

Practical Tips for Presenting to a Board or Council

Preparing for the Presentation

- Timing is important – get on agenda when there are no or not many hot topics.
- If you know someone on the board or council, tell them your issue, and ask for an invitation to present. They may become an ally.
- Have a one page summary handout and get it to them beforehand, if possible.
- Focus on the local issue with local data, and the impact on the whole community.
- Be prepared by practicing what you will say ahead of time.
- We folks in WA seem to compare ourselves to OR – perhaps have an OR example.
- Be VERY prepared and have answers to possible questions about why you want on the agenda.
- Do not be daunted with a perceived big task. Be relaxed yet enthusiastic for your cause.

Delivering the Presentation

- Be punctual and polite.
- Avoid saying ah, so, you know, well, um, really, I mean, and other filler words.
- Give good quality information, data, and real stories – put a face or faces on the issue.
- Be consistent and concise with your messages.
- Be ready to give pros and cons of the proposals or options, and how to mitigate the cons.
- Share options and possible costs and benefits of those options.
- Expect some people to disagree with you.
- When questioned, be polite, repeat your position, and give another example.
- Go into the presentation with the thought you can get a supporter and advocate for other issues, not just the one you are presenting on today. It is a great start to building bridges and broadening scope

References:

Julie Garland-McClellan, Company Director & Board Consultant. www.mclellan.com.au
New Partners for Smart Growth Conference, February 2011