POWER TOOLS FOR POWER QUESTIONS

Questions You Must Ask *Yourself* Before any Client Meeting

1. Have I thoroughly discussed the client's needs and expectations for this meeting?
2. If substantive information or recommendations are being presented, have we previewed these in advance with all the right constituencies?
3. Are the right people—from the client side and from our side—coming to the meeting?
4. If more than one of us is attending, have we discussed and clarified the roles that everyone is going to play?
5. What are the most prominent messages or ideas that I want to get across? How would I summarize these in one minute or less?
6. What are the different options for presenting our ideas? Can we use flipcharts rather than PowerPoint? Do we have some engaging stories that can help to illustrate our points?
7. Is there anything I can give the client beforehand (e.g., pre-readings) that will make this meeting more productive?
8. What's going on in this client's world right now? What pressures is he or she feeling (at work, at home, etc.)?
9. What will my client's reaction be to what we have to say?
10. Is there enough flexibility built into the schedule to have a vibrant, give-and-take discussion, and/or to pursue other issues that the client may want to discuss?
11. What additional information do we need (e.g., about the client executives who will be attending, other important data, etc.) before this meeting?
12. What are the 3 or 4 key, thought-provoking questions that I plan to ask at this meeting?
13. What do I think will be the likely follow-up to this meeting?
14. *If this is a meeting with a long-standing client:* How can I infuse this meeting with the same enthusiasm, creativity, and new ideas that I brought to the very first meeting that I ever had with him or her?