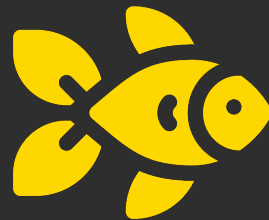


PITCHING FOR LIFE

**STARTUP PITCHING
FOR EVERY DAY SITUATIONS
AT SCHOOL OR WORK**

**A Free Handbook for
Students. Workers. Leaders.**



By Walid O. El Cheikh

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PITCHIO

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Version 1.0

18.08.2019



DEAR READER

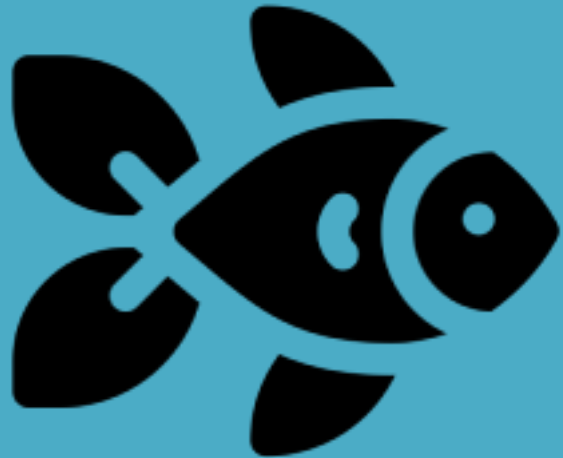
Pitching For Life (PFL) is dedicated to you, all readers. I sincerely hope that it helps you to achieve your goals, or dreams in life.

PFL as a mindset, framework, and tool was, and still is, the best thing that has ever happened to me as a person, student, worker, and coach. In this book, I explain how to apply PFL in various situations at school, and work. I share my experience from lectures, workshops, mentoring sessions, public talks, pitching competitions, and research. Since 2016, I have worked with thousands of people, and along the way some lives were changed – mine included!

"If you make a difference to one person, your life has meaning, and purpose" – Marisa Peer

In 2016, I discovered that pitching could be applied outside of the startup world, basically anywhere. The main reason for this is the short attention span of people, shockingly shorter than a Goldfish. And most importantly, people today struggle to present themselves, their ideas, products/services, or companies. In 2018, I started working on PFL to adapt startup pitching to every day situations to help students, workers, leaders, and potentially anyone else, to use pitching techniques in their daily communication.

In this book, you have the introduction to pitching, 25 cases (Part II-VII), and the conclusion part. You also have the 30 Days Pitching Challenge, a practical approach to pitching. Start with the introduction part, then read the relevant cases for you, and finally participate in the challenge to get the most out of this book. It is up to you how much time, and effort you want to invest on the topic, be it for professional or social reasons. The rule is simple: the more you practice, the more confident you become. Results will follow, eventually. Be patient, look forward, and enjoy. **Best of luck!**



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I thank all my family and friends for their immense support, and patience. Monkey you are the best! Special thanks to everyone who proof-read my book.

I appreciate everyone who invited me to lecture, coach, mentor, present, or do a talk about pitching. Without you, I would have never learned about the topic.

I am grateful if you could share this book with one friend. Maybe you could make a difference in his or her life. PFL is free to download for everyone, and always will be!

I am happy, honored, and humbled to have been part of this amazing journey, helping people to present themselves, their ideas, concepts, products, services, and companies. Writing this book has been an unforgettable journey, an extreme challenge, and a beautiful milestone in my life.

Sincerely Yours,

Walid O. El Cheikh

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PART I

INTRODUCTION TO PITCHING

In this part, you have an introduction to Pitching For Life (PFL) as a philosophy and pitching as a topic. You can adopt PFL to every day situations at school, or work. Pitching is about three fundamental lessons which help you to persuade (convince someone), and get to “Yes.” You will learn about the Pitch Scenario Framework, and how to design a pitch using the Basic Pitch Structure.

You get tips on how to maximize your pitch using different pitching variations, from four seconds to an hour.

WHAT IS PITCHING FOR LIFE? AND WHO IS IT FOR?

Pitching For Life (PFL) is a handbook that adapts startup pitching techniques to every day situations at school, or work. Naturally, life itself is the best school, so it means PFL is also relevant for social situations e.g., how to make friends, meet new people, have conversations, and present yourself, or your ideas. PFL offers you practical tips, and examples to improve your communication skills. Pitching is easy; everyone can learn it! It is similar to riding a bike, or swimming. You can master pitching, or learn how to swim or ride a bike, if you have the willingness to learn, the courage to start, and the patience to practice. As a coach, I have helped thousands of people to discover their own potential, and perhaps changed a few lives along the way, mine included. Maybe your life will change too, that is indeed my only wish from writing this book: to help you to get closer to your dreams or goals in life via pitching. Let's get started!

WHY IS PITCHING IMPORTANT?

The main reason startup pitching is relevant in today's world is simply the element of time. People's attention span had shrank from 12 seconds in 2000 to 8 seconds in 2015. It is possibly even shorter today, and I argue it is around 4-6 seconds. Every day we are bombarded with thousands of marketing messages, emails, texts, and social media posts. Our focus is exhausted. Human-to-human communication is perhaps at its lowest because of smartphones, online services, and social apps. We lack the skills to present ourselves, and our ideas to others. We struggle to communicate in person, online, or even via the phone with other human beings. Worse is when someone has a great idea or a thought, but struggles to communicate it to another person in crucial times, for example, in a conversation or a meeting with a friend, colleague, or boss; in an interview for a job, audition, or something else important; in a networking event or conference; on a stage in front of an audience, or any situation in which you seek to convince someone to do something for you, or get to a "Yes."

GETTING TO A "YES"

We all want to get to a "Yes" not only startups. Startups need to raise money and sell their products or services to survive. You probably want to get a job, nail the audition, ask for a promotion, find a team member, sell your art, fill an application for a loan, present your research, promote your service, sell your products, or simply want to learn how to pitch in different situations while in school, at work, or with friends.

This book has something for everyone, including tips for startups, and leaders. Pitching goes hand-in-hand with public speaking, networking and storytelling. Marketing and pitching are also compatible, but slightly different. As a coach, I have worked with thousands of people, and I am excited to share with you tips, examples, and frameworks to help you, survive and strive, in situations where you need to communicate strategically. After reading this book, I recommend you to participate in the 30 Days Pitching Challenge (30DPC), which you can find on page 57, and check PFL's website for more materials such as videos (my own and from other experts), pitching templates, and exercises. The book, 30DPC, and materials are free of charge, and available to download at www.pitchingforlife.com.

WHO IS IT FOR?

PFL is useful for students, workers, and leaders – regardless of age, industry, or field of expertise.

For students, in schools or universities, you get confidence and practical tips to present yourself, and your ideas, or projects.

For workers such as engineers, artists, designers, marketers, and sales people; you get professional tips on how to introduce yourself, your skills and your concepts, and sell products and services.

For leaders, introverts or extroverts, you learn how to use pitching to persuade, create a public speech and network in events. You will also have a framework how to use storytelling in pitching. Finally, startup founders have tips on how to present their companies and raise funding.

COMPONENTS OF A PITCH

OPENING

GRAB THE LISTENER'S ATTENTION

PRESENTATION

MESSAGE AND ARGUMENTATION

ASK

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO GET?

CLOSING

SUMMARIZE AND THANK YOU

WHAT IS PITCHING? THREE FUNDAMENTAL LESSONS

Pitching is a presentation in which you ask something. You persuade (convince) someone to do something for you. A pitch has a Message, a Unique Selling Point (USP) with Supporting Evidence (SE), and an Ask. Your pitch has to answer three questions: what is it about (Message), how does it work or how is it done (Argumentation= USP/SEs), and why you are pitching (Ask). To simplify, the three essential components of a pitch are: the message, the arguments, and the ask. If you do not ask, it is not a pitch, but only a presentation. So, to pitch means to communicate strategically, and persuade. Startup founders pitch to raise funding from investors, or sell their products to customers. You might pitch to introduce yourself for a job or in a meeting, to present new ideas for approval, to promote online for exposure, to tell stories to inspire people, or to lead teams towards a goal. Here are the three fundamental pitching lessons that helps you to understand how to approach the topic: your mission is to *persuade* (Lesson 1), your strategy is to *conquer the variables* – things that affect your pitch (Lesson 2), and your weapon or tool is to *use a structure* (Lesson 3). Let's explain this!

PERSUASION

Persuasion is a process of convincing someone to do something for you. You need to pay attention to three essential things:

- Your role as a pitcher
- Your audience
- Your influence on the audience

When you pitch, your role is to deliver the message, argument properly, and ask accordingly. You want the audience to like you as a person first, to find you credible, professional, authentic, genuine, and perhaps even friendly, and kind. You want to get the audience to your side, to make them listen to you for as long as possible. Avoid being pushy, aggressive, or needy. Remember that people's attention span is short. Check videos, and articles on PFL's website, Youtube, or journals about persuasion to learn more about how to influence people. Remember that persuasion is not manipulation, it is a strategic way to say something that is ideal for the situation, and your audience.

CONQUER THE VARIABLES

Six variables affect your pitch: Mindset, Time, Tone, Timing, Content, and Listening.

Mindset is what you think, and how you feel when pitching. It is probably the biggest challenge because people can be shy, afraid, uncomfortable, or worried they might fail or embarrass themselves.

Time means how long you talk. You can pitch from four seconds to an hour. A great pitcher knows when to start and end, and uses the available time to describe his/her case with proper arguments.

Tone is how others see you. Are you trustworthy, professional, likable, or relatable? It can be the way you walk, talk, dress, comb your hair, or even breathe. Your body language, eye contact, and the way you speak, define your tone when you pitch.

Content means that you have to balance the words you say with technical vocabulary and emotions. Words are usually 70-80% of the pitch, and the technical/emotional part is 10-15% each.

Timing is when to pitch or not to pitch. You need to know when to approach someone (or not), or when to present the Unique Selling Point (USP).

Listening is about what your audience hears from your pitch. Are they hearing what you want them to hear? They could be busy, distracted, depressed, uninterested, tired, or anything could affect their concentration. It is your objective to help them listen to you for as long as possible.

USE A STRUCTURE

For different situations, you use different structures. It is similar to when repairing a car or assembling a closet, you use different tools for each task. There are basic structures, as well as, more advanced ones. On PFL's website, you can download the templates to use for different situations, depending on your audience, and the purpose of your pitch.

THREE PITCHING LESSONS

PERSUADE

YOUR ROLE AS A PITCHER
YOUR AUDIENCE
YOUR INFLUENCE

CONQUER VARIABLES

MINDSET
TIME
TONE
TIMING
CONTENT
LISTENING

USE A STRUCTURE

MAXIMIZING YOUR PITCH

When pitching, you want to maximize every opportunity to get to a “Yes.” In reality, it is often impossible to get what you want all the time. However as a pitcher, your mindset should aim for maximum results. Max, or Maxine, is your best friend who reminds you to do your best, always! How do you do that?

