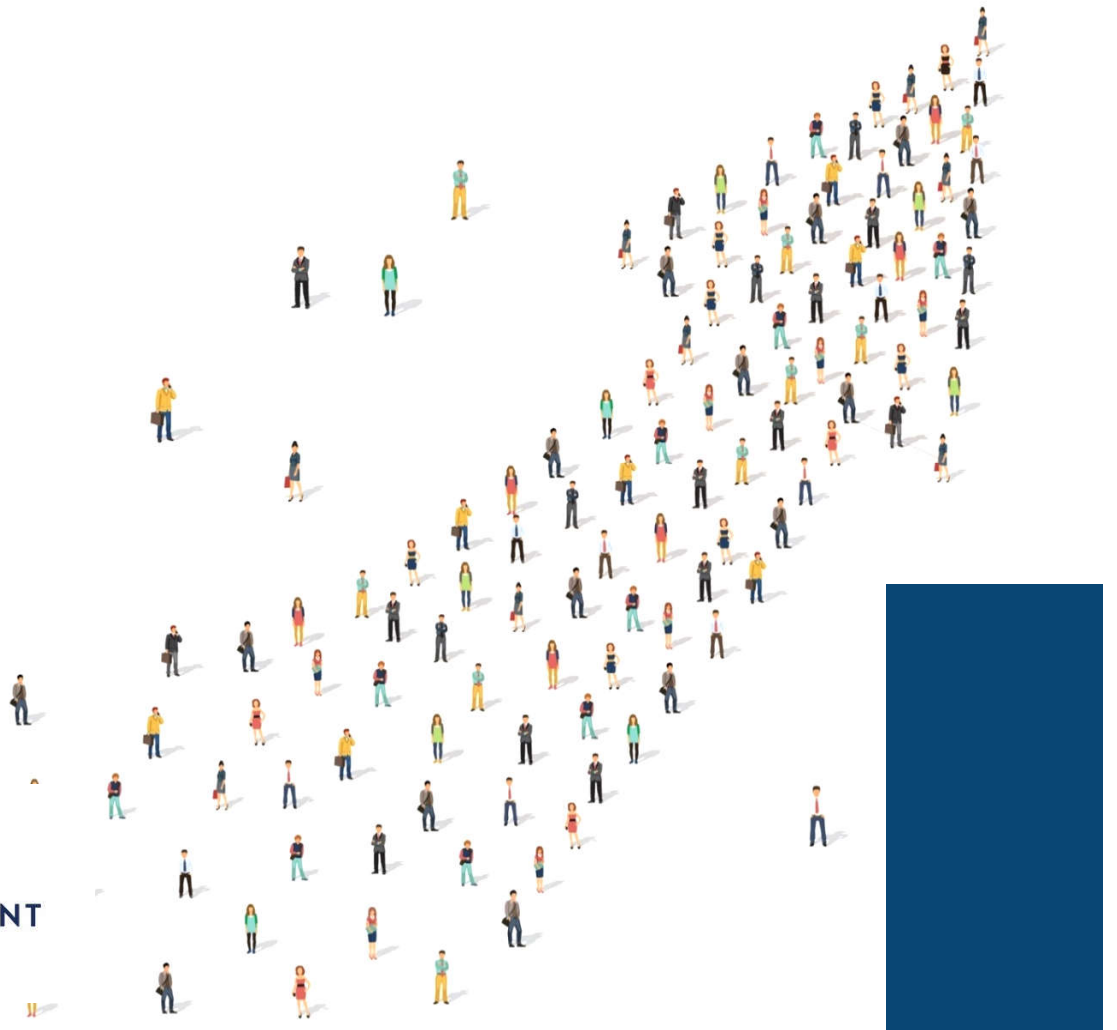


When You Are On The Agenda

Tamás Bernáth

25th of June 2020





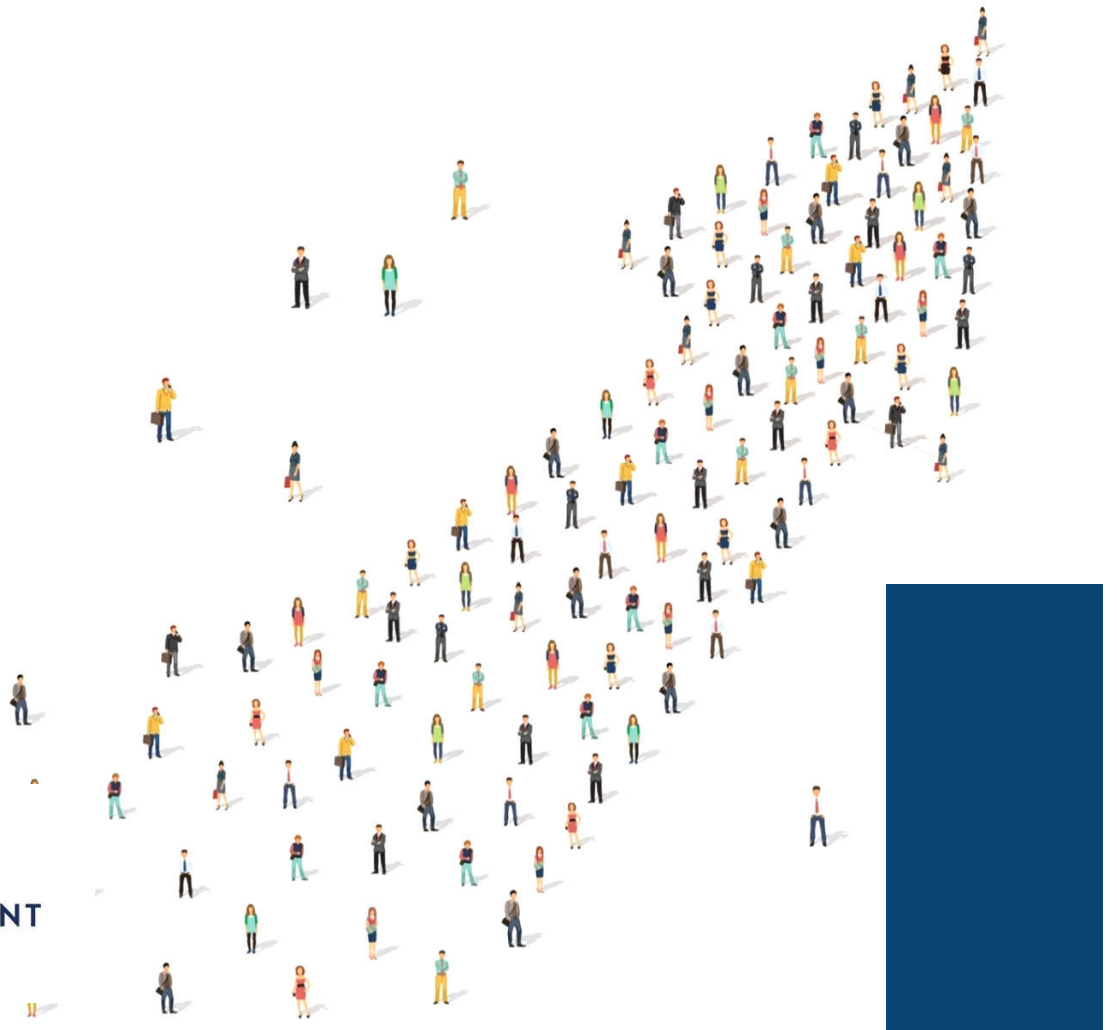
— **Welcome!**

- Your microphones and cameras are now muted
- Ask questions via chat during the webinar
- Moderated Q&A session at the end
- Your names / device names are visible to everyone
- For seeing the slides better you can minimize and move the participant window in the top right corner
- Quick survey at the end – We count on your feedback! 😊

When You Are On The Agenda

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— A question for you before we start!

