



BLACK ISLE  
GROUP

# Compelling Communication

CQI

May 2018

# Structure Persuasive Ideas

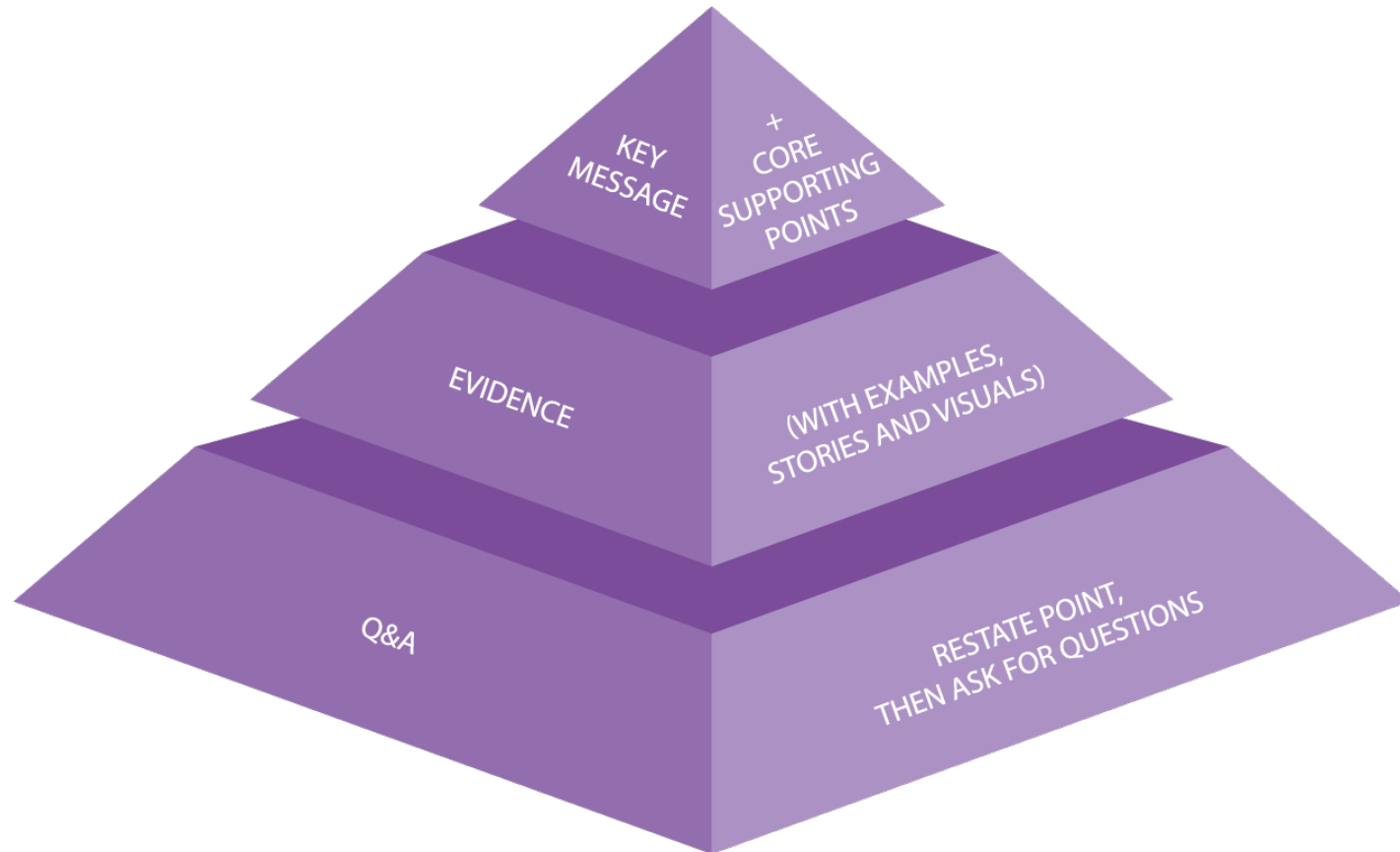
## START WITH “WHY”

Think to yourself “WHY should they continue to listen”? Put yourself in the listener’s shoes. Think what are the key issues for them? AND (this is the important bit) what is your opinion or view on those issues? Trust yourself to give good insight and ensure you find your true voice.

Don’t waste your or the listener’s time by preparing something that will not add value or be remembered by them. So many people, and often because we have been educated in this way, start with the background or scene setting. If you start by telling people things they already know you will not grab their attention or make them think you have really thought this through.

**This is about getting your audience’s buy-in. They need to see where you are coming from at the start.**

# The Pyramid Model



To persuade effectively start with the finer point of your message and only then back this up with detail from the foundations/background.

# How to find the Finer Point

- Ask yourself “**what do you want the listener to think, feel and do as a result?**”
- **It is often your conclusion** or it is stated at the end of a message when you first think it through.
- Give an executive summary of your message, or ask “**what is the bottom line for this audience?**”
- Think of your message as the answer to a question the listener has posed. **Make sure you start with the actual answer.**
- **Think “two up”** – in other words what does the end user need your message for – what do they need to do with it? This helps you give them what they want.

**Remember it is the finer point from the listener’s point of view.**

# Then give Evidence

## How can you prove it?

You only need to headline supporting points at first to deliver focused and high impact messages. Further detail can come afterwards. Do it this way and you will provoke good and relevant questions.

Put yourself in the listener's shoes and structure your evidence logically, so that it is easy to follow. You only need to have two or three core supporting arguments. Any more will dilute the message and/or you risk boring people.

Use data, case studies, examples, stories or logical analysis to deliver evidence that backs up and proves your "why" message, and compel the listener to trust and understand your recommendation.

**Get your audience to believe and act upon your finer point by backing it up with your arguments afterwards.**

# Handle Questions with Confidence

## **P**ause

Take control, don't speak immediately. A confident thinking pause will add gravitas and give you time to prepare your answer. It will flatter the questioner and disguise the difficult question.

## **A**nswer

Start your answer with the actual answer ie the finer point. Eg If it is a yes/no question then start with yes/no. Remember that "I don't know" can be your most credible answer. If people think you are making it up as you go along, they may start to question your other answers!

## **S**hort

Short answers are more memorable and more believable. They are also simpler to give. People are not looking for you to download everything you know on the question.

## **S**weet

It is key to keep your emotions in check. Be pleasant and stay calm.

**You want to show you are trustworthy, as much as, or if not more than, showing how much you know.**

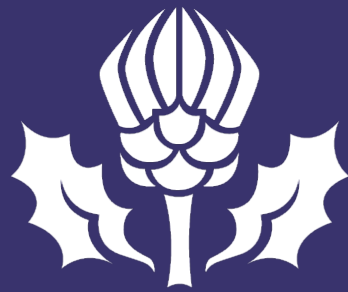
# Harriet Heneghan



Harriet is a Director of Black Isle (Europe) and a highly skilled and experienced coach, having worked with large international businesses for over 10 years. Her core expertise is in helping leaders, professionals and executives achieve their full potential in the area of personal communication and influencing skills. She excels in showing people how to increase trust and emotional buy-in through a mix of psychology and practical learning tools.

Prior to joining Black Isle, Harriet spent over 10 years working for UBS Investment Bank.

Harriet has an MSc in organisational psychology and is qualified and experienced in the use of Hogan Assessments, EQ-i 2.0 and EQ 360..



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