THE WINNING PITCHING MINDSET

Awareness means that you are alert, and ready to pitch (or not to pitch). It starts with your mind telling you that this is an opportunity, and also a challenge. It tells you that you can do it, and it is good to try. How to do this properly? Pitching is not a conversation, a dialogue, or small talk with a person. It is not an ad, nor a movie trailer. Pitching is to communicate on a level where you select the best parts of what you want to say, as quickly as possible, and in a way that your audience wants to hear it, and do something about it. Simply put, it means to communicate strategically, and to persuade. Pitching requires you to be at your mental, and physical best. If you are not, you do not pitch in that particular case. Being alert is to tell yourself “I am ready to pitch” or “Holy Moly, I am about to pitch.” It helps you to think about what to say, organize your thoughts, present your ideas, and seize the moment.

Practice means that pitching is something you learn by doing. Reading a book or watching videos is not enough. You want to put some effort to learn the practical side of pitching. Do not panic yet; you will get an idea or two on how to practice after reading this book and participating in the 30DPC.

Success means that you want to aim at winning every time. Do your best! Every time you pitch it is a unique opportunity to learn, grow, or get to a “Yes”. You learn and grow when it is a “No” by asking “Why not”, or “What can I do better”. The worst thing for pitching is not to pitch. The second worst thing is to aim for perfection: waiting too long to design the perfect pitch. There is no such thing as a perfect pitch! Pitching does not get easier for anyone, even for experts. Today, you might pitch for your first job, next year for a promotion, and after years for a vice-president position. Or, now you are pitching for a EUR 50,000, and tomorrow for EUR 50 Million. The platform gets bigger the better your pitching skills are. Keep pitching. Keep learning about yourself as a pitcher. And enjoy it!

INFLUENCING AND BUILDING TRUST

Human to Human. Pitching is a human to human presentation with an ask. It is done in person, online, or on the phone. Being yourself, likable, friendly, genuine, and professional will always help you to persuade. Use your strengths, and minimize your weaknesses. Do not try to be someone you are not when pitching. All great presenters show their unique personalities, and you can do the same. If people like you but your ideas are irrelevant to them, it is not the end of the road. Alternatively, they might recommend your ideas to someone they know, which is also a win!

Building Trust is an obvious tip when persuading. Trust is earned, and it is a tricky thing because people may judge you already within seven seconds. In fact, people stereotype people in 150 milliseconds. That’s short! First impressions are as crucial as consistency when pitching. It is hard enough to create trust, thus you want to maintain the good relationships for as long as you can. Treat people with kindness, honesty, and respect, and they might trust you eventually. Most likely, they will listen to you and say “Yes” if your ideas are relevant to them. It is tough to persuade if your ideas are irrelevant to someone.

Influence. People make decisions in logical and illogical ways, subjectively and objectively. People buy food to feed their hunger (logical buy), but also buy a EUR 50,000 watch to feel like James Bond (Illogical buy but feels good). Marissa Peer, a best-selling author and therapist, says that “the imagination is more powerful than knowledge when dealing with your own mind and the mind of others.” She adds that “in a battle between emotion and logic, emotion always wins.” People make decisions because something is useful for them, or it makes them feel good e.g., happy, fulfilled, powerful, loved etc. It is of value to them. So, to influence someone often means to exchange some value: “if I do this, what do I get in return?”

MAXIMIZING YOUR PITCH

COMPONENTS OF A PITCH

OPENING

GRAB THE LISTENER'S ATTENTION

PRESENTATION

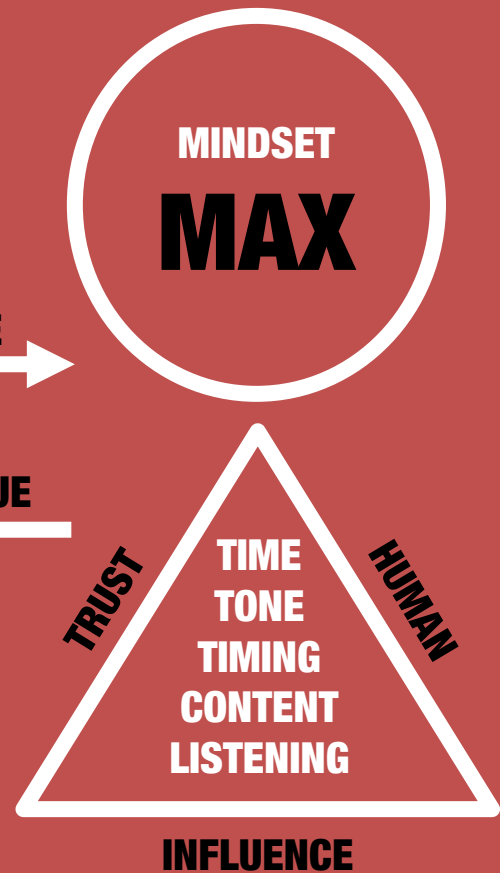
MESSAGE AND ARGUMENTATION

ASK

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO GET?

CLOSING

SUMMARIZE AND THANKS



VALUE EXCHANGE: SHOW VALUE TO RECEIVE VALUE

Showing value means you present your case (idea, product, company etc.) in the best way possible. You explain to the receiver what you have in mind, why he/she should do what you want them to do, why your ideas work, and/or how do these ideas benefit him/her. Every pitch should have one (or max two) Unique Selling Point (USP) and up to three Supporting Evidences (SE). The argumentation part is crucial when pitching. For example, startups must show that they have a profitable company to get funding, a salesperson should argue that her product is very useful/functional/beautiful to sell it, a jobseeker should mention his contribution to the company to get hired, or a game designer must show the potential behind his new project proposal to be approved. Different situations require different sets of arguments. You cannot have the same arguments to all. Make an effort when designing your pitch. Do not leave anything to the receiver's imagination, or assumption. Be clear and strategic about what they should hear, understand, and remember from your pitch. Show the value, ask, and wait to receive an answer.

DESIGN YOUR PITCH – SCENARIO FRAMEWORK

Before you design your pitch, you should have a crystal clear scenario for the case you are presenting. Understanding why you are pitching is crucial. Then, you should specify what you want to get (Do), from whom (We), and what you are actually pitching (Exist). The Pitch Scenario Framework – Why Do We Exist (WDWE) – is an essential tool to target your arguments to your audience. It can be used for almost any situation. The arguments in your pitch should be suitable for the person you are pitching to. You simply cannot pitch in the same way to everyone. You communicate the relevant Unique Selling Points (USP), and Supporting Evidence (SE) to influence someone’s decision in each individual case. This is how you maximize your chances of getting to a “Yes.” In addition, scenarios help you to define your pitch’s variables, for example, the tone of presenting, the length of your pitch, or the way your audience process information.

THE PITCH SCENARIO FRAMEWORK – WHY DO WE EXIST (WDWE)

The Pitch Scenario Framework is a tool to target your arguments to your audience. You can download the template on PFL’s website for free. Use the digital format, or a pen and paper to fill the blocks including WDWE, USP, SEs, and Variables. Having a clear scenario reduces your chances to fail at pitching; it helps you to find the right content (words) for your audience. Here is how it is done.

Why. Before you design the content of your pitch, you want to ask yourself “Why am I pitching?” The “Why” is the big reasons for pitching. It is stronger than the “Ask”. For example, a startup needs funding (Ask) to grow the business (Why). Be specific, use numbers, facts, or anything you have to genuinely visualize the purpose behind your pitch. The “Why” for PFL is to help people to learn about pitching; the target is 50,000 readers. The “Ask” is to download the eBook from the website.

Do. We. Exist. After understanding the “Why” behind your pitch, you can start with either of the lower blocks (Do. We. Exist). For example, you can start with the target group first: Who is your audience (We). Then, ask yourself the following questions: what do I want to get/ask from them (Do), and what am I presenting to them (Exist). Having a clear scenario helps you to select the most suitable arguments, and conquer the variables for your case.

Be Specific. To get the most of the scenarios, you want to be very specific when filling each block. For example, you narrow down the “We” to one person, or a group of people e.g., your boss,

Marissa Peer, or investors at Slush 2019. Sometimes you do not know the people you are pitching to, and in this case it is imperative to do a research on him/her. You can also ask someone if he/she knows this person. All in all, do your homework about your audience. PFL targets readers: students, workers, and leaders.

To Avoid. It is not ideal to pitch to two different target groups e.g., students and leaders or investors and customers. It is much harder to select arguments for both groups in the same pitch. Investors want to make money while customers want to buy products that work. The same thing applies to what you are pitching. For example, pitching Apple as a company is different than pitching an iPhone. The company pitch seeks brand awareness while the product pitch wants people to buy the smartphone. Finally, it is always best to have a clear ask to guide your audience towards what they should do for you. Having two contradictory asks might confuse them.

Unique Selling Point (USP). Every pitch should have one or maximum two USPs. It is the main point that your audience should remember from your pitch. For example, it can be the main benefit that your product or service brings to them: PFL adapts startup pitching to every day situations.

Supporting Evidence (SE). Every USP needs one to three Supporting Evidence to explain further the main point. Select the most relevant SEs for your scenario; they options could be many. For example, PFL is free to download (SE#1); it focuses on mindset development, content design and delivery (SE#2); and it combines theory and practice in a unique way (SE#3).

PITCH SCENARIO FRAMEWORK

WHY

Help 50 000 readers to adopt PFL

DO

Download the eBook from PFL's Website for free.

WE

Readers e.g. students, workers, or leaders

EXIST

PFL eBook from pitchingforlife.com

UNIQUE SELLING POINT (USP)

Adapting startup pitching techniques to every day situations for students, workers and leaders. Pitch anything to anyone!

SE1

PFL eBook is Free to download

SE2

Focus on mindset, content & delivery

SE3

Theory meets practice

MINDSET

TIME

TONE

TIMING

CONTENT

LISTENING

THE PITCHING WHEEL



You can pitch anything to anyone. The Pitching Wheel shows some examples from people I have coached. Understanding who you are pitching to, what you want to get from them, and what you are pitching is essential before designing the content of your pitch. Your main objective is to find the right arguments for your audience. If you have two different groups of people, you create two different pitches. Sometimes, you need to create two different pitches for the same group, for example two different customers. Customer A could be a shy designer while Customer B could be an eccentric football player. When persuading, your approach to Customer A should be slightly gentle (Tone) and pulling (USP) while to Customer B should be dynamic (Tone) and inviting (USP).

DESIGN YOUR PITCH – CONTENT 1/3

Many structures are used to design a pitch. The one that I use in my workshops is based on the components of a pitch, in which you expand the argumentation part. Arguments can be presented in five different parts in your pitch: 1) Product/Service/Concept, 2) Business Model, 3) Team, 4) Traction, and 5) Ask. The Basic Pitch Structure (BPS), presented on the following page, shows the step-by-step approach to providing arguments. It has worked to create and deliver pitches for every example presented in the Pitching Wheel. I have yet to find a case where it does not apply. In this book, I have selected 25 examples to show you how to use the BPS in your pitch design. In your pitch, it is crucial to know how to start and end. In the middle part of your presentation, you deliver the message (what you are pitching), and provide arguments (why should someone do something for you). The BPS template is published on PFL's website. Let me explain how to use it.

PRODUCT/SERVICE/CONCEPT

How to present your product, service, or concept?