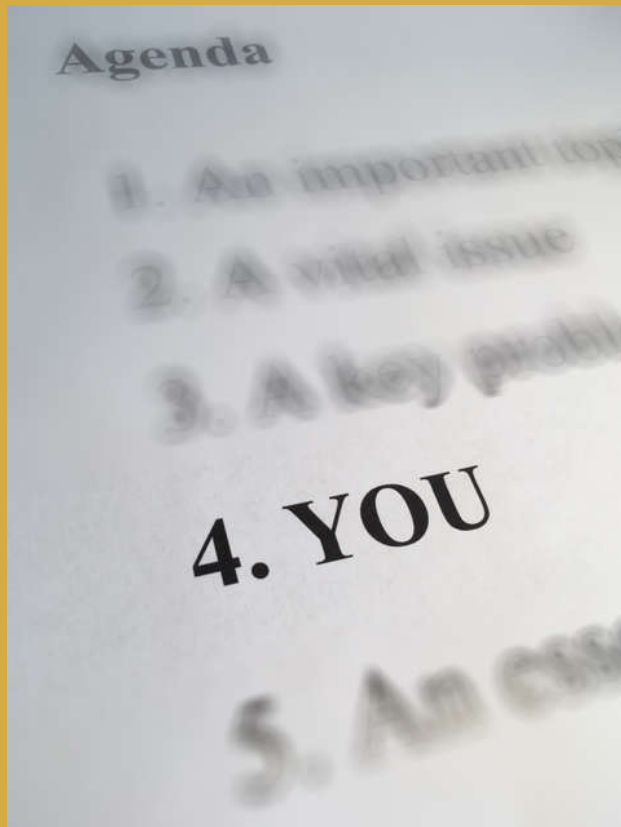
When you know you have to deliver a presentation at a meeting on top management level, what do you feel?

Quick Poll





— What can you expect from this Webinar?



We look at cases where you, as a middle manager, have to appear **in front of a top management meeting** to deliver one of the points on the agenda.

The goal is to perform as well as possible and **leave behind a good impression**— in people that you rarely meet but are important for your future.

Advice focuses on two phases: **understanding** your audience and **giving** them what they need.



— Why am I talking about this topic?

Many years ago, as a consultant, **I had to present** in front of a lot of teams, especially Steering Committees and Board of Directors meetings.

Recently, **I have been listening** to a lot of such presenters as Chairman of various Boards and project management committees

My central piece of advice: understand **how different is their viewpoint from yours**.

With that understanding in mind, follow 4 points:

- 1 **Prepare well** about the audience, the meeting site and the material expected from you
 - 2 Make your message concise and **easy to grasp**
 - 3 In delivery, **focus on the chairperson** in the room
 - 4 Leave **no open problems** behind but do follow up
-



— Understanding the difference (1/3)

**Before you enter the meeting room,
you may expect something like this....**



...but often you'll find something like this instead





Understanding the difference (2/3)

Your viewpoints can be **very different** in many aspects

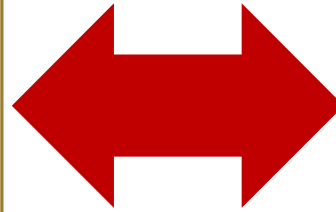
YOU

Eager to share your results

Competent in all details

In need of direction and decisions

Unaware of events and plans in other parts of the organization



THEM

Tired of too many agenda items

Ignorant in your subject matter

Afraid of problems and decisions

Possibly focused on **some other, bigger issue** in the organization

These are **exaggerations**, for sure. But it's worth **preparing** for the worst case.



— Understanding the difference (3/3)

Train your empathy

How does it feel to you when...

