



EARNING THE RIGHT TO BE HEARD

PRESENTED BY:

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2 Fundamental Assumptions

1. Most unprepared people attempt to “sell” their ideas based on **passion** and **emotion**.
2. Most trained decision makers make their “buying” decisions based on **logic** and **rationale**.

2 Foundational Objectives

1. Primary Objective: **Earn the right to be heard.**
2. Secondary Objective: **Get what you want.**

Starting Strong: A Concise, 3-Sentence Opening Statement

Sentence #1: Clearly and specifically state **what you want**.

- Example: “Thank you for your time today; I’m here to request (BLANK).”

Sentence #2: Clearly and specifically state **why you want it**.

- Example: “I’m convinced the time has come for us to carefully consider committing organizational resources (e.g., time, attention, effort, technology, materials, money, etc.) to address the critical issue of (BLANK).”

Sentence #3: Clearly and specifically state **your openness to questions**.

- Example: “I’ve come prepared today to answer your questions regarding this subject.”

Ideas to Implement

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Anticipate and Prepare for 5 Critical Questions

Question #1: **How much will it cost?**

- 3 Absolutely and consistently **WRONG** answers:
 1. **I don't know.**
 2. **Not much.**
 3. **It doesn't matter, we need it.**
- **IN WRITING**, present an accounting of anticipated **direct** and **indirect** costs.
- Anticipate and be prepared to discuss:
 1. **Economic** justifications (e.g., productivity improvements, material usage, time savings, inventory turns, etc.)
 2. **Cost overruns** (e.g., misplaced priorities, ill-defined objectives, scrap, etc.)
 3. Available **funding options** (e.g., creative utilization of undesignated or co-mingled funds, project deferrals, acceptable budgetary adjustments, etc.)
- **NEVER** pad these **numbers**.

Question #2: **What benefits can be expected?**

- **IN WRITING**, create and present a complete listing of all **plausible** project / initiative benefits.
- Distinguish between **economic, environmental, competitive, safety** and **social** benefits.
- **Quantify** these benefits, if possible.
 - Include the anticipated life (or term) of identified benefits.
- In the spirit of full disclosure, self-identify any known **risks** related to your recommended actions.

Question #3: **How much time will it take?**

- **IN WRITING**, create and present an estimated **timeline**.

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- Example: *“With your approval of this request today, you can expect the timing of the project to progress as follows...”*
- Question the decision maker/s to determine if there are any unspoken **needs** or **expectations** regarding the timing of the project’s completion.
- Be prepared to discuss – and accept -- **alterations** to your established time line.
- **ALWAYS** pad these **numbers**.

Question #4: **How difficult will it be to implement?**

- **IN WRITING**, create and present a customized **implementation plan**.
- In addition to COST, BENEFIT and TIME estimates, provide information regarding the scope of the project and the required specifications, to include:
 1. A proposed **organization chart** (e.g., who will be responsible for what and to whom; and
 2. A formalized **communication plan** (e.g., frequency, duration, scope).
- Consider (or limit) the scope / reach of your proposed actions and identify required **specifications** or policy **modifications**.
- **DON’T** overreact if you don’t receive **public credit** for the final implementation plan.

Question #5: **What are the consequences of inaction?**

- **DON’T** fear initial **rejection** of your idea / proposal.
- **DON’T** **overreact** to negative comments or questions you may receive.
- **DO** anticipate some measure of **pushback**.
- **DO** craft your response carefully.
 - Example / Part 1: *“Let me assure you that regardless your decision here today, my commitment to the organization will remain solid.”*

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- Example / Part 2: *“However, if you choose NOT to approve this proposal, let me remind you of the **benefits** which will **not be realized** as a direct result of **your decision** here today.”*

Ideas to Implement

About Phillip Van Hooser

A former FORTUNE 500 Human Resources executive, Phillip Van Hooser's depth of practical leadership experience in manufacturing, banking and the boardroom equips high potentials, emerging leaders and managers to:

- + Motivate a multi-generational workforce
- + Manage conflict and change
- + Improve communication skills between employees and superiors
- + Build high-performance work teams and
- + Create a culture of continuous leadership growth.

Phil is a Hall of Fame speaker, author and leadership development expert for top U.S. companies. His subject matter expertise includes personal leadership, employee motivation, team building and communication skills.

His latest book, *Leaders Ought To Know: 11 Ground Rules for Common Sense Leadership*, is a must-read handbook for leaders feeling the pressure to perform.

Learn more at vanhooser.com.