

Crafting an elevator pitch to engage someone for your project or idea

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Delivery is critical

- Craft and memorize your pitch,
- Make various versions for different stakeholders (change the ask)
- Stay at a high level – provide just enough information to intrigue and invite questions
- Keep it solution-focused; concrete and tangible
- Keep it conversational: you are not closing a deal, you are starting a dialogue

Key components – in 30 to 90 seconds

- Introduction & a high-level ask
- The hook.
 - A compelling statement of the problem or issue that grabs the listener's attention
- The solution or proposal
 - The description of the idea in a way that answers the listener's question: why do I care?
- The specific ask.
 - ...for continued communication, a follow up meeting, an opportunity to present the idea, a change in policy, or a request for financial support. A well-constructed pitch could even incorporate several asks.

Introduction and High-level ask

- Name and function or role
 - Find the element of your role/function that connects to the person
- ‘I’m contacting you because ...’
 - High level ask –the nature of the ask : e.g. a conversation in the future, connection to someone else, get advice or reaction
 - This sets the tone and expectation for what comes next

The hook

- Magnitude of the problem; something new or a surprising twist on a known problem. “Did you know that ...?”
- Relate the problem to current events that involve your audience or what engages them
- Why should we care?
 - The associated health and social costs
 - Clash with social values (equity, respect, individual responsibility)

Solution or Value proposition

- Tangible results or products that you can deliver in response to the problem
 - a project that responds directly to the problem;
 - results
 - a knowledge synthesis;
 - other engaged stakeholders
- What makes your approach unique or credible
- State clearly in terms that are meaningful to your audience

The Ask

- What could this stakeholder ideally do for you?
 - Advice
 - Funding or Letter of Support
 - Engagement
 - Knowledge translation
 - Referral
- Your ask is the **first step** toward that goal
 - An appointment or other mechanism to present the problem
 - Contact information (self or other) for further information
 - Send summary of project
 - An immediate response: viewpoint on the issue; interest in participating

Planning your pitch

- Start with the end in mind
 - What do I need from this stakeholder? What is the first step to getting to what I need? (**The Specific Ask**)
- Try to adopt the stakeholder perspective
 - What about the problem is likely to matter to this stakeholder? How can I present the problem in a way that intrigues? (**The Hook**)
- Recognize (and be confident in!) your unique contribution
 - What am I (or we) offering as a solution or a start? What do I have that this stakeholder doesn't have? (**The value proposition**)

Time to Practice!

- Sit in groups of 4
- Individual work: 6 minutes to develop a 45-second pitch
- In sets of 2: present to one person (1 min); person gives feedback (1 min). Switch roles, repeat (2 min)
- Individual work: integrate feedback (3 min)
- Change partners. Present (1 min), feedback (1 min). Switch, repeat.
- Group discussion – 5 minutes – what works, what doesn't. Choose one person to present their pitch.