

Making Presentations to Private Sector Partners

Private Sector Engagement Toolkit - Tip Sheet #11:

Both formal and informal presentations to private sector partners are critical opportunities for us to demonstrate our understanding of their environment, our management expertise, and the value of an engagement with us.

Tips for Making Formal and Informal Presentations to the Private Sector

1. Ensure your presentation is direct, focused and as succinct as possible. Expect that your audience may have a limited attention span (or limited time) for your presentation and plan your presentation accordingly.
2. Use language they will understand. Avoid terminology that needs definition whenever possible, and if not, make sure you include those definitions. Stay away from using NGO jargon.
3. Be careful the presentation does not require detailed "education" for the audience. If you need to educate them explain so at the beginning.
4. Set general expectations for the presentation at the beginning. Your audience will want to know what is coming and when.
5. Consider sending a short background document in advance of the meeting to help prepare the audience (no more than a few pages). If the potential partner is comfortable with that information, it can give you more time to discuss the details.
6. If you are using power point, try to use as many pictures and visual aids as possible and avoid filling the screen with text. You should not read what is on the screen but use it to illustrate your points.
7. Bring a copy of the presentation or an alternate hand-out for everyone attending. This can be used for note-taking as well as a future reminder for your audience.
8. Lead with the headline; do not save it till the end. The main point of your presentation should be at the beginning and then make the case to support it.
9. Emphasize the value proposition you are bringing to them. Demonstrate an understanding of their business and its needs/incentive structure. Highlight the potential benefits to the firm that a partnership will bring.
10. Make sure to describe your project in the beginning and be very specific how your project and a certain aspect of the business will work together. This will convey to the business that you a) are interested to support the activities of the business and b) you understand what the business does.
11. Include pictures of beneficiaries. The private sector does not automatically know who the target beneficiaries will be. Including pictures can make the proposal more genuine and helps convince and encourage a partnership.
12. Show passion for our work, but keep that balanced by analysis and facts.
13. Demonstrate understanding of the local context and realities. A presentation is not the time to talk about ideal visions, but rather for to present brighter versions of the future and situations of mutual benefit.
14. Practice, practice, practice! Especially if you are presenting with PowerPoint, when you go in for your presentation, it should be second nature.

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