Products are usually tangible things; something you can touch, feel, hear, smell, or see such as a pen, pillow, music, food, color, or book. When pitching products you specify, and differentiate what kind of product it is i.e., how better/stronger/faster/cheaper it is. Use visual demonstrations.

Services are usually something you experience such as restaurants, mail delivery, apps, games, websites, electricity, or parks. When pitching a service you simplify, and clarify how the service works. Describe the process or the experience.

Concepts are products, services, or ideas that are not yet realized such as research, new projects, artwork, or sketches. When pitching concepts, you visualize and ignite the imagination. Use visions, maps, drawings, and user journeys.

There are two ways to present products, services, concepts: 1) Problem-Solution-Benefit (PSB) or 2) Vision-Concept-Uniqueness (VCU). PSB is often used for products and services, while VCU is used for concepts. **Problems** are things that are absent, unavailable, expensive, or complicated about the idea you are presenting (what you are solving). Or, it is something to improve: make cheaper, better, stronger, or faster. Describe problems briefly, in a way that you explain the context from the big picture to particular details. By doing so, you connect with people who has experienced this problem. **Solutions and Concepts** make or break your pitch. If your solution or concept is irrelevant to your audience, it is hard to persuade them.

Explain how your solution or concept works with demos, photos, videos, processes, samples, or visual description to avoid confusion in the eyes of your audience. You want to describe your solution, or concept using a language that a five-year old can understand. The PSB combo shows what this product/service is offering, and the benefits it brings to the user e.g., a better pen, tasty food, fun game, or useful website. The VCU combo shows what the concept is about, where it can be used, how important it is to someone, and how different it is from other ideas. Start the VCU with a strong **Vision** to connect with your audience. Describe the **Concept**. Then finally, explain your idea's unique features, or functionalities - **Uniqueness**.

BUSINESS MODEL

Business Model is the part that covers the arguments about money, or impact your idea brings to someone. A good reference for this is the Business Model Canvas (BMC) by Strategyzer. It is a great tool to find the right arguments about how you create, capture, and deliver value from your idea. I use BMC for every pitch that I design to understand who are my customers, how to reach them, and how do they pay. It helps to map down the key activities, resources, and partners about this idea. Finally, it helps to analyze cost and revenue structures e.g., what are my costs and from where versus what are my revenue streams and how much. BMC is used by startups to explain to investors how profitable their companies can be. It could also be used for every day situations in a simplified way telling about: people, price, place and promotion. In your pitch, you select the blocks that are relevant for your arguments.

BASIC PITCH STRUCTURE (BPS)

OPENING

GRAB THE LISTENER'S ATTENTION

Hi + PUNCHLINE (WHAT, HOW, WHY)

PRESENTATION

MESSAGE AND ARGUMENTATION

PRODUCT/SERVICE/CONCEPT

BUSINESS MODEL

TEAM

TRACTION

ASK

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO GET?

QUANTITATIVE ASKING

QUALITATIVE ASKING

CLOSING

SUMMARIZE AND THANK YOU

MAIN POINTS + THANK YOU

DESIGN YOUR PITCH – CONTENT 2/3

For example, a startup might mention the customer and price blocks: this app is for students, and it is free, or EUR 4,95 to download. Or, a startup might describe a marketing strategy: we have a unique user acquisition strategy for this mobile game. Sometimes you mention both. You can use BMC in every day situations to explain the value/impact of your idea e.g., when pitching to your friend to go to the movies, you could mention that the theater is close by (place), I already have free tickets from work (price), we only need to be there by 18:00 O'clock (activity), and so on. So, BMC helps you to present your argument, about money or impact, depending on your situation, and duration of the pitch. It is rare to have all nine BMC blocks at the same time, especially in short pitches. Choose the relevant BMC blocks to mention for each individual pitch to describe the process of capturing and delivering value (money or impact). Startups need to have their BMC part flawless to persuade investors that their companies are profitable.

TEAM

In this part, you present the people behind your idea. You can be alone, a one-person team, or in a group. Show why this team is together. You introduce yourself, and your key team members. Mention what motivates you to do what you do. If you are presenting on stage or among friends, you can go straight to your topic i.e., no need to present yourself at the start. You can simply start with “Hi, I present you X, it is a mind-blowing solution for Y users/customers (explaining why). I am excited to tell you how we do this!” After that, you describe the idea, explain the BMC, and only then you introduce yourself, and the team. It works brilliantly on the stage, and it helps you to connect with the audience because you make it interesting for them. People’s attention span is shorter than a Goldfish; you have a less than 9 seconds to grab their attention. Your idea is the hook, the solution part in particular. You want your audience to hear your solution as soon as possible, before they get distracted. Get them excited to listen to you. If they do not like your idea, it is perhaps even irrelevant who is behind it. Avoid talking too much about your team unless it is the main point, or someone asks you a direct question about your team.

TRACTION

Traction goes hand in hand with the Team part. It tells about your investment in time, money, and efforts, or your milestones (achievements). Tell us what you have done so far with this team. A startup can describe their current status, for example they have a working prototype, 5000 customers and EUR 2 million in sales. When talking about going to movies, let’s take Bruce Willis as an example, and you could say “Hey, we watched all his movies so far, Die Hard is the best! We always had fun in the movies, remember the last time?”

Traction is important to mention when persuading because it shows that the team is able to deliver results. For example, a startup is capable of creating a profitable company, Apple has delivered many high quality products (e.g., iPhone series), a couple had fun at the movies, and so on. You could talk about the current situation, or the future ambition e.g., our platform is a prototype today, but next year we aim at launching it in Europe; or today we watch Bruce Willis, but I am happy to watch Twilight next. Traction is simply a look into today’s position, the past work, and the near future plan.

ASK

There are quantitative, and qualitative asking.

Quantitative asking is usually about money, or resources such as funding, loans, or grants. You should earn the right to ask for resources with proper arguments. Avoid sounding needy, pushy, or desperate. Pull your audience towards your ask versus pushing aggressively. Pulling is usually gentler and more effective than pushing. Make people trust you before asking for money.

Qualitative asking seeks expertise or knowledge. You ask for help, consultancy, advice, feedback, mentorship, guidance, direction, or an introduction. Be confident and passionate when asking. Stimulate sympathetic thoughts in your audience’s mind for them to land you a favor. Help them to connect with your mission. Make them feel that their small contribution is valuable to your idea.

TIPS FOR USING THE BASIC PITCH STRUCTURE

PRODUCT / SERVICE

PROBLEM (WHAT ARE YOU SOLVING/IMPROVING)

SOLUTION (HOW DOES IT WORK/HELP)

BENEFIT (WHAT DOES IT BRINGS TO THE WORLD)

TIPS FOR PITCHING:

- PROBLEM + SOLUTION FIT / DEMO / PROOF
- USE VISUAL OR PROCESS DEMONSTRATIONS
- SHOW THE OFFERING AND BENEFITS

USE PRESENT TENSE

CONCEPT / IDEA

VISION (WHERE ARE WE GOING WITH THIS)

CONCEPT (HOW IT WORKS/FUNCTIONS)

UNIQUENESS (HOW DIFFERENT IT IS)

TIPS FOR PITCHING:

- SHOW STRONG OR RADICAL VISION
- CLEAR CONCEPT DESCRIPTION
- DESCRIBE HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO SOMEONE
- IMAGINE / WE BELIEVE / WE SEE THIS AS...

BMC - DELIVER VALUE

KEY PARTNERS

WHO COULD YOU PARTNER WITH. WHY / WHERE

KEY RESOURCES

WHAT KEY RESOURCES DO YOU HAVE?

ACTIVITIES

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO/CREATE/PRODUCE/BUY

COSTS

WHERE DO YOU NEED TO PAY FOR SOMETHING?
OFFICE, SALARY, PROMO, R&D, MATERIALS...

BMC – CAPTURE VALUE

CUSTOMERS/USERS

WHO/HOW MANY/PROFILES/PERSONAS/GROUPS

CHANNELS

WHERE/HOW TO REACH PEOPLE, WHICH CHANNELS

RELATIONSHIPS

WHO DEVELOPS/MAINTAINS LEADS/CLIENTS/USERS

REVENUE / MONEY

HOW DO YOU GET MONEY? CASH, CREDIT, LICENSE,
ROYALTY, SUBSCRIPTION, VOUCHERS, TICKETS ...

TEAM

PRESENTER

YOUR NAME, TITLE, ROLE (BRIEFLY WHO YOU ARE)

KEY TEAM MEMBERS

ARE YOU ALONE? (KEY MEMBERS + ROLES BRIEFLY)

TEAM FIT

ALONE OR NOT: WHY WOULD THIS TEAM SUCCEED

WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE IN / STRIVE FOR

WHAT ARE YOU PASSIONATE ABOUT SOLVING

CONVINCE US THAT THIS TEAM ROCKS

TRACTION

WHAT HAVE THIS TEAM DONE SO FAR

RESEARCH/IDEA/DEMO/BETA/PRODUCT/SERVICE

MARKET / AMBITION

WHERE ARE YOU NOW / WHERE ARE YOU GOING

KEY MILESTONES/ACHIEVEMENTS

CUSTOMERS/USERS (HOW MANY)

REVENUE/IMPACT (HOW MUCH TO DATE)

PROTECTION/CONTROL (PATENT, SECRETS...)

WHAT HAVE YOU INVESTED ON/ACHIEVED SO FAR

DESIGN YOUR PITCH – CONTENT 3/3

Whenever possible, quantitative and qualitative asking could go in parallel when pitching. One of the two should be the main ask, for example a startup asking for funding, but also marketing expertise from the investor. A restaurant owner could ask for a bank loan, or an introduction to a potential private lender. An artists might ask from a gallery to showcase her product, or for an advice what to do from the gallery owner. That said, I advise you to use both asking methods in a creative way to get closer to what you need in the near future. If you cannot get the resource, maybe try asking how or where you could get it elsewhere.

OPENING AND CLOSING

Depending on when and where you are pitching, the opening and closing parts are crucial for your audience to start listening to you, and understand what you are presenting to them. There are different tips for different situations on how to open and close a pitch. In general, openings and closings need to be strong and memorable because people usually listen more at the start, and at the end of a pitch. They usually snooze off in the middle part. Open in a way that you awaken your audience's interests, and close in a way that you refresh their memory with an exciting, and promising summary. You want them to listen to your ideas for as long as possible. Start by saying "Hi," and tell "What you are doing, how it is done, and what do you need from your audience, or where you want them to pay attention the most". You want to imagine that if someone hears just the opening, he/she will have a good knowledge about what you are presenting. Do not chew the beginning with phrases such as "Hi, my name is X, I am the CEO of this, thank you for being here, I am delighted to be here and so on." Avoid talking in abstract ways, and throwing buzzwords, or slogans. Tell them in three to five clear and memorable sentences about your idea. Do not give them the chance to miss that! Minimize the noise in your pitch. Noise means any additional word that you could say in a shorter way, or any word that does not serve your pitch. Make an effort for them to remember the essential parts of your pitch, in particular the message, USP, SEs, and Ask.

