

Plan the perfect pitch

So you've come up with a ground breaking, change the world idea and now all you need to do is sell it! Whether you are pitching this idea to your friends, teachers, principal, local businesses or parents, the key is getting your pitch perfect. The pitch should be no more than three minutes and should aim to convince the audience to support it. To do this you need to communicate with passion, purpose and confidence. A successful pitch needs to contain the following elements:



1. Purpose

Clearly state the purpose of your idea. This is your 'why' behind the problem you are trying to solve e.g. Why is it a great idea? Why is it important? What difference will it make?

2. Passion

It is your passion for the cause or idea that will deeply influence people to believe in you. It's your passion that has the power to inspire and persuade your audience to act, fund or give. Your belief in the purpose fuels a winning pitch. Use emotive words and try to tell a story. Stories light up presentations and if it's from the heart, people will be captivated by it.

3. Plan

Think about your audience. Who are you pitching to? What do they believe? What do they know? Plan your pitch around the intended audience. Think deeply about the type of response you are aiming to get from them. What do you want them to notice, think, feel and do? Use this information to define your main message. In the business world, they call this the 'value proposition'.

4. Performance

This is the ability to deliver the pitch in an entertaining and engaging way. You want to captivate your audiences and convince them that your idea is a winner. Make sure your opening remarks are strong and command attention. You could use a quote, story statistic or key question.

When it comes to presenting you might be surprised to learn that your body language and voice have a higher impact than the words you say. Research found that in terms of pitch impact the following weighting exists:

Words: 7%, voice: 38%, body language 55%

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Think about your body language and voice control and build them into the pitch. For example, tone, eye contact, stance, movement, gestures and smiles are powerful tools. The most under-used tool is the power of pausing during your pitch. This is a highly persuasive technique that will 'wow' your audience.

Another tip is to use the words 'you' and 'we' rather than 'I'. This keeps the audience interested and makes them feel included.

Lots of people feel scared about public speaking, especially to large groups. Something that might make you feel better is to remember that it's not about you; it's about your idea and your audience. It is your job to persuade them that your idea is the greatest and that they should get on board. Your idea is going to make a difference - so don't let the fear of what people might think of you personally hold you back.



5. Practise

This is the most important thing you can do. After you have written out your pitch and refined the content, practise, practise, and practise! Practise out loud, and in front of your people many times over so that your pitch is delivered polished, timed, flowing and flawless!

Now go out there and pitch your ideas!