

PREPARING YOUR SUCCESSFUL PITCH

“MUST HAVES”

- (Genuine) Enthusiasm
- Credibility
- Clarity
- ACTION

(GENUINE) ENTHUSIASM

- If you're not upbeat, the audience will share your perspective.
- Practice is important, but believing in your business or concept comes first
 - Research
 - Command of the industry and “the need”
 - A plan to launch

CREDIBILITY

- Statistics or data points: very helpful
 - 2-3 factoids will convey “opportunity” and “understanding”
 - Don’t drown the audience in details and numbers
- Why is there a gap?
 - Who is your target market?
 - What “pain” is your customer experiencing?
 - Competition does exist, so why is your solution better!
- Can you really make this happen?
 - Skepticism is your opponent
 - “Market validation” examples or methodology is mandatory
 - How will you execute? (More to come)

CLARITY

- E-NUN-CI-ATE
 - You have “permission!”
 - This is your moment!
- Minimize jargon and acronyms
 - Use simple analogies
 - EXAMPLE: Coffeehouse selections...online!
 - If buzz words are necessary...explain!
 - EXAMPLES: “Tele-counseling” and “big data” really mean...
- Explain “enough” specifics so that investors can support your go-to-market strategy
 - How did you “discover” this need? (Testimonials can help)
 - Build toward “market validation”
 - Long term: you’re seeking the 1-hour meeting!

**NOW...A POTENTIAL
SLIDE-BY-SLIDE
BREAKDOWN!**

“SLIDE 1:” TITLE PAGE

- Your Name
- Name of Business or Concept
- Tagline or short description of your business
 - EXAMPLE: “Empowering people before they become victims”
 - EXAMPLE: “We build your computer...your way!”
- A teaser: what you are about to reveal
 - EXAMPLE: “We’re going to show you how hunters can enjoy their favorite activity more safely than ever!”

“SLIDE 2”

- Define/quantify the problem or opportunity
 - What are you attempting to solve?
 - What are the customer’s “pain points?”
 - EXAMPLE: “Nationally, our middle-school STEM programs are producing few qualified students. Today, I’m here to share one way that we can begin to reverse this trend!”
- Remember: a few numbers, facts, or statistics add credibility to a short presentation.

“SLIDE 3”

- What is your solution?
 - Be as specific as possible in the time allowed
 - WHAT MARKET VALIDATION HAVE YOU ACHIEVED? (If none, how soon can you meet this requirement?)
- What experience do you bring? Can you cite 1-2 past accomplishments and key skills that demonstrate why your business will succeed?
- Do you have a team? If not (or if so), how will you mitigate your shortcomings?

“SLIDES 4 & 5”

- What is your Value Proposition/Unique Selling Proposition?
 - What makes your solution better than “competitive” offerings?
 - Cost-effectiveness?
 - Ease of use?
 - Special features or capabilities?
 - Intellectual property or “secret sauce?”

“SLIDE 6”

- Clearly confirm your target market(s)
 - Who have you contacted/researched?
 - How will you reach prospective customers?
 - Media, trade events, PR, etc.?
 - Are you/a teammate willing and able to sell?
 - Hint: “They will find me online once I optimize my website” is not the pinnacle of your sales effort
 - What will your “offer” look like?

“SLIDE 7”

- Are you ready to launch?
- What steps are you prepared to take tomorrow morning and how will funding benefit you? (Did we discuss “market validation?”)
 - EXAMPLE: “Susie Smith, a nationally recognized expert in the area of terrorism has signed an agreement that will allow us to produce her audiobook and a press release has been prepared. This grant will enable us to...”

“SLIDE 8”

- Summarize key points from your pitch
 - Why?
 - Who?
 - How?
 - When?
- Politely, but firmly, ask for the sale

5 MORE HELPFUL HINTS

- A clean, concise competitive matrix can add value
- Titles add emphasis, even when you do not read them!
 - EXAMPLE: “Manufacturing Inefficiencies Create Companies That Cannot Compete”
- Be wary of time
- Make and “share” eye contact
- Have fun! People who enjoy what they do, perform better!