

Our main focus in this month's **TRAINFO** is on **PRESENTATIONS**. Even if you don't have to give formal presentations in your daily business, it is still important to be prepared to do so if required. And in all probability you have to give ad-hoc 'presentations' – or status reports to your boss or to colleagues in a meeting.

The most important factor is preparation. Unless you are very experienced in international business, your brain is used to thinking and reporting in German. The switch in languages can cause stress, and even a black-out! It is a good idea to transfer your German knowledge to an English 'data-base' in a relaxed environment. You can do this by-the-way – get into the habit of thinking about your daily business in English, not just in German. If possible, have regular 'English' lunches with a colleague and talk about your projects in English. It may seem strange at first, but after a while it will be quite natural.

With regard to formal presentations, however, thorough preparation is a 'must'. After four decades of observing what I call 'the burst balloon effect' – the collapse of self-confidence that most Germans suffer when they have to make a presentation in English, I can only warn anyone who has to speak English in public not to underestimate the time and training necessary to do this well. That's the bad news. The good news is that with such training there is no reason why someone with only an elementary knowledge of the English language should not be able to communicate successfully with his audience.

Starting a presentation

Ladies and Gentlemen, I would like to thank you for inviting me here today. It is my pleasure to welcome you here today.

Introducing yourself and your topic

Before I start my presentation, I would like to introduce myself. The subject of my presentation today is ...

Overview of the presentation

I've divided my presentation into three main sections. My talk will last ...

Announcing question time

There will be an opportunity for questions at the end of each section / at the end of my presentation.

What to say during the presentation

*So, first of all, I would like to talk about ...
Now I'd like to move on to my next point ...
That concludes the second part of my talk.
Now I'd like to turn to ...*

Focusing on what you would like to say

*I would like to underline the point that ...
How will this affect your business? First of all, it will mean that ...*



Dealing with interruptions

Could you hold that question for a moment, please. I think you will find that I answer it during the next part of my presentation.

Ending the question-and-answer session

That's all we have time for. Thank you very much for your attention.

Ending the presentation

*In conclusion, I would like to say ...
I would like to thank you for your attention and wish you all a safe journey home.*

IDIOM OF THE MONTH:

EASY AS PIE

means that something is very easy to do.

e.g.

“How was the presentation?”

“Easy as pie. I could answer all the questions from the floor without any problems at all.”



PRESENTATIONS

The first rule is to prepare the *content* of the presentation as carefully as usual, but to *free-up* the language. Do not make the mistake of writing your presentation in complicated German, getting someone to translate this into equally complicated English and then bore your audience by reading it to them! The criterion of any communication is KISS: *Keep It Short & Simple*. There are no prizes for the most complicated sentences and the longest words! Tell your listeners what you are going to tell them – tell them – then tell them what you have told them.

Your body language should be relaxed, friendly and self-confident – after all, could your audience give the same presentation in German? Be careful not to fold your arms or play nervously with a pencil. Don't look *'grimmig'*! Remember to SMILE. Don't stare over the heads of the audience or read continuously from your manuscript – look up, and repeat what you have just read on your cue cards in your own words.

Talk directly to every member of the audience, involve them mentally in what you are saying. If you are presenting to a large audience, divide them up into smaller groups in your mind and speak to each group.

Don't speak too quickly and forget the pauses necessary for the audience to absorb, process and react to your information. Warm up your voice before you start by speaking aloud – in English. In addition, not everyone in the audience is a Payments Transaction specialist – or a native speaker of English. So it is important not to use insider abbreviations or information short-cuts.

Finally, never give a speech for the first time in public. Get used to hearing the sound of your own voice speaking English. Practice your speech aloud at home or in front of friends or colleagues, in the bathroom, walking the dogs, sailing your boat, riding your horse or hitting golf balls on the driving range. Live it, eat it, breathe it, sleep it! When you then stand up for real, you will find that giving a presentation in English is as **'easy as pie'**!