... your small **child** wants your attention at the end of tiring day, describing his success in **a game that you don't know?**

... you are late for a meeting but an elderly **aunt** calls lengthily about **a major problem which you cannot help with?**

... you are waiting for a movie to begin and after all those trailers and ads, **one more trailer comes up?**

When you are on the agenda, you may happen to be in the role of **that small child, that elderly aunt or that extra trailer.**

At this point,
you might ask:

*OK, so is
it then
all
hopeless?*

No, it's not.

First of all, **real life situations** vary a lot and some meetings are much better than others.

Second, you can **come out a winner** if you prepare for an audience with a different perspective from yours.

Just like in those sample situations,

- you may discover that your child succeeded in **a great new game** and you'll feel proud
- you may realize that **you do know someone** who can help your aunt
- you may get impressed by the trailer and **decide to watch** the film



— So how to get the most out of it?

Working with your immediate superior who is likely to be a member of the audience, establish what you want to get out of the situation. Mostly, it will be **one of these two**:

EITHER

Get **approval for a change** (e.g. new deadline, extra funding, more staff)

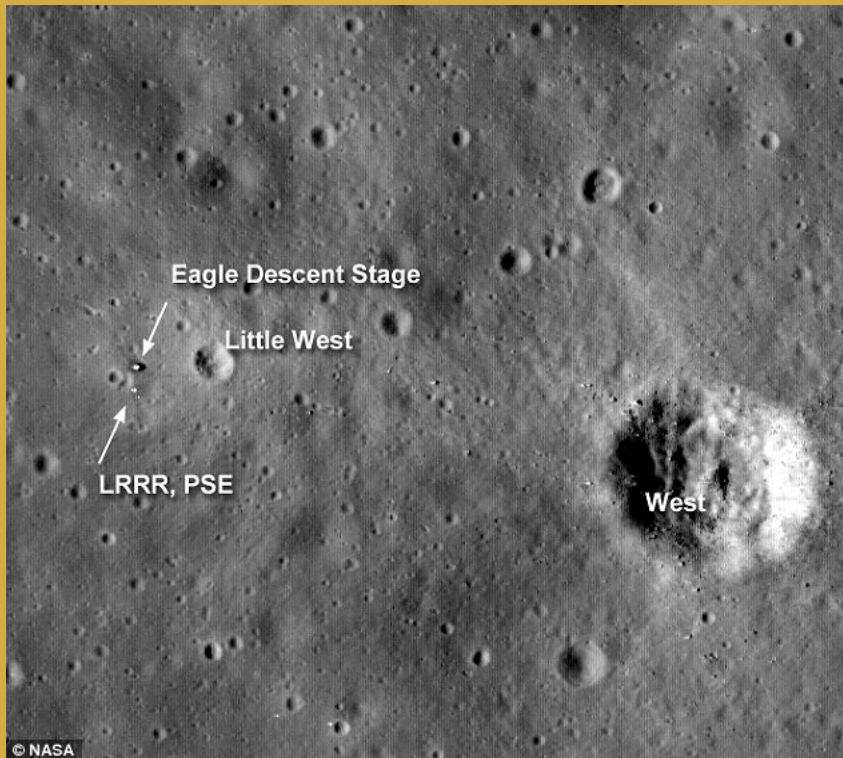
OR

Simply leave behind the feeling of „**all goes well**”

In both cases, the same 4 points will apply:

- 1 **Prepare well** about the audience, the meeting site and the material expected from you
- 2 Make your message concise and **easy to grasp**
- 3 In delivery, **focus on the chairperson** in the room
- 4 Leave **no open problems** behind but do follow up

1 Preparation is 80% of your success



You will be landing in **alien territory**.

