

Pitching Hints

Key points

- be simple
- be passionate
- think of the investors point of view
- Follow It Up!

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Some hints and tips for small business owners when pitching for Angel and Investor funds

Planning it

Start at the beginning. Sit back and think about what it is that your business uses, what it sells, and who it sells to. Why do customers love you? Try to summarise this in a single sentence or Tweet of 140 characters. Sit down with a friend who does not

know what the business is and try to explain it to them in the simplest possible language. That process, of summarising and simplifying your proposal will pay huge dividends when you come to pitch your business to professionals. Make sure you have a

good financial model of the business, marketing plan, the product plan, quotes, references, and endorsements from partners and other investors, and a good summary of your personal motivation for getting into this business. Are you ready now?

Writing It

Jot down the content into the DRAFT template by hand first.

View your PowerPoint presentation as *complementary* to you and your Executive Summary; you don't need to read from the PowerPoint or give all details.

The presentation's

objective is to persuade investors to collect a business plan from you and give their contact details.

Aim for concise slides with a minimum of text (8 bullet points per slide maximum).

Try where possible to use pictures. Video is good, but keep it short as time

is limited.

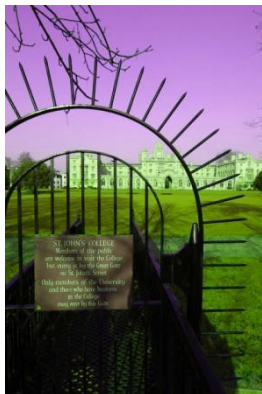
Use bullet points only. No sentences on slides, as you are providing the commentary.

Think of how advertising posters communicate and you'll be thinking along the right lines.

Avoid any industry jargon and keep figures simple and in 'thousands'.



“To catch the audiences attention, place an interesting sentence or quote from a trusted partner on the lead slide.”



Delivering the presentation

Don't talk to the screen – talk to the audience.

If your product is suitable then you should demonstrate it in your presentation. I'd follow “Jason Calacanis's rule” and get a demo in the first 30 seconds. (BUT, see hints on technology

below)

Allow minimum of 1 minute of presentation time per slide.

Practice the presentation as much as you can, with an audience, so you never need to look at the screen to know where you are and what's on

the slide.

At all times, you should be able to present without your PowerPoint. The truly professional presenter gives the impression that if the computer blew up, they'd be able to continue regardless!

Opening the Presentation

The Investors are primarily investing in you as a person. It is therefore my strong suggestion that you open your presentation with an anecdote or personal story which is directly relevant to the business that you are presenting.

This should contain an element of humour, an element of common sense, and gets over some of your personal character. A strong opening can carry the entire presentation, and is a vital part of establishing a rapport

with an audience who will, to be brutally honest, have their minds on many other things.

Balance

Delivering a good investment presentation is all about balance. You need to appear enthusiastic, without appearing desperate.

You need to appear knowledgeable, without appearing didactic or boring. You need to be presenting something which is new and

innovative, but which is not so new and innovative as to be incomprehensible or terrifying.

Presence

Your own physical presence on stage is an important part of the presentation. It would be my personal advice, that wherever possible, you get out from behind a lectern and use the stage to its full capacity. Moving forwards to the edge of the stage to engage the audience: standing in a strong posture with your feet set

firmly on the ground, and using your arms in affirmative and assertive gestures will all help convey your enthusiasm and personal character to the audience. If you have had media training, then now is the time to use it. Make sure that you are relaxed, comfortable, and have rehearsed adequately. There is no dress code for these

events, however informal business dress appears to be the rule of the day - jackets and shirts without ties are a good compromise. People will look at your shoes, and your watch. It is worth paying attention to those small signals of wealth and success when dealing with an audience like this.



Have presence

Technology

The technology at these events is generally designed with the single purpose of making your job as hard as possible. **“Whatever can go wrong, will go wrong”**. If you have soundtrack, it will be impossible for it to be heard over the main speakers. If you have a video, it will play on one screen, but not

on another. If you have clever transitions or effects in your slides, then the presentation machine will have an old version of software which will not support it. If you need an Internet connection, it will fail. If you try to run live software, there will be a driver bug which prevents it working

properly. Therefore it is absolutely vital that you do three things: plan ahead, turn up early to run tests, and have backup equipment. I always recommend that you take your own Mac, with all of the attachments, cables, and speakers. But there is no substitute turning up an hour early and testing!

“Be natural. Treat them like a group of friends that REALLY care about your business and try to HELP them understand.”

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*"Raising money the
easy way is harder than
it looks"*

Objectives of the Pitch

Remember that the purpose of the pitch is to get people to come to a demonstration afterwards, pick up a copy of your Executive Summary, and hand over their contact details with

a business card. The pitch is merely there to excite their interest and get them to think about your business. The selling vehicle is the full Business Plan and an Invitation To Subscribe,

which are legal documents given to those who state clear intention to invest. While this may occur at the presentation, it is more like to come later.

Follow up

There are two ways to follow-up: Administratively or in person. I recommend "in person" and at a private event where other

investors are present. Administratively, you can cheerfully follow up on the leads; collect their investment intentions, abilities, and preferences.

Just remember investors like to talk to the CEO, so put aside time after the presentation to phone them all.

Good Luck

Presenting can be fun, and you should set out to enjoy it. You will be in front of several

hundred people who are generally quite knowledgeable about business, have made

money, and have an interest in new things. So get out there and enjoy it!

<ADDRESS HERE>

PREPARED FOR
<YOU>