

Present to stakeholders confidently

Be confident

Confidence comes from having conviction in what you're presenting. Conviction comes from really understanding the problem you're solving, and having validated your solution(s). Lack of confidence will register as half-baked thinking.

Provide context

Before diving into any solutions, always frame where your thinking is coming from and what it took to get you here. Call out the due diligence you've done, relevant data points, and assumptions before getting into designs.

Understand their role

Believe it or not CEO's are mere humans, and being a big boss is a job too. You are trying to help them make a decision, by providing inputs and an informed proposal. Design enables stakeholders to make hard product decisions, so don't fear them- help them.

Pump the brakes

Breathe in between points. Avoid talking too fast, especially if you have an accent. Review body language (even virtually). Ask for questions/feedback: the goal isn't to get through your preso; it's to enable decisions to get made.

Let them decide

Don't just come in with a hard proposal. Emphasize on data points that drove the decision making to get you to this point. Don't mentally try to "win"- as long as you have more clarity after the meeting than before it you're on the right track.

Diffuse bullying

Stakeholders on power trips can be unproductive with their feedback. An easy way to settle a stakeholder down is to physically write down and repeat their feedback, and have them confirm you "got it right". After hearing back what they said, they'll change their tune.

Speak their language

Avoid design speak, talk their language. They don't care about all the tools you used and design process you followed- talk about what the organization cares about- business goals, what customers are saying and impact.