Prepare as much as possible about

- **the participants of the meeting**
- **the actual site**
- **the materials they expect**



— You can never overdo preparation

AUDIENCE

- Know who is going to be there, **one by one**
- Know how they look (!) and which one is the **chaiperson**
- Ask **a peer** who did a similar job about their experience
- Ask a peer or a dedicated assistant about **habits in these meetings** (e.g. handouts, Q&A)
- Cautiously collect info about **friends & foes** in the room
- Try to know their **technical competence** in your topic
- If feasible, have a small **pre-meeting** with your boss and the chair of the meeting

SITE

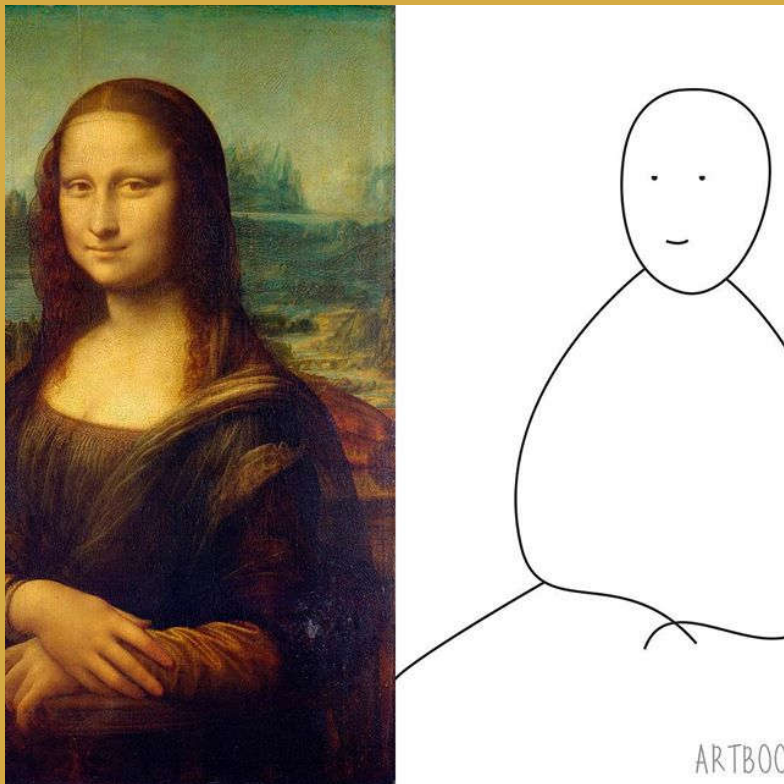
- Go to the room **alone** when it's empty
- Try to **picture it full**
- Learn about the technical setup
 - **microphones** for speakers
 - **projector** for slides
 - **monitors** for slides
 - **flipcharts** (in smaller rooms)
- Try **sitting** in one of the chairs
- Check where you'll be waiting before entering – you'll need some **privacy and water**

MATERIALS

- Establish **expectations** (e.g. PowerPoint vs Word)
- Prepare a very concise **Executive Summary** in preferably 1 slide, max. 3, with all key numbers and facts on it
- *Expect to go through this and nothing else*
- Prepare **support material** for all key messages in the Executive Summary
- *Expect to never use these*
- Plan for **as little technology as possible**: preferably hand out Executive Summary paper sheets at the start

2

Make your message concise and easy to grasp



For the audience, assume **no preparation** and no knowledge basis

Put the focus of your Executive Summary on your key message and **only briefly explain history** – you'll be lost in its details if you start out with it

If your key message is „We're OK“, try to put in everyday terms what **you have already achieved** – see *next slide*

If your key message is „We need a change“, **take seriously the preparation of supportive material**, especially numbers and distribute it if there is a discussion

If you do expect some discussion, you can prepare for the audience members' **motivational factors** along the SEED Model

In all of the above, never say anything not pre-agreed with **your boss**

If you **finish a bit early**, no one will complain

— How to explain it to top management

Instead of saying...

97,72% of customers have been identified remotely or in person and by the end of Phase 1, 100% seems to be a feasible target.

Retooling schedules have been updated and tightened in the light of recent regulatory changes related to emission levels.

