

Coaching a consecutive team presentation: a challenge and opportunity

A recent trend in business presentations is to give a team presentation. This consists of a whole team presenting consecutively, usually for a senior executive visiting from abroad. Team presentations have a number of challenges: each presentation must stand alone but be part of a continuous thread and reinforce the same message, or story. The team needs to prepare both alone and together.

The opportunity to prepare the legal team of a major multinational in Buenos Aires to give a consecutive presentation to their General Counsel on a biannual visit to LatAm was a challenge for [Gola & Asociados](#). But one that we rose to.

Marcela Gola and I worked together on this as the presentation was to be held entirely in English, but for me it was my first time coaching a whole team, and Marcela already had experience in that field. I was grateful for her support and guidance.

The team was large: 8 lawyers in all, and the numbers fluctuated slightly throughout the training, as new members joined and left the team. There were 2 labor lawyers, both of whom had some issues with their English so I had to work with them on their scripts as well as prepare them for any possible questions. All the others were fluent and comfortable giving a presentation in English.

The other lawyers were from different areas such as Compliance and Corporate. They were all under the age of 40 and more than half under 30. It was a dynamic, vibrant young team to work with. They were all women except for one man. One of the lawyers was based in Chile, so her coaching sessions were virtual, presenting yet another challenge.

The main aim of this group presentation was to show the visiting General Counsel that despite the team's average age, they were all more than capable of handling the difficulties and responsibilities that they had to deal with on a daily basis in their work. Our job as coaches was to bring out their expertise and capabilities to the forefront.

The team leader is an extraordinary woman, and although I have worked with lawyers for nearly 20 years, she is the most creative one I have ever met. She loves to play and has an eye for hiring young smart talent and giving them the chance to prove themselves by offering them challenging projects. It was a pleasure and an honor to work with her and her team.

The way we worked with the team was intense, we had a lot to cover in a relatively short time period, and with the importance of this visit, nothing could go wrong.

After an initial brainstorming session with the team and their team leader to define the general story, strategy and role of each lawyer, we had 4 different coaching sessions:

- The first was with Marcela and me to discuss and prepare their individual presentations. We dedicated an hour to each lawyer to help them prepare their presentation.
- The second and third sessions were split up into 1.5 -2 hour sessions with each lawyer with me alone. This was an opportunity for each lawyer to practice their individual presentation in English. On the third session I filmed them so that they had a chance to see themselves on film and learn from their mistakes.

- Finally, just before the General Counsel was due to fly in, we held a dress rehearsal, with the whole team giving the presentation consecutively. They had to be able to deliver their presentation in a random order, which was chosen by the General Counsel on an electronic device, to make the process more dynamic and playful.

Timing was key: each individual presentation could not extend beyond 5 minutes, and there could be no repetition either. Yet each story had to link together to create a larger, more complex story web to illustrate the work this team was carrying out.

The big day came, and the team presentation was a great success. The General Counsel of the multinational came away impressed and enlightened by the Argentina team.

For Marcela and me it was a learning process too. As coaches, we learnt how to guide the team bringing out their strengths and letting their expertise and individuality shine through and complement each other.

At [Gola & Asociados](#) we are keen to replicate this type of group training in other companies, both international and local.

Joanna Richardson

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