

Martin Beck  
*Presentation*

October 19 – November 18, 2012



Once you know what you want to present, you've got to figure out how to organize it. There will probably be several feasible alternatives. The main thing is to be sure to state at the beginning of your presentation why you are doing it, how it's organized, and what you want people to do with it. Sometimes, everything seems to relate to everything else. There is no "right" place to begin. If you open your presentation with a brief outline, people will know what's coming and be able to relax.

One of the worst traps that people fall into when they present their work is to offer only their solutions, thereby excluding the audience from how they arrived at their conclusions. The audience can either take it or leave it. And the tendency is to leave it. It's hard to accept a solution when you are not even sure what the problem was.

If you want the support and commitment of a group, it is almost always best to involve its members in the process of solving a problem. If you've gone ahead and solved the problem by yourself and aren't willing (or don't have time) to repeat the process, at least you can reveal your own thoughts step by step in your presentation. One good way of organizing your presentation is to structure it according to the standard phases of problem solving: "This is how I perceived the problem. This is how I defined and analyzed it. These are some of the alternatives I came up with. Here are my criteria for evaluating them. Here are some of the

advantages and disadvantages of each alternative. Based on all this, here are my conclusions.” Now others understand your reasoning and they can indicate where they agree or disagree with your logic.

Whenever possible, present all sides of an issue, not just your own point of view. Offer the main alternatives with possible advantages and disadvantages. Don’t stack the deck. Let your ideas stand on their own merits. People will respect you for your honesty and fairness and will be less likely to make snap decisions themselves.\*

\* Michael Doyle and David Straus, *How To Make Meetings Work: The New Interaction Method* (New York: Wyden Books, 1976), 260–1.

Martin Beck lives and works in New York. Recent exhibitions and projects include “Remodel” at Ludlow 38 in New York (2011, with Ken Saylor), “Panel 2—‘Nothing better than a touch of ecology and catastrophe to unite the social classes...’” at Gasworks in London (2008), “The details are not the details” at Orchard in New York (2007), and contributions to the 29th São Paulo Bienal (with Julie Ault) and the 4th Bucharest Biennial (both 2010). In November 2012 a survey exhibition of Beck’s work, titled “the particular way in which a thing exists,” will open at the Leonard & Bina Ellen Art Gallery at Concordia University in Montreal. Beck is the author of *an Exhibit viewed played populated* (2005), *About the Relative Size of Things in the Universe* (2007), and *The Aspen Complex* (2012).