
Communicating Financial Results to Executives Training Course: Message, Visuals and Q&A

8 – 12 March 2027
Amsterdam





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Programme Summary

Communicating financial results to executives, from message design to visuals and questions, is the subject of this five-day training course for finance managers, controllers, planning and finance directors at a managerial level, ending in a results presentation pack for one organisation. Finance teams often hold sound numbers but lose the room through crowded slides and unclear asks. The programme moves from message principles, through diagnosis of existing reports, to design of storyline, visuals and responses, then to application. Mars Training Centre UK delivers this programme in communicating financial results.

The Business Case

Decisions follow what executives take in, not what the ledger holds. When finance leaders present results with a clear answer, a few well-chosen visuals and ready replies to challenge, boards decide sooner and trust the figures more. Weak presentations push the same questions back to finance, month after month, and consume time that analysis needs. Clear delivery also gives finance a stronger voice in planning discussions.

- **Decision Time:** Shortens when each presentation opens with a recommendation and the evidence behind it.
- **Rework Requests:** Fall as variances and assumptions are explained once, in a consistent format.
- **Stakeholder Confidence:** Grows as questions are anticipated and answered from a prepared evidence file.

Principles and Evidence Base

- **The Pyramid Principle:** It supports the answer-first structure used to build messages in Sessions 1 and 3.
- **IFRS Practice Statement 1 Management Commentary:** It guides the narrative on performance, position and prospects drafted in Session 3.
- **Cognitive load theory:** It limits how much each slide and table carries in the visual design of Session 3.

Intended Participants

- Finance managers who present monthly results and forecasts to senior colleagues.
- Controllers who explain variances and close outcomes to non-finance leaders.
- Planning and analysis leads who turn models into recommendations.
- Finance directors who address boards, investors and audit committees.

The programme serves banking, manufacturing, retail and public bodies.



Learning Outcomes

1. Participants will be able to evaluate existing finance reports and slides for clarity, audience fit and decision value.
2. Participants will be able to diagnose where a financial message loses an executive audience.
3. Participants will be able to construct an answer-first storyline for results, variances and forecasts.
4. Participants will be able to design charts and tables that show one point each.
5. Participants will be able to prioritise likely challenges and prepare evidence for each.
6. Participants will be able to justify a recommendation to a board in a short, structured presentation.

Programme Structure

Day 1: Communicating Financial Results: Audience and Message Principles

What does this audience need to decide, and how should the answer be framed?

- Audience Needs Profile
- Pyramid Principle Message Structure
- Decision and Ask Statement
- Management Commentary Narrative Elements
- Key Message One-Pager

Day 2: Diagnosing Finance Reports, Slides and Variance Stories

Where do current reports and presentations confuse, overload or fail to persuade?

- Board Pack Clarity Review
- Slide Density Audit
- Variance Explanation Check
- Chart Choice Error Log
- Question History Analysis

Day 3: Designing the Storyline, Visuals and Narrative

How are results, variances and forecasts turned into a short, persuasive storyline?

- Storyline Board Template
- Chart and Table Selection Guide
- Variance Bridge Chart
- Performance, Position and Prospects Narrative
- Slide Simplification Rules



Day 4: Delivery, Challenge and Business Case Presentation

How does a finance leader hold the room, handle challenge and win a decision?

- Opening and Close Script
- Challenge Question Register
- Evidence File for Answers
- Business Case Presentation Format
- Peer Feedback Rubric

Day 5: Applying Communicating Financial Results in One Organisation

Is the results presentation pack ready to be given to a real executive audience?

- Applying the Session 2 Clarity Review to the Chosen Pack
- Rebuilding the Storyline from the Session 3 Template
- Rehearsing the Session 4 Opening and Close
- Answering Session 4 Challenge Questions Under Time Limits
- Completing the Results Presentation Pack

Methodology

The programme uses structured exercises and peer review on anonymised results packs from banking, manufacturing and retail settings. Participants work in small groups as presenter, executive and observer, rebuild one real presentation from first draft to rehearsed delivery, and give and receive written feedback against a shared rubric at each stage.

- Suggested activity: Cutting a twenty-slide results deck to a three-slide storyline with one recommendation.
- Suggested activity: Redrawing a cluttered variance table as a single bridge chart.
- Suggested activity: Answering a hostile board question in sixty seconds and receiving group feedback.

Capstone Output

Each participant completes a results presentation pack for one organisation. It holds a one-page key message, a short storyline, a chart and table set, a variance bridge, a challenge question register and an evidence file. The pack is used to present at the next board or committee meeting and as a template for later reporting cycles.



Frequently Asked Questions

Is communicating financial results suitable for finance staff who rarely present?

Yes. Communicating financial results is set at managerial level and assumes you prepare or deliver finance messages to senior colleagues, not that you are an experienced speaker.

Which models does communicating financial results rest on in this training?

Communicating financial results rests on the Pyramid Principle, IFRS Practice Statement 1 Management Commentary for performance narrative, and cognitive load theory for visual design.

How is the pack from communicating financial results used at work?

You use the communicating financial results pack for your next board or committee meeting, and reuse its storyline, visuals and evidence file in later reporting cycles.

How does communicating financial results differ from a programme on financial reporting?

Communicating financial results centres on audience, message and delivery, while a financial reporting programme centres on preparing statements and applying accounting standards.