IT downtime due to core system replacement is expected to fall under the predefined 0,05% threshold after Milestone 7.

...SIMPLY SAY:

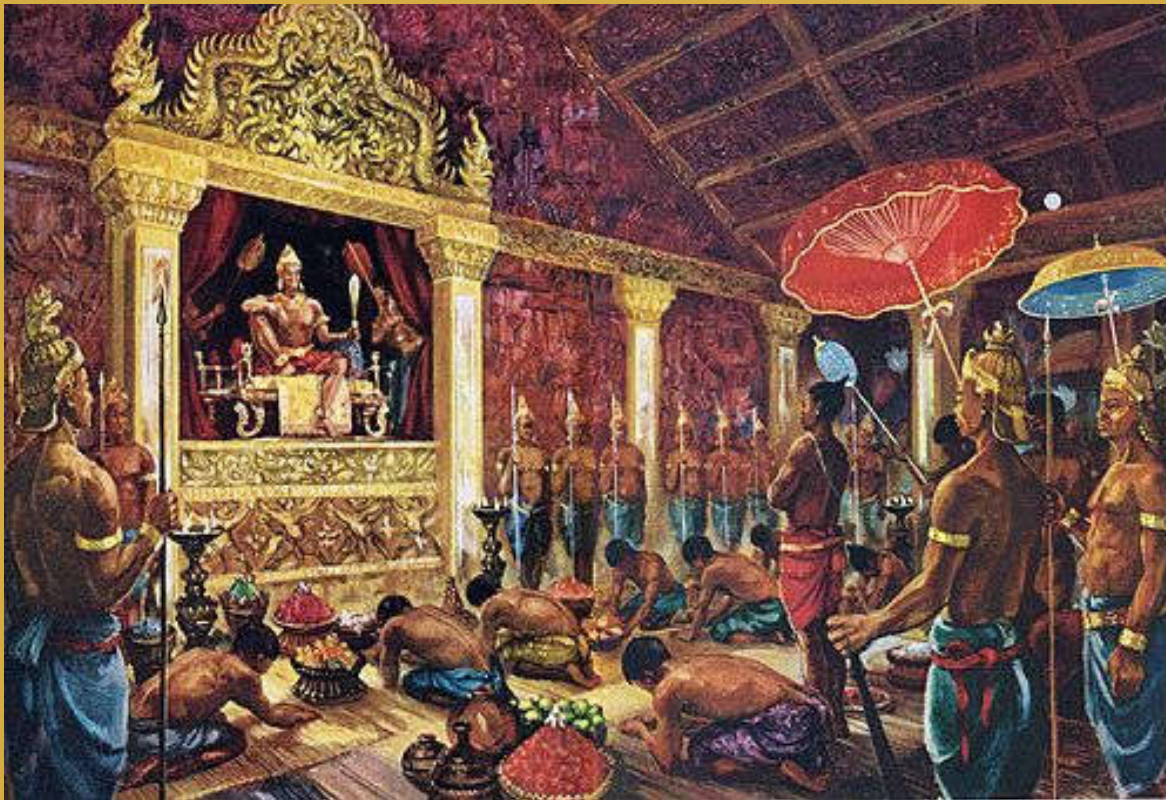
WE KNOW PRACTICALLY ALL OUR CUSTOMERS BY NOW. WE WILL KNOW ALL OF THEM IN ONE MONTH, AS PLANNED.

THEY JUST MADE THE RULES TOUGHER. WE CAN COMPLY AS THERE WAS SOME SLACK IN THE TIMEPLAN. EXPECT NO FINES.

FROM NEXT MONDAY, THOSE ANNOYING LITTLE MESSAGES WILL GET OFF YOUR SCREENS.



3 Deliver your point with focus on the Chairperson



In a short meeting of strangers, **eye contact** matters most.

