

# How to present architecture issues to higher management

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## Abstract

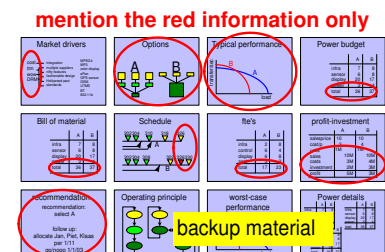
Architects struggle with their visibility at higher management echelons. The introvert nature of architects is a severe handicap. Participation of architects in management teams is important for balanced technical sound decisions and strategy. Improved managerial communication skills of architects are required.

This article describes how to give a more effective presentation to higher management teams. Subjects discussed are the preparation, content and form, do and don't advise.

## Distribution

This article or presentation is written as part of the Gaudí project. The Gaudí project philosophy is to improve by obtaining frequent feedback. Frequent feedback is pursued by an open creation process. This document is published as intermediate or nearly mature version to get feedback. Further distribution is allowed as long as the document remains complete and unchanged.

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# Characteristics of managers in higher management teams

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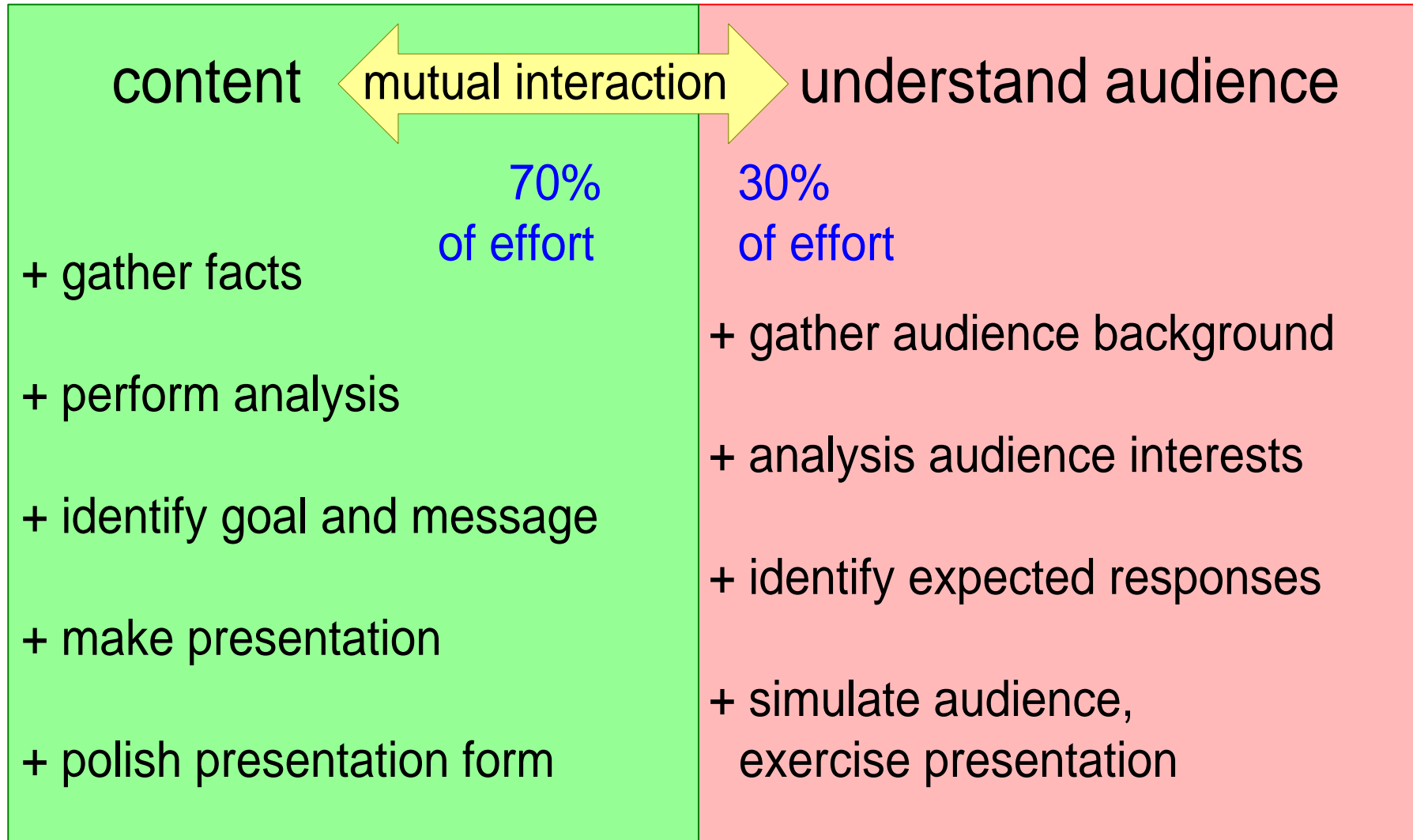
## *common characteristics*

- + action-oriented
- + solution rather than problem
- + impatient, busy
- + want facts not beliefs
- + operate in a political context
- + bottom-line oriented:  
profit, return on investment,  
market share, etc.

