

5 Tips to Land Your Pitch

Having the opportunity to pitch your product or service to those interested is an incredibly exciting time. Maybe this is your first pitch, or maybe you've done this countless times before. In any case, it is important to remember certain do's and don't's you may never have thought of before, or ones that may have already made or broken your chances. Here are 5 things to think about for your next pitch:

1. Keep It Simple

Remember to address what your company does and the problem it solves in as clear and concise language as possible in your introduction. It sounds ridiculous, but sometimes it is so easy to get carried away in your spiel. Therefore, it is important to differentiate yourself from the undoubtedly dozens of other groups that may be pitching similar products to your audience.

2. Master Your Technology

Most presentations use a slideshow of some sort, often Power Point, as a complement to their pitch. Ensure they are well designed, sleek and informative – but more importantly – that they run seamlessly. When used well, they can reinforce the information being verbally conveyed without distracting from it. Avoid technical problems – ensure slides don't skip and are arranged in the appropriate order. Any problems that must be dealt with during your time will distract from the quality of the pitch and waste the few precious minutes you and your team has been allotted. To avoid these issues, after practicing for friends and colleagues, show up at the venue early and ask to do a test run - if possible - it could save your whole pitch.

3. Don't Mention Preparation

Whether you have spent countless hours on the presentation, or just threw it together the night before, do not mention this during the meeting. If your presentation underwhelms, and you made it clear that you have poured your heart and soul into it, then don't expect much confidence in your ability or your product. However, if you put the presentation together in five minutes and you knock it out of the park, those listening may not be impressed at your genius, but instead be disappointed to learn that you are a procrastinator with a lack of respect for other people's time.

4. Anticipate Questions

Your time is always limited, therefore you must anticipate questions and ensure their answers are included in the information you are presenting. Do not waste time by forcing your audience to inquire about basic information that should have been addressed in the pitch itself. Include relevant growth metrics, market opportunity, margins and competitors in the industry, anything you can think of will make you look professional and allow the questions that are asked to be more familiar, allowing a more intimate understanding of your product.

5. Answer the Questions, Don't Make up New Ones

It is perfectly ok for your audience to ask for clarification at the end of your presentation. Although it can be an unnerving experience, it is important to pay close attention to what's actually being asked. Listen carefully and take a moment to digest each question before answering. Don't let your nerves get the best of you so that you end up answering a question that was never asked. Take a breath, relax and give a clear and thoughtful answer.