While presenting, look

- **most at the chairperson**
- second most, at your boss
- sometimes around, at the participants
- **very rarely at your slides**

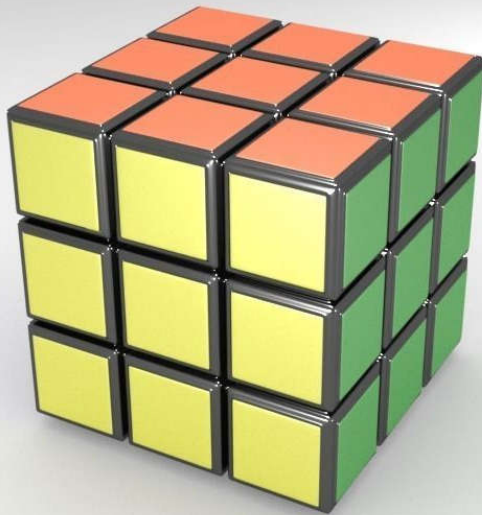


— Your delivery should be clear and confident

- 1 For an easy start, decide on your **greeting** and your **first** short content sentence and **learn it by heart**.
- 2 Similarly, prepare a **closing** sentence and a **farewell** term and **learn it by heart** or write it down for yourself.
- 3 **Avoid** presentation **tricks and jokes**. These are too risky here.
- 4 Speak **louder** and **faster**. Practically, it always helps.
- 5 Check if they're **listening** – if the loss of attention is obvious, look at your boss and then the chairperson **for reassurance or help**

4

Don't leave open problems behind



When you are on the agenda, generally, **be positive**.

You should leave the audience with the feeling that **there are no open problems** in the project or the organizational unit.

However...

Don't lie 1.

If there is **a risk**, acknowledge it but talk about how you plan to **mitigate it**.

Don't lie 2.

If you **don't know** the answer, promise **to come back** with it. Pressed hard, come up with **an estimate** if you really must.



— Make the end as orderly as the whole presentation

- Technically, when finished, the Chair **should ask** if there are questions (ie, **not you**)
- When **a question** comes up, look at your boss to establish which of you should answer – 90% of the cases, it will be you
- Offer **follow-up information** as appropriate in the organization. This takes usually two forms:
 - **Answers** to questions raised in the meeting
 - **A memo** of the agenda point, e.g. your executive summary with some corrections or additions
- If you ever promise to send something, **keep this promise and be fast**. Check the message with your boss and send it through the organizational channels, e.g. through the secretary who organizes these meetings
- At the end of the agenda point, wait politely **to be let off** by the Chair
- Ask your boss **for feedback** the next time you meet



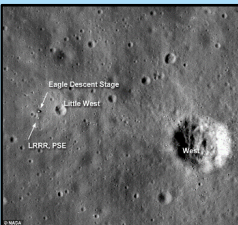
SUMMARY: Accept the difference, use the 4 points and you will succeed



**Accept the key difference: it is showtime
for you, another item for them**



1



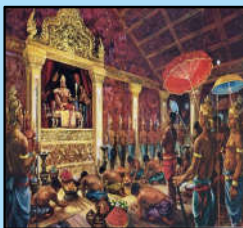
**Prepare well
about audience,
site, materials**

**Make your
message simple
and easy to grasp**



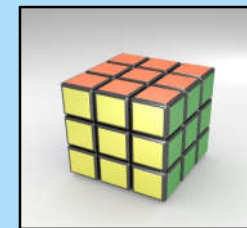
2

3



**Deliver with
confidence,
focusing on the
chairperson**

**Leave no open
problems behind
and do your
follow-up**



4

— Any Questions?



WE NEED YOUR FEEDBACK! – Stay for the poll! A few seconds only 😊



Hope to see you on our programs in the Fall:

- Business Leadership Program
- Foundations of Management Program
- Corvinus-MSM-SEED Executive MBA

Details: <https://www.seed-uni.com/programs/>