

Beacon SW – Public Sector Tendering SIG Tips for Perfect Pitching

Careful planning is essential

- Start thinking about the pitch from the outset
- Start planning in earnest as soon as you've been shortlisted
- Don't leave it all to the last moment!

Tailor the presentation to the client

- Normally the client will provide details of length of presentation/Q&A
- Client may set a topic for the presentation
- Give the client what they ask for
- Make sure the presentation is appropriate to the client's style

Less is more

- Be concise and to the point
- Don't try and cram in too much detail
- Make sure presentation will not overrun time allowed

Avoid death by PowerPoint

- Avoid using too many slides with too many bullet points in tiny fonts
- Avoid distracting slide transitions
- If you know the client well, may be able to go for a more conversational approach

A picture paints a thousand words

- Where possible, use pictures or graphics to make your point
- However, avoid gimmicks and inappropriate humour

Rehearse, rehearse, rehearse

- Essential for the presenting team to have a couple of full run throughs ahead of the pitch
- One of these should be in front of informed colleagues who can ask practice questions
- Agree who will answer which type of question to ensure smooth interaction at the pitch

Don't just read your notes

- Don't just read your notes or read the points off the slides
- You should know the content well and hence notes/bullet points are just memory joggers

Bring the delivery team

- Essential that the team attending the pitch are the team that will deliver the service – the client will want to see the whites of their eyes

- Make sure everyone gets a chance to speak either in the presentation or during the Q&A
- Make sure that the client is not left with the impression that the Directors attend the pitch but the graduate trainees do the work – they are paying for expertise

Knock their socks off!

- Keep the energy level high
- Convey your enthusiasm for doing the work
- Don't just repeat what's in the proposal
- Try and demonstrate that you've progressed your thinking on the work since the proposal went in so you can offer new insights at the pitch
- Be unfailingly polite whatever the provocation

Sarah Livingstone
Oxford Innovation
28 April 2010