

Presentation skills for the housing and built environment sector

Having superior presentation skills can help you secure new business, influence the public and regulators into favouring your proposals, and form strong links across organisations to build sustainable communities.

Presentation skills specialist Executive Solutions helps housing professionals to:

- Win new business through exceptional presentations and pitches
- Persuade the public and regulators to buy into new housing and recreational schemes
- Create sustainable communities and buildings

Win new business –Pitch-perfect presentation skills for architects

Standing up to give a presentation is one of many people's worst fears – but if you're to grow your architectural practice you need to deliver winning pitches. The good news is with the right preparation, you can deliver smooth, seemingly effortless presentations time after time.

Honing your presentation skills can also help you sell your designs - by persuade the public and regulators to buy into your development projects, and collaborate to build sustainable communities. Presentations coach and trainer Veronica Broomes can help you

- improve your success rate when pitching for new business;
- explain better to clients why they should use your architectural services;
- convert more proposals and tenders into successful bids;
- prepare better for and be more focused during client meetings;
- increase your capability and confidence to pitch for larger contracts.

Skills required and techniques applied by professionals facilitating meaningful stakeholder* engagement:

- master the art of listening
- handle difficult questions
- prevent and manage confrontations during planning and community meetings

- communicate proactively rather than reactively in public

*Stakeholders include a broad spectrum of local residents, public interest groups, regulatory agencies and local businesses.

Advice for architects and their clients in consulting with stakeholders

- identify groups in the community that use the park (regularly, occasionally).
- identify groups in the community that **do not** use the park.
- source list of community groups from local council and voluntary sector organisations.
- contact groups to find out if their members use the park at present or would be interested in using the park.
- request an opportunity to speak with the group at one of their regular meetings/events. If event is planned within time available for consultation, enquire what support the group requires to arrange an event/meeting for you to meet with members to discuss the plans for the park.
- plan to meet with group at a time and venue convenient to them.
- seek to meet with residents living near to park.
- during consultation meetings, find out what present users like and dislike about the park and ask for suggestions on ways of improving enjoyment of the park or increasing use of the park.
- find out from community warden about their experience about the way people use the park.

Key to an effective consultation strategy is seeking to reach a wide cross-section of the community, e.g., teenagers, retired/seniors, mothers with young children, representatives of Black Asian and Minority Ethnic groups, faith groups, mobility levels (especially important for issues of access).

Relying only on information provided by the local council or the views of specially selected local residents, limits the quality of feedback and results in architects designing their project and restricting their design to architectural considerations and their interpretation of what the users will want rather than based on an understanding of their expressed views.

Seeking feedback in the local shopping centre means that only those who are not in a hurry are likely to accept your invitation to stop and share their views on your proposal. Stakeholder consultations are most effective when designed and planned to reach a wide cross-section of direct beneficiaries of the built environment.

Time required for meaningful stakeholder consultation

This varies depending on the nature of the project and can range from a couple of days over a week or two to two to three weeks over a period of several months on more complex projects. What is clear, and well known by facilitators, is that meaningful consultation cannot be done by a one-off visit to the nearest High Street in the hope of reaching a broad cross-section of potential beneficiaries/users of a project.

For additional information on skills needed by built environment professionals as they contribute to the creation of sustainable communities, you can read the report by [Sir John Egan](#), available on Community and Government website (<http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1502251>) or purchase your copy from RIBA Enterprises Ltd (sales@ribabooks.com).

Build sustainable communities and buildings

- About the running of your architectural practice? Is it business as usual or business unusual?
- Recently started promoting 'green' building designs for sustainable communities and contemporary living?
- Still unable to get clients to understand what is meant by sustainable buildings and communities?

Contact us to discuss how you can become more effective in explaining how your designs represent better value for money and will help you clients to live in zero energy buildings and in the process take practical action to reduce carbon emissions.

To find out how exceptional presentations can help you build your business from the ground up, email (veronica@executive-solutions.co.uk) or call Veronica Broomes on 0845 054 2870.

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