



Roundtable Member

Claudia Calderon, Senior Director of Marketing, CSD Portfolio & Field Planning/Activation at PepsiCo Beverages Canada, shared her perspective with our team on how to set yourself up for success when presenting to a senior audience.

Mentoring **MATTERS**

Q

I've been asked to deliver an overview of our new department plan to the Executive Team. What tips do you have for getting off on the right foot when presenting to a senior audience?

Presenting to a senior audience can be intimidating, even for those that have been doing so for many years. Why? Well, whether we like it or not, presenting to senior management puts us in a vulnerable position and unfortunately it can often feel like it's a "make it or break it" situation. Having said that, here are a few tips that can help set you up for success as you head into your next big presentation:

Prior to the meeting...

Prepare, prepare, prepare - The best way to set yourself up for success is to feel like you've got a good handle on the material. Spend the time to get yourself comfortable with the content – it may be time consuming but it will pay off in dividends in terms of your confidence.

Leverage colleagues or mentors - You're not the first person to present to senior management so make sure you leverage the learning from those around you.

Take them through your presentation and ask for their coaching both on content and delivery. Leveraging the experiences of those around you will only make you better!

Anticipate questions and challenges - One of the most effective strategies is to put yourself in the shoes of your audience. Based on their roles, ask yourself what you think they would want or need to know?

Putting yourself in the shoes of your audience will allow you to think through potential roadblocks in advance, challenge yourself to go deeper and/or perhaps re-assess your recommendation prior to the meeting. Doing this not only allows you to get ahead of potential issues but it also demonstrates that you have a holistic perspective on the business.

Leveraging the experiences of those around you will only make you better!

Pull supporting data together - No matter how much you prepare you will never be able to anticipate or know the answer to every question, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't be armed with as much supporting or backup data as you can. This way, if you can't remember the answer or need additional facts during the meeting, you can turn to your backup data to help you.

Align your boss in advance - Surprises are never a good thing so make sure that you bring your boss along during the process. This will not only allow you to leverage your boss' experience but it will create an advocate in the room for you the day of the presentation.

During the meeting...

Set expectations - Right from the onset be clear on the objective of the meeting and what you need to get from the audience. Setting the context of the meeting and being clear on the end goal will help you set the stage for a fruitful and focused discussion.

Be concise - Focus on the most relevant points of your presentation and tell a clear story. More importantly leave time for discussion and questions!

Be flexible - Think about your presentation as a discussion rather than a download. This will help you have the right mindset and expectation for the meeting. If a big discussion emerges half way through your presentation, or you're asked to go back or jump ahead, you won't get thrown off and can keep your momentum.

Be confident in yourself - While senior leaders may have more experience than you (and that can be intimidating), remind yourself that more than likely you're closer to the situation than anyone else. Be confident in your abilities – confidence in yourself will instill confidence in your plan.

Lastly, and probably most importantly, remind yourself ***that senior leaders are there to challenge you to think differently so that you can continue to grow and develop as a professional.*** Assuming that any feedback is meant with positive intent will make the outcome of any presentation one from which you can learn and grow.



Claudia Calderon is a graduate from the Richard Ivey School of Business of the University of Western Ontario and she currently holds the position of Senior Director of Marketing – CSD Portfolio & Field Planning/ Activation at PepsiCo Beverages Canada. Since joining PepsiCo Canada in 2003, Claudia has had the chance to work on both the Foods and Beverages divisions and influence the agenda behind some of the best and biggest brands in Canada including Lays, Doritos, Aquafina, Dole, 7UP, Tropicana, Gatorade, Pepsi, 7UP & Mountain Dew.

Some of Claudia's biggest accomplishments have been leading all strategic and executional elements of the Lay's Local Campaign, reversing four consecutive years of mixed performance on the Doritos business, developing & leading the strategic agenda behind the Foods shopper marketing team as well as setting a strong vision & growth agenda behind the waters, Gatorade & soft drink portfolio.



Fluent in English and Spanish, Claudia's work has been recognized with numerous internal & external awards. Moreover, she devotes much of her time to recruiting and mentoring interns and full time employees. Outside of the office Claudia loves musical theatre & working out. She also works as a fitness instructor for Goodlife.



Glain Roberts-McCabe is passionate about the art of leadership and supporting ambitious mid-career leaders. She created **The Roundtable** to provide emerging leaders with the navigational skills, tools and savvy needed to manage increases in scope, pressure and leadership complexity.