Best 3 Minutes

HELP! I Need To Pitch!

You've got a pitch coming up, with just a few minutes to tell your story.
How do you get started with creating the message to get the action you need?
Here are the 7 steps that have helped thousands build their winning pitch.

1 Who's your audience? What do they care about?

Make a small profile of your audience, so you can guide your message to their interests. What are their biggest concerns and challenges?

Are they money focused, or interested in environment, or in social issues? Conservative or innovative? Want to know about process, or only the outcomes? Theoretical or Doers?

2 What action do you want them to take?

What's the objective of the pitch? Sure, you want them to think differently – but what do you want them to do?

Think about what they could do at 09:30, on a Monday morning. Visit your website? Arrange a follow up meeting? Sign a cheque? Give you advice? Being clear on your objective helps you steer the pitch towards a real outcome.

3 Don't open PowerPoint! Brainstorm with Post-Its.

Instead of jumping straight into slide software, organise all your thoughts first. Post-its are a great way to get your ideas out of your head, and to build a storyline that you feel comfortable and confident with. This will save you a lot of time when making slides.

Use The Pitch Canvas© to help you with brainstorming. Available free at **Best3minutes.com/the-pitch-canvas**

4 Make the first word count, with a strong opening.

A lot of pitches take a long time to get into the story, starting with things like "Thanks for the opportunity, delighted to be here, nice to see some familiar faces..." etc.

Make the first word and sentence count with a bold statement about the problem, a question, one big fact about the problem you're solving. Time is limited – use every second.

5 Use the Power of Three to keep your story focused.

The temptation to tell everything is huge! It's better to keep yourself focused on the essentials, so that they can follow the story, and remember the key points.

There is a power in reducing content and being very clear about a few important aspects of your business.

6 Have a strong close, with a clear Call To Action

The last 30 seconds are the first thing they will remember. What do you want to be front of the audience's mind when you've completed the pitch?

Make sure your objective – the action you want the audience to take – is clearly stated so they know what to do next!

7 Think it through, write it down, say it out loud, get feedback

Once you have the story clear, test it out by saying it out loud. Make sure it sounds like natural, spoken language.

Then get feedback, by asking these three questions; What stood out most about the pitch? What did they not understand? And do they have friendly advice for improvement?

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