

From the Editor

The Medical Science Liaison Presentation

Shine in Your Interview

During the face-to-face interview, a candidate for a Medical Science Liaison (MSL) position will be asked to give a presentation. The candidate

may be asked to present material of their own, but most often, the candidate will be asked to give a presentation based on a clinical paper provided by a hiring manager.

Presentation Success

The Presentation Serves Multiple Purposes

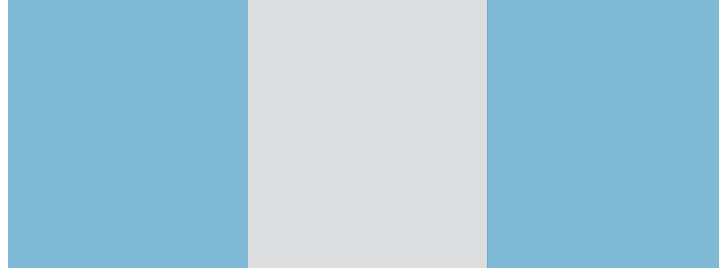
1. It allows the hiring manager and others in attendance to assess a candidate's scientific knowledge. This includes evaluating a candidate's ability to synthesize information and apply that information to the Company's product(s).
2. Beyond demonstrating what a candidate knows about the Company and its products, the presentation allows a candidate to demonstrate what he/she knows about a therapeutic area, a Company's competitors, and the marketplace.
3. The presentation also lets the audience know if a candidate is professional and relatable and how he/she performs under pressure, handles questions, and tends to their appearance.

The Company simulates a real-world experience, hence; the audience in a setting that is conducive to presenting material (e.g., conference room). If a candidate is free to present their own material, it's recommended that the presentation is on a scientific/clinical topic that is relevant to the Company. If the candidate is given the topic and guidelines, it's critical for the candidate to strictly adhere to what's been provided.

Preparing for the MSL Presentation

1. Begin your preparation by asking who will be in attendance for your presentation. Understand what they are expecting or needing from the presentation. Take time to ask the person who invited you for a full and complete analysis of who will be in the room. Your audience may include nonmedical people. Be prepared to speak to the entire audience and explain your slides in terms nonmedical people can understand.
2. Periodically, a candidate is asked to give a presentation to one person (after the group presentation). This is to learn if you can handle impromptu requests.
3. Practice, but do not memorize your slide deck. Be prepared to present your material out of sequence. Keep your presentation within the bounds given. Often, you'll have 10 minutes to present and 5 minutes to answer questions.
4. Have your presentation ready to digitally submit in a timely manner. The Company may ask for it before your arrival so they can set up the room. Make sure you've checked for spelling, grammar, typos, etc. before submitting the presentation. Have another person review your material before you hit "send."

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5. Technology can fail. It's advisable to print copies of your presentation. At a minimum, take 6 printed copies with you. If the audience is no more than 10, print 10 copies.
 6. You'll want your presentation on your laptop and on a flash drive. Know how to hook up a projector. Additionally, take your own laser pointer.
2. Step your audience into each section of your presentation, for example: "For the next 5 minutes we will review..."
 3. Look at the audience, not at the screen. Have a few notecards, if you need prompts.
 4. Be humble, confident, and poised. This presentation can make or break you. This is not the time to be an egomaniac.

Answering Questions During the MSL Presentation

1. Members of the audience may interrupt you and ask questions during the presentation. Or someone may do something annoying like clicking their ballpoint pen. Remember, this is part of the "test." Your audience wants to learn how you handle various situations.
2. If you get a question for which you do not know the answer, it's acceptable to say you do not have an answer, but that you will speak to the Medical Information Department or the Medical Director (others) to get the information. Promise delivery of the information within 24-48 hours. This will inform the inquisitor that you know how to navigate the Company to find answers.
3. You may be asked a question in multiple ways. Be prepared to answer calmly. This process is often used to learn if you get frustrated.
4. It's okay for you ask questions of audience members.

Rocking the MSL Presentation

1. Introduce yourself. Warm up and engage the audience with a story that you can connect to the presentation material. If you know who is in the room, the introduction is a good time to acknowledge your audience (e.g., "It's good to have legal, medical, and administration representatives in the audience today.").

5. Present facts, not conjecture. Your presentation must be evidence-based and fair and balanced. When you can relate information to safety and efficacy, do so.
6. Engage your audience as much as possible. Figure out where you can have 2-3 interactions with the audience. It's good to create a conversation.

Evaluating the MSL Presentation

Take some time after every presentation to review what you believe went well and what could be improved. If possible, ask the hiring manager/ audience for their feedback. Also, let the recruiter you are working with know how the presentation went. The recruiter may have feedback from the hiring manager to provide you.

Good luck with your presentations. Remember practice makes perfect. Hopefully, these insights will help you knock the ball out of the park! ■