Remember to smile; it helps you! When closing, you want to help your audience to remember the main points from your presentation. You do that by summarizing the key points. This applies to public speaking, presentations on a stage, and in networking situations. Train yourself to say "Hi" when you are ready to start your pitch and "Thank you" when you finish. Do not complicate the beginning, or the end because you are the most nervous, and exhausted respectively in those moments. Create a routine, and a healthy ritual, in a way that if you only remember the opening, USP, and closing you will communicate the essential parts of your pitch. This way, if you forget to say something in the middle, it is ok! One last point, in some situations you can pitch straight away without a grand opening. For example, when someone asks you "what do you do", "where do you work", "how are you" or similar questions. You answer briefly, and pitch. For example, when someone asks me "Where are you from", and I feel that it is a moment to pitch, I say this: "I am from Lebanon. I moved to Finland in 2005. Finland changed my life, and now I am writing a book called Pitching For Life". Usually people ask me some questions about the book. So, the point here is that you want to wait for the right moments to use the opening and closing statements, and understand when you need to pitch straight away.

HOW TO USE THE STRUCTURE?

The Basic Pitch Structure can be used for any pitch, and to anyone. It can be delivered from four seconds to an hour (Check the 25 cases in this book). It is also useful in a conversation. Imagine yourself sitting in a bar/cafe, and you ran out of things to say. Pick a topic and try the PSB combo: "Global warming is terrible (Problem). What could we do (solution), what would we gain (benefits). Think about how much money it will cost to raise awareness (BMC), who should do this (Team), what has been done so far (Traction). Think of questions for each part from the BPS, and the conversation will flow! Having a structure helps you to organize your thoughts. It helps you to remember how to start, what to say next, and when to end your pitch. Try it, and practice enough to make it part of your studies, work, and life. This is what PFL is about!

PITCHING VARIATIONS

The Basic Pitch Structure (BPS) can be used from four seconds to an hour. You present the message and expand the argumentation part: Product/Service/Concept, Business Model, Team, Traction, and Ask. Depending on the time you have, you select the relevant arguments for your pitch, for example, PSB/VCU for describing an idea, BMC for explaining the value, Team/Traction for presenting who is doing this and what has been done so far, and Ask for highlighting what you are seeking to get from this pitch. Sometimes you use only one argumentation part, other times you have more time to tell about several parts together, if not all. Below are the usual pitching variations, and where/how they are mostly used.

4 SECONDS PITCHES

ONE SENTENCE. USP OR ANY PART FROM ARGUMENTATION.
USEFUL IN SOCIAL SITUATIONS, NETWORKING, EVENTS.

8 SECONDS PITCHES

3-5 SENTENCES. WHAT, HOW, WHY. A QUICK SUMMARY OF YOUR PITCH. USEFUL EVERYWHERE. THE MOST EFFECTIVE.

30 SECONDS PITCHES

10-15 SENTENCES. 1-2 PARTS FROM THE ARGUMENTATION.
USEFUL EVERYWHERE. THE 2ND MOST EFFECTIVE AND USED.

1-10 MINUTES PITCHES

A SHORT PRESENTATION. IN CLASS/MEETINGS. ON STAGE.
STRONG OPENING/CLOSING. USP. CLARITY. SIMPLICITY

10-30 MINUTES PITCHES

A MEDIUM LENGTH PRESENTATION. IN MEETINGS. PUBLIC TALKS (TEDX). INSPIRATION OR MOTIVATION TALKS. STORIES.

30+ MINUTES PITCHES

A LONG PRESENTATION. STORIES. EDUCATION OR RESEARCH.
SOPHISTICATED CONTENT/AUDIENCE. HIGH EXPERTISE.



PART II

PRESENT YOURSELF

In this part, you learn to present yourself e.g., Introduce yourself, present your skills, and pitch for a job, for love, or for a promotion. You get examples, and tips of common mistakes. You learn how to conquer variables for each case. You understand how to use the Scenario Framework to create scripts for different pitches.

INTRODUCE YOURSELF

There are many situations to introduce yourself to new people at school, or work. When you pitch yourself, you want to tell who you are as a person, and show your personality. Be yourself! Do not forget that small-talk is not pitching. You pitch when you have a purpose (Ask), otherwise you do not need to pitch. The purpose can be that you want people to like, trust, believe in, or simply understand you as a person. Whatever your purpose, you want to seize the moment, and your mindset is set to maximize the opportunity. You tell about yourself honestly, and genuinely for people to get to know you better. Wait for the right queues, or questions such as "tell us about you", "present yourself" or "where are you from". Presenting yourself is important; humans are social animals. We strive together. It is never a bad thing to tell about yourself, provided that you want to. Finally, ask questions whenever possible about others; it shows that you care.

COMMON MISTAKES

Unclear or complicated sentences. With new people, it is always better to have short, clear, and easy to understand sentences. Keep it simple!

Not showing your personality. People connect better with you when they get to know the real you; what you like, or dislike. Start with likes; you can of course share your dislikes, but do it after.

Not listening to others. Presenting yourself requires you to also know others especially if you expect them to get to know you. Ask questions, give compliments, or constructive comments.

CONQUERING THE VARIABLES

Timing: when asked or when you need to approach someone. **Content:** hobby, or interests. Ask questions. **Time:** 30secs - 5min. **Tone:** friendly, approachable, kind, or helpful. **Listening:** pay attention to the question, or the context. Listen, ask questions, and/or give compliments when needed.

Mindset: it is a good thing to introduce yourself genuinely, and to seize the moment. You are probably nervous, shy, or uncomfortable to talk about yourself as a person. Do your best. Smile, it is an opportunity. Be alert. Keep it simple and clear. You will get better the more you practice.

SCENARIO

WDWE You want to fit in, or meet someone (Why). You want new people (We) to get to know (Ask) you (Exist).

USP Hobby, or Interest. For example, sports or music.

SE#1 You are kind.
SE#2 Approachable.
SE#3 Helpful.

You are pitching yourself as a person. Describe yourself in 1-3 interesting facts or personality traits.

SCRIPT & COMMENTS

Script. "Hi, I am Sam. I like sports like basketball or football (or 1-3 hobbies, or interests e.g., music). I enjoy X (explain in 1-3 reasons why you like this hobby or interest e.g., playing basketball because it is a social sport or playing music in a band because it is fun). I like meeting new people, and I am a bit shy in the beginning or comfortable around people (share 1-3 things about how you feel when meeting new people). I am looking forward to getting to know you. I am happy to tell you more about myself. Feel free to ask me anything. Thank you".

Comments. Introductions are short ranging from 30 seconds up to five minutes long. In a conversation, they can be even shorter. Keep the dialogue, and ask questions, if possible. One tip here is to listen to what others are saying, and you can take one or two words from what they are talking about to formulate appropriate questions, for example: "Have you played Football long? Do you play Basketball in a team? Or what is your favorite band/song?" Usually questions stimulate discussions, and show that you care about what others are saying. Keep it simple in the beginning. Have short, clear, and easy to understand sentences because you do not know how new people are processing information (Listening as a variable). Finally, present/pitch yourself only when you need to, otherwise enjoy the conversation.

PRESENT YOUR SKILLS

You present your skills to people for project work, team meetings, or when someone asks you about your skills. Your purpose is to introduce what you do professionally. You want to show your expertise, talent, or experience (what you are good at doing). You say the best parts about what you do quickly. You maximize your pitch by explaining your skills (USP). You wait for queues, or questions such as: what do you do, what are you good at, what have you done previously, where did you study/work before, or what would you like to work on. Working in diverse teams is normal nowadays, but it can also be challenging. Make it as clear and simple as possible for others to know what you do. Explain how you enjoy working/studying/doing something. Avoid talking about personal hobbies, or interests unless they are relevant for presenting your skills e.g., “I played team sports, so I believe I am good at teamwork.”

COMMON MISTAKES

Context Mismatch. You talk about personal things when you need to present your skills professionally. Pay attention to the question, and context!

First impression gone bad. After that, it is too stressful to recover, and it creates panic in your mind. Give yourself a break. Believe you have a second chance! At least, try to do your best, it is not the end of the world.

Strengths vs. Weaknesses. Everyone has both. No one is perfect. Focus on your strengths. Be humble not showy. Be hungry but in a subtle way.

CONQUERING THE VARIABLES

Timing: introduce your skills when asked, or when needed. **Content:** your skills vs. personal hobby/interest. Avoid talking in abstract ways. Give examples about your skills to explain what you can do, and how good you are at these skills (I worked on 10 UX Design projects, explain). **Time:** 1-5 min. **Tone:** friendly, humble, hungry, and professional. **Listening:** people want to know about your professional skills. Pay attention to the question, and the context. **Mindset:** introducing your skills helps others to know what you can do. It might start some interesting conversations. It is a good thing!

SCENARIO

WDWE You want to do your work properly or to enjoy it (Why). You want new colleagues/students (We) to know or trust (Ask) your skills (Exist).

USP 1-3 particular skills, traits, or expertise. For example, UX design, fast calculations, teamwork.

SE#1 You are talented.

SE#2 You are patient.

SE#3 Team player.

SCRIPT & COMMENTS

Script. “Hi, I am Veera. I am good at (name 1-3 things). I worked/studied X (e.g., UX design) for Y years or worked on 10 UX design projects. I enjoy working/studying in teams (or explain how you enjoy working). I do things on time. I care about other people’s work (here you can share more about what you feel e.g., I am patient when there are challenges). I stress about (name 1-3 things e.g., deadlines or miscommunication). Feel free to ask me anything, I am always ready to help. I am happy to be part of this group, and do great projects. Thank you”.

Comments. Introducing your skills is as important as introducing yourself. Just keep in mind the context, and your audience. You want to have a strong opening, go straight to what you do, how long you have done your work, and how you feel about working on something. Share your excitement/interest about joining this the team, or working on a project with them. Start with the positives, and share something negative (if needed), but do it softly and delicately. You do not want this team to think you have a baggage, but you also want to connect with the people who share your values at school or work. Avoid overthinking, try to write down on a piece of paper, or your smartphone the main points (if needed).

PITCHING FOR A JOB

Pitching for a job requires you to present yourself, and your skills at the same time. That is why it is a slightly daunting process. We all want to get a job that we like. Most recruitment processes are complicated by design. You start by writing a CV, and Cover Letter. You fill an application, and/or answering questions online, on the phone, or in person. The standard questions are usually asking you to argue why someone should choose you over another person. It is a competition between you, and other candidates. You want your arguments to help you to stand out, be memorable, and believable. Practice how to maximize your strengths, and minimize your weaknesses. You do so by anticipating questions, creating scenarios, and writing down USPs, and SEs. Design several pitches about who you are as a potential candidate. Use the Pitch Scenario Framework and the Basic Pitch Structure to prepare yourself as much as possible.

COMMON MISTAKES

Long sentences. Recruiters are humans who have short attention span. Be consistent, informative, concise, and memorable. Prepare to pitch online, in person, or on the phone. Avoid long sentences!

Overpitching yourself or your skills. You want to balance pitching yourself, and your skills. Avoid letting one overshadow the other.

No preparation. Be ready, mentally and physically, when pitching for a job during the application and interviews. You become more confident, and you increase your chances to be hired.

CONQUERING THE VARIABLES

Timing: when you apply, and at interviews.

