

Executive Event

Leader Speaks Guidelines - leader leaving

This is a list of topics you might want to include in your Leader Speaks. It is not the intention that you should include each and every one of these nor is the list comprehensive. This is simply a set of best-practice headings that we have picked up from watching many leaders and teams in many different situations and organisations.

The news of your departure will dominate people's thoughts, particularly if this is the first time they have heard anything about it. Therefore consider what other messages you need to get across and have a clear delineation between topics that are 'business as usual' or related to your departure. Consider also which to tackle first.

Leader Speaks - business as usual

- (1) Start by explaining the areas you are going to cover
- (2) Key things you want from the event
- (3) Key issues facing the organisation
- (4) What's going on outside the organisation - operating environment, politics and so on
- (5) How your mission, vision and strategies are going
- (6) How the organisation is doing
- (7) Use specific data wherever possible - performance, customer satisfaction, financial
- (8) How the different parts of the organisation are doing and any emerging organisation structure issues
- (9) How the Corporate Brain is doing
- (10) Key issues and priorities for this team
- (11) What you have been working on - internally and externally
- (12) Any other messages you want to get across
- (13) Finish by recapping what you have covered

Your departure

- (1) Start by stating the facts about your departure
 - (a) "There is one more thing I need to cover in my Leader Speaks..."
 - (b) Why you are leaving
 - (c) When you will be leaving or, if the date is not firm, approximately when and the process by which the date will be determined
- (2) Who will be taking over from you, whether short-term or permanently, what the process for selection will be or has been
- (3) Who in the room already knew, anyone else outside the room who knows, anyone outside the organisation who knows
- (4) What the knock-on effects will be to the team and the rest of the organisation, to clients, to suppliers, to key projects
- (5) Changes you would like to see
- (6) What is likely to stay the same
- (7) Your initial thoughts/steer on release of the news, both internal and external
- (8) Your initial thoughts on the handover process to your immediate successor
- (9) Previous experience of leaders leaving - where it has worked well and where it hasn't
- (10) Any other key facts
- (11) Say that this is not a farewell speech - it is the start of a natural process of transition

Notes

Use flipcharts - this is particularly important for the leaving content as you want people to take in everything you say despite the trickiness of the topic. Unlike a run-of-the-mill Leader Speaks, we may intervene with a Round Robin at key intervals as well as facilitate the planned Reflections. If your immediate successor is in the room, there is the option of asking them to say a few words also - we have guidelines for this if required.

Time

As long as you need to get the job done, especially on the topic of leaving.