

Increase the Impact of Your Investor Presentations

Today, more than ever, it's important that investor presentations be focused, succinct and persuasive. Why? Two reasons: (1) everyone's attention span is getting shorter and shorter, and (2) the PowerPoint Age has generated an overwhelming clutter of presentations.

The standard isn't "to present the facts"; it's to develop a compelling story that motivates action. After almost 20 years of experience helping some 5,000+ presenters, let me share with you some simple rules to help you accomplish this goal.

Focus, Focus, Focus.

What's the point? Clearly identify the major objective of the presentation (note, I didn't say the many objectives! What are the 5 or so points that you want to communicate in the presentation. For instance, you may want to deal with the (1) history of the company, (2) current business (products and customers), (3) future strategy; (4) financial data and (5) Management team. This is your first FOCUS.

Second, have each section FOCUS on a single topics. Don't try to combine different topics.

Then, as you create "slides" detailing the topic's elements, have each FOCUS on a single idea.

Organize Your Story

Start with an agenda slide - outlining your story Second, use transition slides to alert the audience that you're changing "focus" from one section to another. Finally, end with a 'Conclusion" slide -state the 5 points (+/- 2 points) that you want the audience to walk away with.

Format for Impact

In each slide, use the title to organize the audience's reaction. For instance, state the conclusion of the slide (e.g., "2001:Record Sales" instead of calling it "Sales History"). Another option is to intrigue the audience (e.g., "How did we become the leader?")

Leverage Visual Metaphors for Comprehension

The classic saying "a picture is worth a thousand words" is wrong; no-one want to hear 1,000 words. Use the appropriate graphs, diagrams, drawings and photos to help your audience instantly grasp and understand your point.

The bottom line: LESS IS MORE! It's not what you know about your company that counts. It's what your audience needs to know! If it takes 2 hours to figure out what content needs to be addressed, it may take 4 to format the presentation to have the desired impact!

Finally, you need to develop a presentation that fits the presenter's style and capabilities. We'll share some tips about these in a future article!