Chapter 10: Making Presentations

The McKinsey Way — Ethan M. Rasiel • Executive Strategy Breakdown

THE MCKINSEY WAY

1 Structuring via the Pyramid Principle

- ✓ Executive communication must lead with the conclusion: state the core recommendation up front, followed by supporting arguments, backed by granular data.
- ✓ Busy executives think inductively and deductively from outcomes; burying the recommendation on slide forty creates impatience and invites defensive interruptions.
- ✓ A pyramid-structured deck ensures that even if an executive cuts a one-hour meeting to ten minutes, the strategic message and financial rationale are instantly understood.

2 Pre-Wiring Everything to Eliminate Boardroom Surprises

- ✓ Never drop a surprising strategic bomb in a formal steering committee; unexpected conclusions trigger reflexive public resistance and defensive posturing.
- ✓ 'Pre-wiring' means scheduling one-on-one briefings with each key decision-maker before the final presentation to walk them through data and recommendations.
- ✓ Pre-wiring uncovers private political objections in advance, allowing the team to refine analysis, address concerns, and guarantee unanimous board consensus.

3 Tailoring Presentation Altitude to C-Suite Decision-Makers

- ✓ Calibrate the presentation's altitude to the specific audience: CEOs care about shareholder value and market share, while plant managers care about shift logistics.
- ✓ Resist the temptation to showcase every spreadsheet model; relegate dense methodology and peripheral datasets to the appendix.
- ✓ Keep the main deck focused on strategic trade-offs, financial returns, operational risks, and decisive milestones that require executive authorization.