
PANEL INTERVIEW PRESENTATIONS

A GUIDE FOR
MARKETING CANDIDATES



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PRESENTATIONS IN INTERVIEWS

Presentations are generally found towards the final stages of the marketing interview process.

Delivered to a panel, in person or via video call, they are a vital part of the interview process. Nail this and there is a strong chance that you will get the job.

However, they are a challenge and require preparation and time.

We strongly believe in supporting our candidates and have collaborated with marketing leaders in tech to build this essential guide on what is important when tackling presentations and what they expect from candidates in order to shine.

As our Director Karen Lloyd says, "the most successful people are the ones who see this as an opportunity to shine and to stand in the shoes of their future self rather than another hoop to jump through as part of the process."

WHAT DOES THE PANEL ASSESS?

A presentation is designed to test many different aspects including:

- Your performance against the role competencies
- How you would approach the role
- How you take and deliver on a brief
- How you respond to feedback
- How you manage questions and challenge
- Your cultural fit

WHO SITS ON THE PANEL?

It depends on the seniority of the role, but you can expect a combination of:

- The Hiring Manager
- A Talent / HR representative
- Key stakeholders (role dependant)
- Senior Manager (may be hiring manager's manager)
- A member of the peer group



STANDING IN THE SHOES OF YOUR FUTURE SELF

Presentations are a far more common part of the interview process for marketing professionals today.

Their inclusion is an indication of how thorough a company is about its recruitment process. They aren't just going through the motions, but are serious about appointing the right person for the role and are prepared to invest additional time to make sure they make the right decision.

Presentations to panels are also useful insights to you as a candidate. The process gives you a view on how the people you may be working with engage, communicate and collaborate.

Even though you may feel challenged and put on the spot, this isn't necessarily a reflection of the culture, it may be an interview strategy to test your soft skills.

Businesses don't ask you to produce a presentation for a panel to see how good you are at Powerpoint, or to test your theoretical marketing knowledge.

They are trying to see you as a whole; how good you are at collaborating, engaging stakeholders, communicating your ideas and your cultural fit.

The question in everyone's mind is "can we work together?"

It is a question that you as the applicant also need to ask.

If you do feel awkward, our advice is to imagine you are already working for the company and this is simply the delivery of a project.

They want to see you succeed as much as you do!



THE BRIEF

The majority of organisations will use a presentation as a way of assessing how you would approach the job itself.

You can generally expect therefore that the brief will be specific to the role and its purpose and responsibilities rather than a generic "marketing" presentation.

You may be asked to develop and present a marketing plan, a campaign plan, an ABM plan, a go to market strategy; what ever it is the role will require.

Many companies try to keep the brief as close as possible to the role and its overall responsibilities.

They are looking to see you as you would act in role; working with the unknown; responding to feedback from different sources, collaboration styles and ability to meet the brief.



GUIDANCE FOR CANDIDATES

- Do not miss out elements of the brief; even senior candidates have been known to do this.
- If you are struggling with a particular element, seek advice - your Recruitment Partner should be a go-to in this case.
- This is not a showcase of your academic marketing knowledge.
- Keep it in context and relevant to the practicalities of the role and what you think is important.
- Do not copy marketing plans or strategies from the public domain - it needs to be your own work.
- Plan your time - allow time for feedback and be prepared for a Q&A after your presentation.



RESEARCH

Your research will be primarily restricted to information in the public domain; companies understand this and will not expect you to know the ins and outs of the business.

However, that does not mean your research should be limited to a cursory review of the company's website and LinkedIn company profile.

You will be expected to have a top level understanding of the market, competitors, partners, channels, product propositions and target audience.

This all takes time, so it is important that you set aside time to properly research as well as develop the presentation itself.



GUIDANCE FOR CANDIDATES

- Consider the sources of information available to you beyond the company website - industry media, company press releases, social media, competitor information etc.
- Your Recruitment Partner can also be a useful source of information - don't hesitate to ask them!
- Some companies are open to a discussion with the hiring manager prior to the presentation - however, this should be used as the last stage in your research, not as your starting point! Make the most of the opportunity to ask questions and use it to clarify and help shape your presentation.
- Remember to include the panel members in your research. How do they fit into the organisation? Can you establish a rapport through shared interests or experiences?