Content: yourself and your skills. Your arguments come in the form of questions. Product = yourself, BMC = your salary expectations/how you create value. Traction = what have you done previously.

Time: it depends. **Tone:** friendly, humble, hungry, and professional. **Listening:** Prepare several pitches e.g., for different types of recruiters. Research who will be present in the meeting.

Mindset: it is an opportunity to get a job. It could be stressful. Be patient, and strategic. Prepare well to maximize your chances to be hired.

SCENARIO	SCRIPT & COMMENTS
<p>WDWE You seek to fulfill your career objectives (Why). You want recruiters (We) to hire (Ask) you (Exist).</p> <p>USP likable person and good worker.</p> <p>SE#1 You are friendly SE#2 You are efficient SE#3 Ambitious, hardworking, or reliable</p>	<p>Script #1. Tell us about you? Here you summarize both points from Presenting Yourself, and Your Skills. You want to balance both in the same time. Pick the best arguments (show the value you bring to the company) and be yourself (introduce yourself, and your personality).</p> <p>Script #2: Why should we hire you over another person? Here you talk about your strengths i.e., Product (What you can do), BMC (How you benefit the company), and Traction (What are your achievements or milestones). Be strategic, clear, and straightforward. Answer shortly, and in a memorable way.</p> <p>Comments. Pitching for a job is a process, in which you end up pitching several times. Get used to it, and try to enjoy it. Prepare as much as you can even before you start the application using different scenarios. Maximize the opportunity for recruiters to notice you, screen you, select you, and hire you. Be ready, and alert to pitch yourself and your skills in different situations and people. For example, the third round of interviews could be with a completely new person, such as the Managing Director of the company. Mind the pitching variables; they are crucial to conquer when hunting for a job. You are competing against other candidates, so you want to stand out on personal, and professional levels. Use the Basic Pitch Structure to anticipate questions, and answer them properly.</p>

PITCHING FOR LOVE

Pitching for Love is probably the trickiest, most emotional, and vulnerable experience you will ever encounter in your life. These are the rare moments in your life when you want to declare your sincerest feelings to someone special. Most people struggle because of their ego, pride, insecurity, self-doubt, or simply not knowing what to say. You want to be honest to yourself, and to your loved-one. Aim at communicating with absolute sincerity, and affection. Find the courage to declare your intentions in the right time for both of you. Just like in any situation in pitching, there are no guarantees that you will get to a “Yes.” Yet, you still want to maximize the opportunity. Prepare your scenario, design your pitch, and do it in the best way you can. Prepare to explain as much as possible, if needed.

COMMON MISTAKES

To be or not to be. The worst thing you can do in this situation is not to declare your love. You will regret it for the rest of your life. Just do it!

Wrong timing or content. Love is the best thing in the world. Timing, and content have to be right for both of you. You want to be aware, and alert!

Rejection is not the end of the world. When you pitch for love (or any emotion) and receive a “No”, you want to ask “Why Not”. Listen. Be patient. Do not let disappointment ruin what may come after! You never know if the “No” could be a “Yes” later.

CONQUERING THE VARIABLES

Timing is crucial. Make an effort to find the right timing for both. **Content:** your feelings, your intentions, and what it means to you, and him/her. You are pitching your concept of love. Your Vision should be strong. **Time:** it depends. Take your time! **Tone:** honest, affectionate, dedicated. **Listening:** understand your loved-one, and how he/she wants you to do this. Prepare explanations, and questions. **Mindset:** this is probably very important to your life. So, prepare well. Do it gently, and genuinely. Be aware, and alert that trust is key. Mind the other person’s feelings. This is not only about you!

SCENARIO	SCRIPT & COMMENTS
<p>WDWE You seek happiness, or a life-companion (Why). You want your loved-one (We) to believe / know about / Accept (Ask) your feelings (Exist).</p> <p>USP Your concept of love and/or your vision of love (what it means for both of you).</p> <p>SE#1 Honesty. SE#2 Trust. SE#3 Dedication.</p>	<p>Script. <i>“Hi, I have something very important to tell you. You may want to sit down for this (Optional). I am in love with you (I like you very much or similar) and I would like to take this to the next level because (name 1-3 reasons). You are (name 1-3 things what she/he means to you). I see us (describe your vision e.g., starting a family, moving in together, getting a dog/cat or similar). How do you feel about this? Is there something else I could do, or say? I am very serious, and genuine about this (summarize your intentions and give reasons). Thank you.”</i></p> <p>Comments. Pitching for love is an emotional thing. You want to say what it is about, how it makes you feel, and why you are doing it. Your vision of love is very important to describe. You want her/him to visualize, and imagine what you have in mind. Trust is key. You can use this script for many situations in relationships. You can also use parts of the Basic Pitch Structure, for example the BMC to describe about money (e.g., we save money on rent if we live together), Traction part to describe milestones (e.g., we have lived together since 2010) or other parts. Finding love is the first step, keeping it requires unconditional dedication, and understanding. Pitching is for the rest of your time together using different scenarios e.g., which movies to watch, restaurant to go to, wedding themes to have, kid’s names, and so on. Remember that persuasion is not manipulation! Love is powerful; these pitches are probably the most important ones in your life!</p>

PITCHING FOR A PROMOTION

Pitching for a promotion is a situation where you ask for a salary increase. It is a very particular ask from your manager. Highlight yourself as an employee (Yourself as a concept), salary expectations, the value you bring to the company (BMC), your efforts (Traction), and your reasons behind the ask. You already know your manager by now because you have spent time at the company. Create your scenario for her/him, design your pitch, and deliver it bearing in mind the ask is for her/him to approve the promotion. Remember that a promotion is a professional, and emotional ask, because you probably love your job, otherwise you would not want to stay, or seek more responsibility at the firm. You want to balance the tips from Pitching Yourself/Your Skills/For a Job. Demonstrate clearly the value that the promotion brings to yourself, and the company. For example, it brings greater motivation, higher efficiency, bigger results, or more responsibility.

COMMON MISTAKES

Promotions are earned not given. You can only ask for a promotion when you have earned it. Show a clear success path (Traction), or vision.

Balance professionally and emotionally. You want to show what it means to you, and the company with clear USPs and SEs.

Rejection is not the end of the world. Same as with Pitching for Love, you want to be ok with the “No.” Here you want to ask “Why Not?” Also ask yourself whether the outcome suits you or you want to look for new opportunities internally or externally.

CONQUERING THE VARIABLES

Timing: you ask for a promotion when you have earned it. You have excelled at a project/task. You created a positive impact/outcome. **Content:** show the value to you and what it brings to the company. **Time:** 5-30 min. **Tone:** balance the professional and emotional approach. **Listening:** address your manager in the way he/she expects it. Book a meeting. Create an environment where you can ask for a promotion. Calculate the outcome, even if it is negative. **Mindset:** If you feel you have earned a promotion, you have to ask for it. If you do not ask, you might regret it later!

SCENARIO

WDWE You seek more responsibility at work (Why). You want your Manager (We) to offer more salary/new tasks (Ask) to you (Exist).

USP You are a valuable and productive employee (show it).

SE#1 Motivation.
SE#2 Contribution.
SE#3 Commitment.

SCRIPT & COMMENTS

Script. *“Hi, I booked this meeting to ask for a promotion because (show the benefit it brings to you, and the value it brings to the company). I have been working on (1-3 projects or tasks) and I have done (1-3 good/excellent things). I see this promotion (describe your vision and mention salary request in numbers). What do you think? I believe this will be a good thing for me and this company (summarize/repeat the USP and SEs, if needed). Thank you.”*

Comments. Pitching for Promotion is a normal thing to do when you have spent enough time working in a place that you enjoy/love. Most people are afraid, shy, or uncomfortable to do it, particularly if they think about the request being rejected. Getting to a “Yes” is a confirmation to you, and your employer, that you are committed to the company. Getting a “No” will open discussion, and maybe even lay the foundation for considering you for future opportunities. Sometimes employers propose the promotion, but most often it is on you to initiate. The worst-case scenario is that you leave the company – an outcome that no one wants. Don’t be afraid to ask if you have earned a promotion.



PART III

PRESENT CONCEPTS

In this part, you learn to pitch new ideas or concepts. For example, you learn how to use pitching in brainstorming sessions, and school presentations. You also learn how to pitch a mobile game idea, to showcase and sell art, or to present design ideas. You get examples, and tips of common mistakes. You learn how to conquer variables for each case. You understand how to use the Scenario Framework to create scripts for different pitches.

BRAINSTORMING IDEAS IN TEAMS

Presenting ideas in teams is a pitch when you want your ideas to be heard, liked, trusted, or adopted. Usually when team members are brainstorming new ideas in a meeting, they start by introducing themselves, and their skills (or not if the team members know each other). Presenting ideas is the natural next step. Everyone wants to participate, even by listening and/or contributing to someone else’s ideas. Concepts are ideas that are not yet realized, so you want to visualize and ignite the imagination of the team. Start your phrases with “Imagine or I imagine ...”, “I see this as ...”, “We could approach this with ...” or similar. You also want to be polite, and respectful of other team members’ opinions, and ideas. The best way to approach feedback in a brainstorming session is to use “Yes, and ...” (vs. Yes, but ...), “I like this and I wish that”, or “How about this...”. Give enough time and space for everyone to talk by creating an environment of trust!

COMMON MISTAKES

Dominant vs. quiet. Some members speak more than others but it does not mean that the loud ones have better ideas. Have clear times for everyone to speak. Give space to everyone’s ideas, incl. yours.

Creating an environment of distrust. The last thing you need when brainstorming ideas in teams is to have a negative vibe in the room. You, or someone who has a great idea, will struggle even if she is a great pitcher. Everyone takes charge of the trust-building process to maximize the collective pitching. You all want to feel safe/trusted/calm!

CONQUERING THE VARIABLES

Timing: everyone should have a timeslot for presenting. Timing should be assigned. **Content:** Visualize your ideas. Describe how they help the team. **Time:** it depends on the length of the meeting e.g., 1-5 min/person + discussion. **Tone:** polite, respectful, hoping to contribute. **Listening:** brainstorming is a dialogue between two or more people. Listening plays an important role to find the best outcome for the team. **Mindset:** you want to contribute with your ideas, or build on someone else’s ideas. You seize the moment by presenting your ideas in a clear and simple way.

SCENARIO

WDWE You seek to contribute positively to the team (Why). You want your team members (We) to hear, like, trust or adopt (Ask) your ideas (Exist).

USP You have something valuable to present or contribute to someone’s idea.

SE#1/SE#2/SE#3
Depends on the topic. Prepare relevant SEs for your idea/concept.

