

Part VI – The MCM World Conference Educational Presentation

The Master Club Manager (MCM) process requires, as a final step, a candidate to make an educational presentation to attendees at a session of the annual CMAA World Conference. Following basic guidelines will help ensure that development time is most effectively used and that session attendees will receive maximum educational benefits from the presentation.

Planning Your Presentation

Please remember the following general points when planning your presentation:

- **This is an educational presentation about your Monograph and its conclusions.** It is not a presentation on the procedures you used to complete your Monograph. Research methodology should not be a major part of your session.
- **Emphasize how the challenges addressed in your Monograph directly relate to the "real world" of club managers.** When possible, use an example to stress the practical aspects of your conclusions.
- **Always remember the audience.** Constantly think about "why does this matter to the listeners" as you prepare and deliver your presentation.
- **Emphasize the conclusion(s) or solution(s) generated from your study.** Tell how they should be applied and how they will help the attendees' clubs. Emphasize what should be avoided or what could be gained by following your recommendations. When possible, include guidelines, "rules of thumb," hints, suggestions and short cuts that will allow managers to implement your recommendations.
- **A typical presentation at the annual World Conference will last approximately 30 minutes.** You will be notified about the actual time allocated so you can develop your presentation. Be sure to allow time for questions and answers. For example, a 30-minute session might include about 20 minutes of presentation with the remaining time allocated for feedback discussions.
- **Do not make excessive use of examples, slides or videos relating to your club.** Also, do not plan on using video for more than two or three minutes, if at all, during your presentation.
- **You may wish to use some (limited) handouts, and you will need to duplicate them.** (CMAA's Education Department staff can advise on the number that should be replicated for the session.) You may wish to provide an abbreviated outline of your presentation on a handout and/or use the handout(s) to illustrate/reinforce "complicated" overhead or slide presentation material. Do not try to provide a handout for everything you plan to discuss. A few relatively well-thought-out handouts are best.

PowerPoint Suggestions

- Use visuals to emphasize key points.
- Address one key point per visual.
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- Be sure each is legible and that there are no typos; ask someone to carefully read through them before they are finalized.
- Make sure visuals are attractive.
- Don't include too much information. Some experts suggest no more than seven lines with seven words on each line.
- Consider the number of slides you will use. As a rule of thumb, use about one slide for every two minutes of session time.
- Do not use distracting graphic techniques or sounds when changing slides.
- Keep each slide simple. The use of simple line art or other visuals can help keep slides interesting.

Be Organized When You Plan

Here are Five Steps to Plan an Organized Presentation:

- **Task One**: Remember that the goal of the presentation is to inform attendees about what you wanted to study (your Monograph's project goals), what you discovered and most importantly, how your discovery(ies) will help the club industry.
- **Task Two**: Keep your audience in mind every moment as you plan your presentation. "What's in it for them?" and "why should they know about each aspect discussed?" "What are the relatively few most important points they should know?" These are among the questions to constantly ask yourself as the presentation is planned.
- **Task Three**: Organize your presentation effectively. Identify the main ideas (concepts or components) you want to discuss.
- **Task Four**: Think about important subpoints for each of the main ideas identified in step three.
- **Task Five**: Develop other components of your presentation including a "catchy" introduction, necessary visual aids and/or handouts and a brief conclusion (summary).

Concentrate On Each Element in Your Presentation

Consider an introduction to get attendees interested in the topic. Explain how your topic is important to them. Assure them of your competency in the subject area and establish a good rapport. When planning your opening, consider using humor in good taste and/or telling a relevant story. Be sure to explain how the topic will relate to the audience and how it will benefit them. You might ask a rhetorical question such as, "How you like would to have all the employees you need at all times?" or you might find an appropriate quotation from a famous person.

After the introduction, provide a preview or overview of the presentation. For example: "In the next 20 minutes, I will explain the three major points I learned during my study."

After the overview, state your main points. It is generally best to limit your discussion to the three to five most important points. Then, use a transition. For example, "The second point I want to establish is ..." or "Now that we have discussed point one, let's look at the second point ..."

Be sure to summarize your main points. Perhaps you can refer to something you noted during the introduction. Experienced trainers have a "rule of thumb"; tell them what you are going to say (preview); tell them what you want to say (presentation); tell them what you told them (review).

Practice! Practice! Practice!

Practicing the delivery of your presentation is a critical step in a successful Conference session. Formal presentations frequently take longer than one thinks and this most often happens when the speaker has not timed the session while practicing it.

A few "trial runs" using your notes, PowerPoint, handouts and any other presentation tools may suggest changes that will make the session even better. Carefully time the session so you will know whether changes are required so you can remain on schedule.