THE PRESENTATION

Presentations are a regular part of life for most marketers, so it may be that you are confident in crafting a presentation.

However, it is especially important to ensure this one is engaging and delivers your message. You are not delivering to colleagues who know you well and are used to your approach. This is a finite opportunity to make the impression you want to.

Getting your ideas down is the first hurdle to overcome. You can then take the time to craft your ideas so they translate into a coherent and well flowing structure.

Karen says, "Don't be afraid to think outside the box and bring yourself into the presentation. Can you make it fun, interactive - how does it also represent you?"



GUIDANCE FOR CANDIDATES

- It is not a script; adhere to standard presentation guidelines - bullet points and images as prompts for you to talk around is ideal.
- Death by Powerpoint is a real thing! Keep your audience engaged and interested.
- Bring your personality; the panel is just as interested to see who you are and how your thought processes work as they are to gauge your marketing competencies.
- Practice in advance with a friend - pacing the presentation is very important. Rushing through will not give a good impression, nor will running over your allotted time.
- Build in time for Q & A at the end and feedback.

POOR EXAMPLE

Inbound Marketing Strategy

1. Attract the right audience

- Create blog posts that will engage, educate, and detail the product proposition and drive lead capture
- Social content - build social plan that will reach our preferred target audience with content that engages
- Ads - online advertising strategy using key social channels and Google ads to reach target audience

2. Engage potential customers

- Email marketing - direct email to opt in lists / consider other ways of generating email lists
- Conversation bots - supporting web users using AI bots

3. Delight Clients

- Smart content - consider UX experience and abilities to tailor content to customer interests
- Automation - use of automation tools to manage content delivery across multiple channels

GOOD EXAMPLE





THE DELIVERY: PRESENTING IN PERSON

Prior to Covid, the majority of panel presentations were in person events. However the interview landscape has changed drastically since 2020 and the majority of presentations are delivered via video.

In-person interviews are returning however and panel presentations in person are a vastly different experience to online, although possibly more nerve wracking!

One huge bonus is the non-verbal feedback you receive when presenting in person - it allows you to instinctively read the room and tell how your audience is responding and helps to build a immediate rapport more easily.



GUIDANCE FOR CANDIDATES

- Arrive with backups of your presentation, ideally both on laptop and memory stick if possible.
- Hard Copy Notes - consider limitations on the presentation set up. You may not be able to use the Presenter view.
- Remember first impressions; from the receptionist to any interviewers you haven't yet met - make them count!
- Take a deep breath and relax (easier said than done, we know). Take confidence from your strong preparation, practice and be ready to respond agilely to feedback and questions.
- Smile and be yourself - they want to see you and your approach.



THE DELIVERY: PRESENTING ONLINE

Video presentations are now the norm; anyone working from home through the pandemic has listened to, if not delivered at least one.

An interview presentation has many of the same challenges that any other presentation does in this format. It limits your ability to read body language and grasp whether people agree or disagree with you or whether you are properly engaging your audience.



GUIDANCE FOR CANDIDATES

- Practice! Get familiar with the tech, be that Zoom, Teams, Skype or another software package. Do a couple of test runs with a friend to make sure you are confident and the presentation works.
- Log on a few minutes early - avoid getting flustered by having the presentation up and be ready to greet your interviewers.
- Consider your environment and background. This is no different to any other video interview - find the full advice on this here.
- Have a back up plan - what will you do if your internet goes down / laptop crashes? Get a phone number for the hiring manager and be able to email the presentation and dial in if necessary.
- Be open to pausing in your delivery and checking in with the panel members. This allows you to check engagement and also allows them to ask any pertinent questions as they may not want to interrupt you.