## *highly variable characteristics*

- ? technology knowledge  
from extensive to shallow
- ? style from power play to  
inspirational leadership

## Always prepare with small team!



# Recommended content

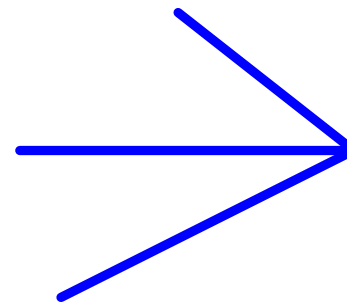
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+ clear problem statement (what, why)

+ solution exploration (how)

+ options, recommendations

+ expected actions or decisions



supported by  
**facts and figures**

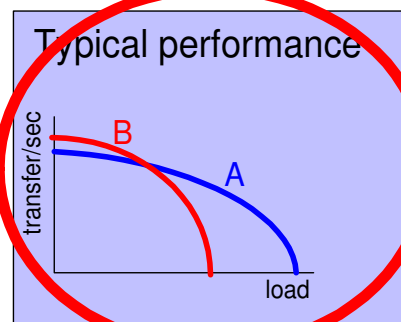
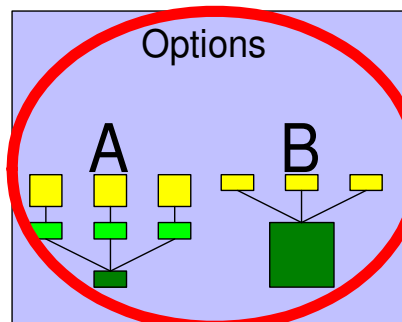
## mention the red information only

### Market drivers

- Cost
- ttm
- WOW
- DRM

- integration
- multiple suppliers
- nifty features
- fashionable design
- Hollywood pact
- standards

- MPEG4
- MP3
- color display
- ePen
- GPS sensor
- GSM
- UTMS
- BT
- 802.11b

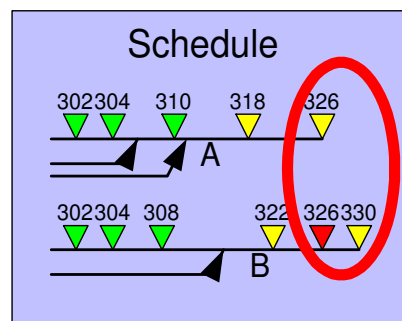


### Power budget

	A	B
infra	7	8
sensor	6	8
display	20	17
power	3	4
<b>total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>37</b>

### Bill of material

	A	B
infra	7	8
sensor	6	8
display	20	17
power	3	4
<b>total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>37</b>



### fte's

	A	B
infra	2	8
control	6	4
display	6	8
and	3	3
<b>total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>23</b>

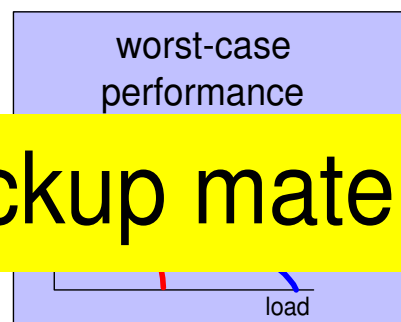
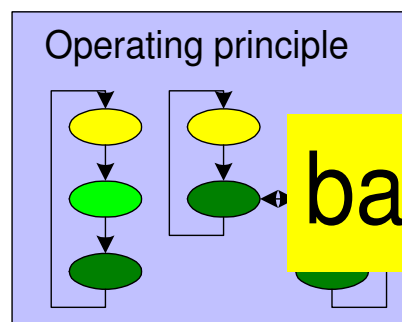
### profit-investment

	A	B
salesprice	10	10
cost/p	3	4
units	1M	1M
sales	10M	10M
costs	3M	4M
investment	2M	3M
profit	5M	3M

### recommendation

recommendation:  
select A

follow up:  
allocate Jan, Piet, Klaas  
per 1/11  
go/nogo 1/1/03



### Power details

	A	B
infra	7	8
sensor	6	8
display	20	17
power	3	4
<b>total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>37</b>

**backup material**

# Form is important

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poor form can easily distract from purpose and content

presentation material

- + professional
- + moderate use of color and animations
- + readable
- + use demos and show artifacts

presenter's appearance

- + well dressed
- + self confident but open

but stay yourself,  
stay authentic

# Don't force your opinion, understand the audience

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## *do not*

- preach beliefs
- underestimate technology knowledge of managers
- tell them what they did wrong
- oversell

## *do*

- + quantify, show figures and facts
- + create faith in your knowledge
- + focus on objectives
- + manage expectations

# How to cope with managerial dominance

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## *do not*

- let one of the managers hijack the meeting
- build up tensions by withholding facts or solutions
- be lost or panic at unexpected inputs or alternatives

## *do*

- + maintain the lead
- + be to the point and direct
- + acknowledge input, indicate consequences (facts based)

# Exercise presentation to higher management

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- + Bring a clear **architecture message** to
- + a **Management team** at least 2 hierarchical levels higher
- + with **10 minutes** for **presentation including discussion**  
(no limitation on number of slides)
- \* architecture message =  
**technology** options in relation with **market/product**
- \* address the **concerns** of the **management stakeholders** :  
translation required from **technology** issues into  
**business consequences** (months, fte's, turnover, profit, investments)

# Exercise schedule