SCRIPT & COMMENTS

Script #1. Tell us about your idea? *“I imagine X to be (visualize, describe, and ignite imagination). It is valuable/works because (1-3 reasons). I strongly believe in this because (USP + SEs). What do you think? I am happy to explain more if needed.”*

Script #2: Contributing to someone else’s idea? *“Yes, and (when replying about an idea), we could add (1-3 things), how about we try this (1-3 things), or I like this (you mention that idea that you are commenting), and I wish that (1-3 new ideas that you want to suggest)”.*

Comments. When telling about your idea, you want to bear in mind people’s attention span, and the variables. Wait for your turn but also seize the moment. Tell what your idea is about, how you see/imagine it working, and why it is a good/relevant idea for this project/team. Be patient but also firm when contributing to someone else’s idea. You want your ideas to be heard, understood, and liked. Try to explain more if needed/asked. Prepare as much as possible before the meeting, otherwise you might sound opinionated without facts/knowledge. Be polite, and respectful. Listen to others. Pitching is easier when it does not hurt someone’s feelings, or confront his/her opinion in a contradicting/negative way.

SCHOOL PRESENTATIONS

Presenting in schools or universities is a pitch when students want to get a certain grade or pass the course. Present what you have worked on. Validate your concepts with clear USP and SEs. Your project must sound logical, believable, meaningful, helpful, and/or functional. Use the Basic Pitch Structure (BPS) to present your arguments in a way that your audience understands your work, and believe it is meaningful. Usually, school presentations are concepts, i.e., they are not yet ready products or services. Use the VCU format for describing the concepts. In some cases, you can use PSB when it fits e.g., you can mention the Problem, describe the Solution, and explain the Benefits. You want your presentation to be interesting and believable. The content is as important as the delivery in the classroom. Remember to smile, and at the same time, be professional. Try to enjoy it as much as possible. Humor is always good to have when presenting, but as long as it does not take away from your credibility, or performance.

COMMON MISTAKES

Unclear presentation. When presenting, you want to clarify and simplify so everyone can follow and understand what you have worked on.

Uninteresting. You do not need to put on a show, but you want to at least aim for some humor, joy, fun, and structure when presenting. Have a strong opening/closing, and clear USP and SEs.

Practice. If you have a great content but you lack preparation, your presentation might suffer. This is obvious. Practice several times before presenting.

CONQUERING THE VARIABLES

Timing: assigned by the teacher. **Content:** show what you have worked on and how it is relevant to the course with clear USP and SEs. **Time:** 3-30 min. It depends on the course. **Tone:** interesting, fun, and believable. **Listening:** you want your classmates and teacher to follow your presentation. Have clear and simple to understand sentences. Have fun. **Mindset:** you have worked on your project for some time, so it is imperative to put effort on designing your pitch and practicing your presentation. Every pitch is an opportunity to show what you can do, or what you learned.

SCENARIO

WDWE You seek to learn or graduate (Why). You want your teacher (We) to give a certain grade (Ask) for your school project (Exist).

USP depends on the project in school. Usually you summarize the key findings or takeaways.

SE#1/SE#2/SE#3
Depends on the project. Think of what should your classmates and teacher remember the most. Make it fun too!

SCRIPT & COMMENTS

Script. *"Hi, I/we present you X (tell what it is). It works like this (describe briefly), and we aim at (mention 1-3 reasons why they should listen). We have enjoyed working on this project because (or share how you felt). Here use the VCU or PSB format to describe the Concept. Then explain the BMC by summarizing the parts about people (who is this for), place (where is it implemented/delivered), price (how much does it cost), and promotion (how to reach users/customers) or other relevant parts from BMC. The next parts will be to introduce the Team (your group who worked on this), Traction (what you have done, achieved in this project), and Ask. For the Closing, you summarize the main points, and say Thank You"*

Comments. Use a structure because you want to have a presentation that everyone can follow. The Basic Pitch Structure works, and you want to use it in a way that fits your projects (VCU/PSB). When it comes to the Ask, avoid saying "please we want a good grade", instead you say "with this presentation, we have demonstrated that our project is logical, believable, and meaningful. We did a good job in this course. We learned a lot (or similar)". Pull vs. Push. Balance your content with technical and emotional queues. Make it believable, professional, fun, and memorable. In most cases, teachers give you a particular structure that you should follow, and it means you need to incorporate pitching techniques within the given structure. It is ok, you can do that, give it a try!

SHOWCASING AND SELLING ART

Pitching art is a delicate matter because art has no limits. Artists choose a purpose, vague or defined, to express themselves, or stimulate reactions based on the viewers perspective. Art expresses the artist's point of view, asks questions, or presents something meaningful. When you showcase or sell your art, for example an art piece in a gallery, you carefully and strategically describe the concept of your art, and explain the business potential. Prepare clear and simple to understand arguments, including the Unique Selling Point and Supporting Evidence about your art piece. Explain what makes it unique, and sellable. Artists fall in the trap of over-describing their concepts by providing an exhaustive list of materials, technical overview, or production methods. They often find it uncomfortable to sell their work. Your art's concept is important, but providing proper arguments and selling are too. You want to tell the best parts first, which is your art, yet it is crucial to show the value of it too, how it makes someone feel, why does it exist, and who will buy it.

COMMON MISTAKES

Not pitching. Artists often find pitching out of their comfort zone. They tend to be shy or insecure to sell their work, or talk to people. It is a big mistake! You spent time on your art, you should pitch it too.

Lack of business know-how. It is not the end of the world! There are many beginner courses online that you can check. And, you only need the basics when pitching. Start with business model courses. Learn how to show who are your customers, how you attract them, and how much is the price, and profit. The latter is important for the gallery owner or partner, not customers.

CONQUERING THE VARIABLES

Timing: Whenever possible. **Content:** Explain your art, and show the potential. Have a clear Ask. **Time:** 4 secs-30 min. You pitch in different occasions. **Tone:** professional, passionate, and memorable. **Listening:** Owners/partners want to know if they can sell your art. Customers want to see the meaning or beauty. Raise interest first. Start with short pitches 4-60 secs, follow-up (1-30+ min), and close deals (30+ min). **Mindset:** You spent time on your work, make an effort to sell it. Pitch online via a website or social media, and in person i.e., talk to people as much as you can.

SCENARIO

WDWE You seek to develop your art business or concept (Why). You want an art gallery – as an example – (We) to showcase and sell (Ask) your art (Exist)

USP meaning, beauty or emotion. It depends on the art.

SE#1/SE#2/SE#3
Expand on the USP, explaining the value behind the art, and the business potential e.g., I use sustainable material that I get for free (= more profit)

SCRIPT & COMMENTS

Script: 1-5 minutes pitch. "Hi, I have this beautiful art piece, I believe it will sell well in your gallery or customers will buy it because (mention the USP). Here use the VCU to show a strong vision (e.g., it is a piece for every home, many people love it, or similar). Explain the concept and show how unique it is (1-3 things). Then, present the BMC parts: people (who is it for), price (how much), promotion (how to attract customers), or other parts such as profit (how much per unit sold). Introduce the Team (you alone or key members), and Traction (your achievements to date e.g., portfolio, other galleries you work with, number of pieces sold). Ask, here you want to be specific and strategic: what would you and the gallery owner gain from this. Summarize the main points, and say Thank you."

Comments. Pitching art is slightly difficult because the value is unclear, it is not easily explicable. It is rather subjective, than objective, to explain the value behind art. Use short sentences to present your concept and arguments, it does not need to be complicated. Think about what your audience need to hear, for example, the gallery owner have many artists pitching to her, and all she cares about whether your art piece will sell at her shop. Customers think differently, they want something meaningful, or beautiful.

PRESENTING DESIGN IDEAS

Art asks questions. Design creates solutions. Design has limits from user/client's vision/needs (expectations and accessibility) and/or pressure from business goals (budgets and deadlines). Imagine pitching a concept of a web design, graphic design, or an industrial product for a user/client. You have constraints such as technology, aesthetics, and functionality. Design is measured objectively, and subjectively. It should look great, and perform its intended function. When pitching a design, you want to understand the users' needs and clients' vision, before you present your ideas to them. You need to fulfil all their desires. If you do not, your work and pitch might suffer. You put time for working on the project, and preparing your pitch. You maximize your pitch (and work) by asking the right questions, ultimately to avoid wasting unnecessary time. Learn all pitching variations as you have different types of meetings (duration, and purpose) with users/clients. Be patient and confident throughout the whole process.

COMMON MISTAKES

Listening. Not listening to users/clients' vision/needs, leads to miscommunication, which affects your work and your pitching. Have the courage to ask questions if something is unclear, or to suggest new ideas when it is absolutely necessary.

Flustered confidence. Design work takes several iterations with users/clients, who often shake your confidence. They demand more from you. Be patient, and believe in yourself. Pitch your ideas clearly to avoid wasting unnecessary time due to miscommunication.

CONQUERING THE VARIABLES

Timing: depends on accessibility to users/clients. Meeting are arranged by both sides. **Content:** have a clear USP and SEs. Prepare to update users/clients about your progress. Explain new ideas, and the value/impact they bring e.g., on budgets or deadlines. **Time:** designers pitch regularly using all pitching variations. **Tone:** confident, patient, and professional. **Listening:** understand user/client's vision/needs. Be aware of different variables and scenarios. **Mindset:** a happy user/customer is good business, even if he/she is demanding. Pitching properly helps you to do your job better.

SCENARIO

WDWE You seek to create beautiful and functional design work (Why). You want the user/client (We) to like/approve (Ask) your design ideas (Exist).

USP A beautiful and functional design concept.

SE#1 Fulfills user/client's vision/needs
SE#2 Fits in the budget
SE#3 Fits within the deadline or timeframe.

SCRIPT & COMMENTS

Script. *"Hi, I see/imagine X (website/graphic/product) to be (visualize/describe how it fits the user/client's vision/needs). From my experience of working on X projects (use numbers e.g. 20-50 or similar punchline to establish credibility about your work), I believe this is a good idea because (USP + SEs). Describe the relevant BMC parts for your concept: people, price, place, promotion, or other. Mention the Team and Traction, you expand on your experience as a designer or add new arguments to enforce credibility. Ask: What do you think? I am happy to explain more, if needed (expect a dialogue or questions). Thank you."*

Comments. When pitching design ideas, it is important to establish your credibility, and present your ideas clearly. It is often a dialogue with the user/client, which means you have to wait for the right moments to pitch. For example, they might expect you to present your ideas after they have explained their brief. Later, they will challenge you with difficult questions or new demands. You want to anticipate questions; it will help you to prepare better arguments. They usually ask questions from the argumentation part such as "why did you choose this concept?", "how much will it cost us to build this", "who will work on this project", or similar. Answer with confidence. Use short sentences, with clear USPs and SEs, to help them understand your arguments.

PITCHING A MOBILE GAME IDEA

Pitching a mobile game idea combines notions from pitching art, design, technology, and business. As a game developer, you pitch new concepts regularly including new game ideas, features, or updates. Show a strong vision behind the concept, and visualize clearly the Unique Selling Point (USP). Explain in straightforward way how the new concept works, what players feel when they experience it, how unique it is, and how it benefits the studio. The USP might be the gameplay, mechanics, design, art, or anything that makes the experience enjoyable. You want your concept to stand out from competition. Use VCU structure, it works best for games. Demonstrate in your vision the functionality and profitability aspects. Remember that you pitch games to different target audiences such as players, publishers, investors, partners, employees, managers, and other groups. Create relevant scenarios, and design strategic pitches for each target audience to maximize your chances of getting to a “Yes.”

COMMON MISTAKES

The concept is unclear. A complicated or unclear game pitch confuses your audience, the persuasion suffers. Explain clearly the experience behind the game and your arguments.