KEY TAKEAWAYS FOR PRESENTATIONS

PREPARATION

Prepare your technology, have a back up plan in place and have your notes to hand offline



CULTURAL VALUES

Research the company values and demonstrate how your values and style align



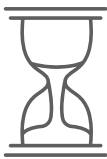
PRACTICE

Whether delivering in person or online, run through with a friend in advance



TIMING

Pace yourself; leave enough time for Q&A and feedback without rushing through the slides



ENGAGEMENT

Engage and interest your audience; less waffle and more concise delivery of your ideas



RAPPORT

Use your research and past interviews to help build a rapport with the panel members



COLLABORATION

Take care to manage the multiple stakeholders on the panel and show a collaborative approach



PERSONALITY

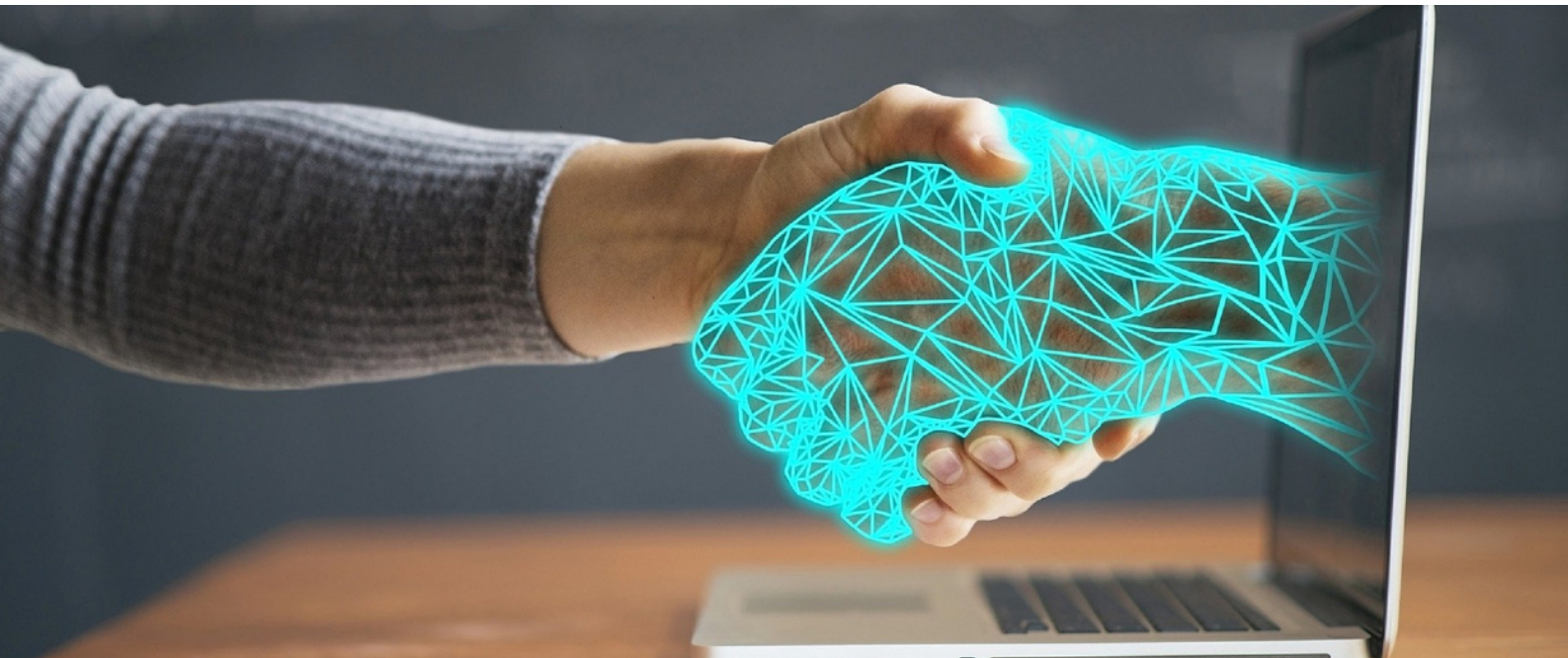
Don't be afraid to let your personality show. Panels assess your soft as well as hard skills



SUPPORT

We are here to support you so reach out to your Recruitment Partner if you are struggling





WHO IS ARMSTRONG LLOYD?

We are a “high end” niche search (head-hunting) consultancy, working with marketing specialists in the £50 - 150k+ salary bracket.

Partnering with B2B technology businesses, we focus on helping them invest in their marketing teams; putting exceptional marketing people like you at the heart of their business.

This isn't just a job to us; we are as passionate about your career in marketing as you are and treasure our long term relationships with our marketing colleagues.

We are so proud of the role we play in helping marketing professionals progress and develop, not only in a single job, but throughout their marketing careers.



01737 457 330

armstronglloyd.co.uk