

**PM Forum - Dublin**

**Life’s a pitch! Delivering winning pitches and presentations**

Gavin Duffy, of media coaching company, Media Training, and most recently one of the Dragons on the Irish series of television programme “Dragon’s Den”, gave the well-attended Dublin Forum meeting tips on putting your best foot forward when tendering and pitching.

Gavin has seen numerous professional services firms over the years spending all their time preparing huge tender documents and then, if called to present, spending even more time on the content of their presentations, but said that the last thing firms seem to consider is: how are we going to engage with the client and build a relationship with them?

In his experience of sitting on the client-side of pitch meetings, he observed that the least amount of time appears to be spent preparing for the Q&A session at the end of the presentation with the potential client. He cautioned that the Q&A session is where the business can often be lost.

When sending a team from your firm to present to the potential client, Gavin highlighted a few other points for consideration:

<b>Address fees upfront</b>	Where appropriate! A lot of firms seem to save the topic of fees until the end of the presentation and even at that seem embarrassed to discuss them. Firms that discuss their fees early on in the presentation and back them up with clear examples of experience and expertise have a greater chance of success in the pitch.
<b>Avoid going into the finer details on the historical background on your firm</b>	The client will be far more engaged if you make a few insightful comments on their business and industry and issues they might be facing instead.
<b>Avoid lengthy PowerPoint slide presentations</b>	While visuals are always helpful in making a presentation, it can be boring for the potential client to sit through slide after slide of bullet points.
<b>Avoid silo presentations</b>	This approach can give the impression that the team members do not know each other well. By inviting each team member to say something brief at the start and encouraging relevant interruptions throughout, the dynamic is changed.
<b>Ask, and answer, a series of questions during the presentation that are relevant to the client</b>	This will allow you to engage in a more focused way with the client.
<b>Involve a good team leader</b>	Much of the winning is in asking the right questions. Choose an appropriate team leader, one who is a listener rather than a talker, as they will be able to pick up on any concerns the potential client may have and address them during the meeting.
<b>Prepare well</b>	An obvious but often forgotten point is that everyone on the team should read and be familiar with the content of the firm’s tender document before going to the pitch meeting! Make sure everyone on the team has a role and is actively involved in the presentation.

<b>Always follow up</b>	During the course of the presentation, try (where possible) to create an opportunity to follow up after the meeting.
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During a lively question and answer session at the end of Gavin's talk, he mentioned a textbook - "How To Make an IMPACT" by Jon Moon - that he has found hugely useful in the finer points of writing proposals or using slides in presentations, and recommended it as essential reading.

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