Unbalanced pitch. Talking too much about the concept, without proper arguments (BMC, Team, Traction, and Ask) is not ideal. Show your game’s potential incl. fun, performance, and profitability.

Not memorable. Lack of enthusiasm, passion, emotion; a boring concept; or shaky pitch can put people off. Pitch in a fun and memorable way.

CONQUERING THE VARIABLES

Timing: Depends e.g., internal/external meetings, conferences, events, or online stores. **Content:** Explain clearly the concept and the experience of your game. Demonstrate strong vision, and the business potential. **Time:** all pitching variations e.g., networking (4-30 secs), elevator pitches (30-60 secs), presentations (10-15 min), public talks (15-60 min). **Tone:** Enthusiastic, professional, passionate, emotional, and fun. **Mindset:** Games are fun. You spend time making them, so invest time on pitching them to relevant target groups. Every pitch is an opportunity to make your game a success!

SCENARIO

WDWE You seek to make your game concept a real success (Why). You want your manager/publisher/investor (We) to fund (Ask) your game concept (Exist)

USP An awesome game with a unique experience (be specific here)

SE#1/SE#2/SE#3
Anything that elaborates on the experience, or awesomeness.

SCRIPT & COMMENTS

Script. *“Hi, Here is my game (or concept), it is called (name it, or start with the name of the game e.g., Hi, Angry Birds is...). We like/love this game because (mention 1-3 reasons why they should listen, or what players love about it). Use the VCU structure to show a strong vision, describe the concept clearly, and explain the uniqueness in your game concept. After that, present the relevant BMC parts e.g. players (who), market (where), monetization (how will it make money), promotion (user acquisition strategies), or other relevant BMC parts. Next, introduce the Team (who is it, why them), Traction (what this team has done so far, Any achievements/milestones?). Ask, and offer justifications on how the funding will be spent.. Summarize the main points. End with Thank you”*

Comments. Pitching a game for funding requires you to explain the concept, and the business potential. In most cases, it is best to start your pitch by showing your game’s demo, and describing the experience. Understand the environment, and the people you are pitching to. You want your pitch to stand out from competition. Make it memorable and interesting for others to listen to your pitch. Make them remember the name of your game, and/or your company brand. Sometimes, it is also important that they remember your IPs, or the name of your main character from the game, depending on the game.



PART IV

SELL PRODUCTS OR

SERVICES

In this part, you learn to pitch for product development and sell products and services. You get examples, and tips of common mistakes. You learn how to conquer variables for each case. You understand how to use the Scenario Framework to create scripts for different pitches.

PITCHING FOR PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

Pitching for product development is inspired by the Design Thinking process, in which designers do quick prototypes, collect data, and validate ideas with actual users/customers. You pitch your ideas as soon as possible because you want to create something that someone wants to use, buy, or most importantly benefit from. Thus, pitching for product development helps you to realize whether your ideas are useful, or beneficial. It is better to know early than too late. Fail fast, but do it smartly. Collect relevant information by asking the right questions. I started pitching PFL on April, 2018. Once I understood that PFL is feasible (phase 1: is it possible?), I started investigating the content (phase 2: what to write about?), and the value it brings to someone (phase 3: how to create value?). I pitched almost a hundred times to different target audience e.g., students, startups, artists, teachers, managers, and potential partners and investors. The feedback that I received helped me to know what to write about and how to start and finish the book.

COMMON MISTAKES

Pitching too late. Whatever your reasons for not pitching: shyness, insecurity, top secret project, or not knowing what to say, you want to find a way to get some answers before working too long on something that someone might not use, or buy.

Asking the wrong questions, will get you the wrong answers. You then create products/services that are not ideal for users/customers. Why risk it?

Not listening. After pitching and asking, try to record every answer, even if it is not relevant. Analyze them critically. In future, they will help you!

CONQUERING THE VARIABLES

Timing: Depends: meetings vs. events. **Content:** Present your ideas. Ask questions to users/customers (how it benefits them), to partners (how you can collaborate), to investors (how much funding you can anticipate). **Time:** All variations e.g., events (4-60 secs), or meetings (10-60 min). **Tone:** Friendly, professional, and open-minded. **Listening:** Pitch clearly, and use qualitative asking for feedback, insights, or introduction. **Mindset:** it is best to know, than not to know if your ideas are feasible, or have potential. Feedback helps to improve your ideas. The effort is worth it!

SCENARIO	SCRIPT & COMMENTS
<p>WDWE I seek to write a book that helps people to realize their dreams/goals in life via pitching (Why). I want(ed) future readers (We) to tell me via feedback/opinion what to write or how to help them (Ask) via the book (Exist).</p> <p>USP adapting startup pitching to every day situations.</p> <p>SE#1 Free of charge SE#2 Exercises, materials, templates SE#3 Scenario Framework</p>	<p>Script. <i>"Hi, I am writing a book (or I have an idea) called PFL (name it). It adapts startup pitching to every day situations at school and work (explain the USP). The book helps you to pitch anything to anyone (mention why your product/idea is beneficial). Use PSB/VCU depends on product/idea (e.g., Problem = people struggle to pitch, Solution= The book + describe it, Benefit= mindset, framework and tools). Present the relevant BMC parts e.g., PFL is for students, workers, and leaders (people), it is a free eBook with exercises, materials and templates (price), available online (market= anyone can download it, marketing= where to find it) or other BMC parts. I coached thousands of people, I am passionate about helping them (Team). I have developed a scenario framework that works (Traction). How could PFL help you the most? What do you think? (Ask). Thank you"</i></p> <p>Comments. Pitching for product development is important because it might save you from working on something useless. It provides you with valuable feedback that can help you improve your ideas. In my opinion, silence may kill great ideas; it is the saddest thing in the world. I learned this in the hard way working on my first startup back in 2009. I wasted time, money, and effort on a ridiculous business idea. I learned many lessons from my failure, nevertheless it cost me three years of my life. Have the courage to go out, and ask people early about what they think regarding your idea. You will be surprised with the amount of feedback, inspiration, and support that you will get from people.</p>

A SALES PITCH FOR A PRODUCT

Pitching a product requires you to specify, and differentiate the product from other similar products. Demonstrate the value it brings to people (USP/SEs), and explain how it helps them, or how they benefit from using it. Build a relationship with your users/clients. Avoid short-lived selling; it might create tons of negativity. Remember that products are tangible things, something you can touch, feel, hear, smell, or see e.g., pen, pillow, music, food, book, or color. People want to trust that it works for them. You want people to trust, and depend on you as a salesperson. A sales pitch is always done by people to people, even if it is online. Use visual demonstration to explain why customer should buy this product over another similar one e.g., it is better, stronger, faster, cheaper, safer, or more beautiful. Selling is easier when it genuinely helps someone in some way e.g., find the right laptop for school. Usually the pressure in selling comes from a demanding situation (targets), or person (boss). Aim for Max every time, think long-term, and have a positive attitude.

COMMON MISTAKES

Aggressive selling. If you push, you have already lost. Customers are allergic to pushy salespeople. You stand out when you help people, answer their questions, and sell in a friendly, caring and professional ways.

Not listening. Salespeople tend to not listen to what customers want, or need. This is one of the biggest mistakes in selling. Help people to find the right products, so they benefit from them.

Lying takes much effort to do and more time to recover from its negative effects.

CONQUERING THE VARIABLES

Timing: Anytime a customer approaches you in person/online, or when you need to approach them.

Content: You explain/describe the product and its USP/SEs. Show what it is and how it benefits them.

Time: all variations, depending on the situation.

Tone: Friendly, professional, and helpful.

Listening: Customers want to find what they are looking for, even if sometimes they do not know what they need. Pull them towards your products, versus pushing aggressively. **Mindset:** Selling is good when it helps someone. Help people, and they will help you back by buying from you!

SCENARIO

WDWE You seek to help someone to get the product they need/want (Why). You want users/customers (We) to use/buy – download PFL as an example – (Ask) your product (Exist)

USP adapting startup pitching to every day situations.

SE#1 Free of charge

SE#2 Pitch Scenario Framework as a tool

SE#3 Introduction, 25 cases, and practical challenge.

SCRIPT & COMMENTS

Script #1. "Hi, PFL is a book that adapts startup pitching to every day situations at school or work (USP). Imagine a situation where you need to present yourself or your ideas, apply for a job, sell products, or look for funding (differentiator). PFL helps anyone to pitch anything. PFL's Pitch Scenario Framework works, it can be applied to any situation. The eBook has an introduction to pitching, 25 practical cases, and the 30 Days Pitching Challenge. It is free to download online. It is beneficial for students, workers, and leaders (BMC). The author has coached thousands of people from various backgrounds including university students, CEOs, and Ambassadors. The framework, and approach he uses in his workshops help people to gain confidence in their presentation skills, and also create informative, concise and memorable content for their pitch (Team and Traction). You can download the PFL eBook online on www.pitchingforlife.com (Ask). Thank you".

Comments. Make an effort to clarify and differentiate the product and its benefits. Create a desire and trust for the product. Make it easy for people to understand how to obtain, use, or consume the product. When pitching physical products, it is best to demonstrate visually or show it, if possible. For example, you show how a laptop looks and works, how a pillow is comfortable and fluffy, or how this pizza tastes and looks delicious. Showing a product eliminates any doubt in people's minds about what it is about.

A SALES PITCH FOR A SERVICE

Pitching a service requires you to simplify and clarify the experience from start to finish. Think of a restaurant, mail delivery, apps, games, websites, electricity or amusement park, they all have a user journey. For example, you look for a restaurant, book the one you like, go there, eat, pay, and leave. When pitching, describe the process, or the experience. People love experiences that work, and avoid the ones that are complex, misleading, shady, or annoying. People want to believe, and trust that they will enjoy, and/or benefit from the service. You want to inform them about your service, and its benefits. You want to stand out from competitors. For example, think of two Italian restaurants in the same street, they might have similar menus but one way or another they are different. The competitive edge could be in the booking system, quality of food, décor, customer service, atmosphere (e.g., live music), or perhaps even cleanliness. Highlight what people might want or need from the experience, and present it clearly to them.

COMMON MISTAKES

Lack of clarity. If you cannot explain your service, and its benefits, it is hard to get to persuade.

Too complex. Most services, especially new experiences or platforms, have many layers, or steps e.g., a gazillion website features. So, it becomes very difficult for people to understand why they should use or buy them.

Experiences are easy to forget because they are intangible. Stand out by promising and delivering an unforgettable experience. Show your customers the benefits and/or the excitement of this experience

CONQUERING THE VARIABLES

Timing: Anytime someone is in contact with your service (in person/online). **Content:** describe the experience, and its benefits. **Time:** Depends on service, situation, people, and environment. **Tone:** fun, honest, and memorable. **Listening:** understand your users/customers, and their needs. **Mindset:** Selling services is about bringing joy and/or something practical/useful to someone. You are the one who facilitates/provides the experience to people. It is awesome to pitch services because you have a chance to make someone's day better, happier, or more enjoyable.

