BACK IT UP

"This study shows customer interest is increasing."

"Maybe we need to be doing something here."



**#5 DON'T BE AFRAID OF EXECUTIVES.
BE AFRAID FOR THEM**

**IT'S COMMON TO BE
AFRAID OF EXECS**

**“I’m not MEAN,
I’m just HONEST.”**

**THERE'S EVEN A TERM
FOR IT: EXECUPHOBIA**



**BUT DON'T LET EXECS INTIMIDATE YOU
AND RATTLE YOUR PRESENTATION**



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**BUT DON'T LET EXECS INTIMIDATE YOU
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INSTEAD, BE AFRAID FOR THEM

**AND SHOW HOW YOUR
PROJECT CAN PROTECT THEM
FROM THE THINGS THEY FEAR**



**BELIEVE IT OR NOT
EXECES HAVE A LOT TO FEAR**

FEAR OF FAILURE

FEAR OF DEMOTION

FEAR OF LEGAL ACTION

FEAR OF EMBARRASSMENT

FEAR OF EMPLOYEE LEAKS

FEAR OF BAD INVESTMENTS

FEAR OF LOSS OF REPUTATION

FEAR OF A TEAM MEMBER SCREWING UP



YES, IT'S EASY TO BE AFRAID OF EXECS



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**BUT KEEP THEIR FEARS TOP OF MIND
AND SHOW HOW YOUR PROJECT WILL
HELP TAKE THOSE FEARS AWAY**



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**BUT KEEP THEIR FEARS TOP OF MIND
AND SHOW HOW YOUR PROJECT WILL
HELP TAKE THOSE FEARS AWAY**

**THIS MINDSET WILL
REDUCE **YOUR OWN ANXIETY****



SO LET'S RECAP

SUMMARY

5 TIPS FOR PRESENTING TO EXECUTIVES

#1 GET TO THE POINT IN ONE MINUTE

#2 TALK ABOUT PROBLEMS WINNING IN THE MARKETPLACE

#3 SELL A VISION BEFORE DISCUSSING THE DETAILS

#4 LEAD WITH STORIES, NOT DATA

#5 DON'T BE AFRAID OF EXECUTIVES. BE AFRAID FOR THEM

NOW...

GO NAIL YOUR NEXT EXEC PRESENTATION!

NOW...

GO NAIL YOUR NEXT EXEC PRESENTATION!

**“That was
ABSOLUTELY STUNNING!”**





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TRAINING
COACHING
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