Memorize the opening and the closing along with major transitions. Practice with visuals if you are using them. Simulate the situation; time yourself. Presentations almost always take more time than you think they will! When practicing your presentation, ensure that your notes are key words only. Never read to the audience. Use a stand-up rehearsal and practice answers to anticipated questions. Undertake a full-length presentation; check your timing. Focus on your voice; don't talk too fast or too slow. Be concerned about volume. You'll need to adjust your speech volume after you become familiar with the actual room although you'll probably use a microphone so try to talk naturally.

After these practice sessions, consider a final and formal practice session using your management team, board or even local chapter members as the audience.

(Note: Contact the MCM Academic Council or CMAA staff liaison to the Council to confirm the amount of time you will be given.)

It's Almost Time!

Arrive at your assigned room early to learn about the facility. If the room is being used for another session, you can review your materials nearby. If it is vacant, you can obtain assistance in connecting your computer to the projector and learning about use of the microphone. Walk around and then sit down to see what the participants in various locations will see and hear. Check out the audio-video equipment and be sure you know the CMAA staff member who will serve as the moderator and who can help to resolve any pre-session problems. Check your microphone, the location and use of video equipment (practice using the equipment if you are not familiar with it) and room lighting, if applicable.

Suggestions for Delivering Your Presentation

Speak from an abbreviated outline. Use key words only; do not read outline notes word-for-word. The purpose of the outline is to jog your memory and ensure you discuss points in the organized way you had planned. Some speakers use index cards; others provide a handout or an overhead of key points of the outline and then use them to help attendees review and keep up with the presentation. Below is an example of an outline.

Managing the Labor Shortage: Role of Professional Development Program

1. Introduction
 - The club industry is labor-intensive.
 - Members are demanding increased service levels.
 - Other industries compete for our employees.

2. Industry Background Statistics
 - Markets
 - Competition

3. Solutions
 - Reduce turnover.
 - Increase productivity.
 - Recruit in non-traditional markets.

4. One Strategy to Reduce Turnover: Professional Development
 - It helps the club and its members.
 - Employees desire it.

5. Components of an Exemplary Professional Development Program
 - Orientation
 - Training
 - Job rotation

6. Conclusion: What I Learned
 - We must manage human resources.
 - We must “keep up” with our fast-changing profession.

Here are some suggestions for delivering your presentation:

- Dress professionally; you are representing yourself, your club, your association and your profession as you provide world-class, cutting edge information to your peers.
- Remember body language. You are "on stage" from the moment you enter the room until you exit it. Be concerned about your posture, body movement and arm gestures, facial expressions and eye contact. Here are some things to avoid:
 - Hands in pocket
 - Hands behind back
 - Arms crossed
 - Wringing hands
 - Pacing back and forth
- Other items on the "horror list" of presentation problems include: chewing gum, reading from note cards, clutching the podium, saying "Ah – ah – ah" and using visuals that do not contribute to the presentation. Be sure you give your presentation to the audience (face attendees) and not to the computer or projection screen.
- Try to involve your audience. (If it is appropriate, provide a colleague with a few pre-planned questions to be asked to help the audience get started.)

Managing Anxiety

Some speakers may be anxious about public speaking. Here are some common but irrational beliefs:

- Everyone must totally approve of everything I say and do.
- I must be perfect.
- It is terrible if anything goes wrong.
- I am terrible if I am not perfect.

To reduce anxiety, organize and practice your presentation before you give it. Remember that you know more about the topic than anyone else. Besides, you are really talking with peers: professional associates in the club industry. Give yourself a "pep-talk" immediately before your presentation. Emphasize that what you are going to say is important. Always remember: you are the expert!

Knowing you are ready for the presentation is one good way to be less anxious about it.

Handling Questions

Tell the audience at the beginning of the session whether you encourage questions as you deliver the presentation or if questions should be held until the end of the session. If you permit questions during the speech, responses will be more meaningful to the audience. There will be more immediate feedback and this will encourage more active listening.

An obvious disadvantage is that questions might interrupt your schedule and/or the organized flow of information that you had intended. If, on the other hand, you encourage questions at the end of the presentation, you will be in control and have less of a timing problem. An obvious disadvantage is that you may lose audience attention and focus the emphasis on the question/answer session rather than upon the "here and now" of the presentation.

Conclusion

One of the primary reasons that a CMAA member seeks the MCM designation is to "give back" knowledge based upon one's experience. The educational session at the CMAA World Conference is the first formal opportunity you will have to present monograph information to your colleagues in the club industry. It may be one of the very few times that you will be able to discuss the topic with a relatively large number of persons in a group setting. Following the guidelines noted above, along with using your own common sense, will help to ensure that you most effectively share your information with fellow professionals.

Remember the most important rule: enjoy yourself! There is no one in the room who knows more about the subject than you do. Make it your goal to provide at least one new piece of knowledge or to provoke one new thought about a topic to everyone in attendance. If you do this, you will have accomplished a feat matched by few others anywhere.