SCENARIO

WDE You seek to create an awesome Italian Restaurant experience in Finland (Why). You want people (We) to come to and enjoy (Ask) your restaurant (Exist)

USP Delicious Italian Food, great service

SE#1 Authentic
SE#2 Fresh
SE#3 Affordable

Anything that helps your experience to stand out from competitors.

SCRIPT & COMMENTS

Script. "Hi, Da Marko is an Italian restaurant in the center of Helsinki. Our service is great; our prices are even greater for an authentic Italian menu. That is what our customers say on TripAdvisor. We thank you, and love you! We do everything in-house with the utmost care and love for fresh ingredients (USP). Most restaurants in this region have frozen, or packaged foods (Problem). Da Marko combines traditional ways of cooking with a modern twist. Our menu has only nine dishes incl. antipasti, primi, secondi and dolci – all prepared to perfection (Solution). You can expect an authentic Italian experience, a cozy place, and tasty food (Benefits). The prices for a four-course meal and house wine is around EUR 60, which is great! We are located in Kamppi Center (BMC). Our Head Chef is from Rome, he just moved to Finland a year ago (Team). Feedback from customers and critics has been amazing since 2010. We are almost 10 years old! Can you believe it? (Traction). We are open every day from 12:00 to 23:00, serving lunch, aperitivo, and dinner. More info at www.damarko.fi. We would love to see you soon. Welcome to Italy in Helsinki, Benvenuti! Thank you."

Comments. Make an effort to explain the experience clearly (great food, prepared well). Highlight the USP, and benefits (Authentic, fresh, and affordable). Help customers to obtain the service (www.damarko.fi and location).



PART V

PROMOTE ONLINE

In this part, you learn to pitch on websites, via emails and in videos, and to apply pitching for user acquisition for apps. You get examples, and tips of common mistakes. You learn how to conquer variables for each case. You understand how to use the Scenario Framework to create scripts for different pitches.

PITCHING ON WEBSITES

A website asks people to engage with the content and/or do something such as download a service, buy a product, review something, or contact someone. The challenge for an online content creator is to convey the message in an informative, concise, and memorable way to a broad audience. You never know who is visiting your site after all. People often struggle to understand the purpose of the site (message), or to find the relevant information in a short period of time. Remembering sites (or apps) is another issue, for example the domain name, or the brand. When pitching on websites, maximize the users' experience, as well as, the pitch. Most content creators ignore the latter, or simply do not know how to pitch online. You apply all the notions from previous and later parts in this book. Start by creating several scenarios for your site. Focus mainly on visitors, and what they should do on your site. Conquer all the variables, particularly the Tone, Content, and Listening parts. Design several pitches on your site, perhaps on different pages, to address different target groups.

COMMON MISTAKES

Sophisticated language online does not work anymore. Use text that a five year old would understand. Explain USPs in a straightforward way to get the maximum results from your web pitch.

Long texts. People are allergic to long texts. They want more visuals, e.g., photos, videos, graphics, or storylines. Minimize noise on your website, and drop the Jargon. Any word that does not serve the purpose of your site must be dropped. Limit your technical vocabulary. Increase emotions. Help the visitor to engage better with your page. Make it believable, and memorable!

CONQUERING THE VARIABLES

Timing: When someone visits your site. **Content:** Clear message and USP with minimum noise. If possible, an engaging storyline. **Time:** 4-8 secs. and 30-60 secs variations work best online. Sometimes people engage longer, it depends on the site. **Tone:** Professional, informative, and Engaging. **Listening:** Help visitors to understand the purpose of the site, and to navigate around it quickly. Put yourself in your visitor's shoes. **Mindset:** Websites are important in today's social, and economic life. Balance the design (layout), and pitch (text).

SCENARIO

WDWE PFL website to compliment the book – a platform where readers engage with the content, and learn more about pitching (Why). I want readers (We) to regularly visit and interact with (Ask) PFL's website (Exist).

USP adapting startup pitching to every day situations.

SE#1 Introduction to pitching.

SE#2 Framework to design a pitch.

SE#3 Tips and examples.

SCRIPT & COMMENTS

Script. "PFL is an eBook (what it is) that adapts startup pitching to every day situations for students, and workers (USP). It has an introduction to pitching (SE1), a framework for designing a successful pitch (SE2), and tips and examples for pitching in different situations (SE3) e.g., Present yourself/your skills/concepts, sell products/services, or get funding. PFL is free (BMC). It is the most helpful for students, workers, and leaders (People). The author has coached thousands of people from different backgrounds (Team), and published the PFL book (Traction). (Traction). On this website you can find the eBook, and materials such as pitching templates, videos, and exercises e.g., 30 Days Pitching Challenge. (Ask)."

Comments. When pitching on websites, write short sentences with minimum amount of noise, and have an attractive, and engaging layout. Help visitors to grasp the purpose of your site quickly. Guide them on how to interact with pages and, what to do (Call To Action). For example, you might want them to know about your service, and perhaps download it (App), make a reservation (Restaurant/Hairdresser), purchase an item (Course), or leave a review. Balance the design with the pitch by using visuals (photos/videos/Infographics), and strategically designed text (bullet points, lists, title/subtitle etc.). Stories are powerful and memorable online, check Storytelling in a Pitch on pages 52-53.

PITCHING VIA EMAILS

Pitching via emails is a delicate matter; the more you write, the less the effect. Email marketing, and selling are at their lowest simply because people have over-used them. Spamming has killed emails! However, it is still one method to reach someone, present your ideas, and ask something. Keep it short, and straightforward. Tell why you are emailing, what do you have in mind, and how you and the receiver benefit from this email. Make it as easy as possible for the receiver to grasp the point. Use short sentences. Write one idea on one line. Use links, instead of attachments, whenever possible e.g., a link to SlideShare presentations. Just a reminder that a pitch is a presentation, in which you ask something. If you send a random email without an “Ask”, it is not a pitch. When you meet new people, for example at an event, you want to inform them that you will send them an email. Avoid sending long emails in the beginning. Try to convey your message in short sentences.

COMMON MISTAKES

Long Emails. They are not effective unless someone asks you to send details. Keep it short, and straightforward. People receive many emails!

Unstructured emails. Put yourself in the receivers’ shoes, and imagine how they want to receive emails. People are busy; help them to scan the main points from your email, quickly. Steal their attention, stimulate their curiosity, and motivate them to reply. Use spaces, titles and subtitles, and links whenever possible. Use the Email template, which you can download from PFL’s website.

CONQUERING THE VARIABLES

Timing: When you need to pitch via email, or someone is expecting it. **Content:** Why-What-How Structure. Tell why you are emailing, what you want, and how the receiver can help, or should reply. **Time:** 4-8 secs and 30-60 secs variations work best in emails. **Tone:** Depends on the email’s purpose, and receiver. **Listening:** send emails in a way the receiver wants to read them, keep it simple, and to the point. Adjust as you see fit. **Mindset:** Emails can be annoying. They work best when someone is expecting them. Otherwise, you need to explain the reasons behind the email you are sending.

SCENARIO	SCRIPT & COMMENTS
<p>WDWE You seek to arrange a follow-up meeting with someone, who might take your idea to the next level (Why). I want Mike (We) to meet (Ask) me (Exist)</p> <p>USP Depends on the idea, but there should be synergy with what Mike is doing.</p> <p>SE#1/SE#2/SE#3 Depends on the idea. Build on synergy.</p>	<p>Script. Email Title: Mike, we met at (Event’s name) or personalize it.</p> <p><i>Opening: Dear Mike, It was nice meeting you at (Event’s name).</i></p> <p><i>Why: I am emailing you to arrange a meeting next week (be specific if possible e.g., Monday, 24.06.2019 at 10:00 am). We talked about (remind him about your conversation, if needed, e.g., ‘We talked about F2P in mobile games’).</i></p> <p><i>What: I told you about X, it is (explain a bit the idea + add links with materials).</i></p> <p><i>How: I felt we have some synergy (highlight USP/SEs briefly). And I am thinking we could benefit from (the Ask e.g., partnership, knowledge exchange, etc.).</i></p> <p><i>Closing: I am looking forward to meeting you and discussing more.</i></p> <p><i>Best regards, (Your name)</i></p> <p>Comments. Pitching via email is a delicate matter because the receiver might perceive your content, or tone subjectively. In addition to tone as a variable, the content and listening are crucial to consider before emailing. Make it as personal as possible in the title, opening, and body. Spam emails are generic, and impersonal. Create the Scenario, and Pitch Design. Have a clear purpose for your email. Use the Email Structure from PFL’s website, if needed. Sometimes, it is easier to call the person, or send a text message rather than emailing.</p>

PITCHING IN VIDEOS

Pitching in videos is when you want someone to watch your video content, and do something about it. Video followers might like, subscribe, order, review, book, or give feedback. Videos are effective because they visualize the message, and describe the arguments in a vivid way. People prefer to watch videos than to read text. People have a short attention span. YouTube ads are skipped within 4-5 seconds. Have a strong opening in the first 10-20 seconds. Think of it as a hook to grab someone's attention to watch for an additional 20-60 seconds. Connect with your audience in a fun, engaging, professional, and consistent way. The quality of the video production is a key variable (Content). All other variables play an important role for the effectiveness of your pitch. Plan the Scenario, aim at conquering the variables, and design your pitch carefully. The Basic Pitch Structure works on videos too. Use PSB or VCU depending if you are presenting a concept, product or service. Do not forget that pitching in videos can be integrated in the storyline, and production.

COMMON MISTAKES

Weak Opening. People switch very fast because their attention span is short, and the number of marketing messages that they are exposed to on daily basis is enormous (~3000/day). Have a strong opening to engage your audience in 4-8 seconds.

Production and Storyline imbalance. Have a strategic storyline, together with great visuals and production, explaining the USP/SEs, tickling imagination, and stimulating emotions.

Same video to all. If you have many different types of viewers, create a separate pitch for each group.

CONQUERING THE VARIABLES

Timing: Depends. **Content:** Strong Opening, storyline, arguments, ask, and closing. PSB/VCU depends on the context. **Time:** 4-8 secs and 30-60 secs variations work best for marketing videos. Sometimes you can have longer videos, and people can engage longer. Depends on the case. **Tone:** Fun, engaging, and professional. **Listening:** Engage your audience, create several videos for different target audiences, if needed. **Mindset:** Videos are powerful for pitching because they are visually engaging and explanatory. Invest on them!

SCENARIO

WDWE You seek to create a significant audience for your YouTube Channel (Why). You want followers (We) to subscribe on (Ask) your YouTube channel (Exist).

USP You have a unique or engaging content (usually it is a very focused topic e.g., lessons, funny videos, dancing birds, cars).

SE#1 SE#2 SE#3
Anything that describes further the USP (1-3 main points).

SCRIPT & COMMENTS

Script #1. Three Pitching Lessons, YouTube Video (1-10 minutes).

"Hi, I present you three fundamental pitching lessons, and a scenario framework that will help you pitch anything to anyone. Pitching is easy; everyone can learn how to pitch. I am very excited to show you the basics today (opening). Lesson 1: pitching is about persuasion, which means you convince someone to do something for you. Lesson 2: you need to conquer the variables. Lesson 3: you want to have a structure. (I explain the lessons with examples). Pitching is important for students, workers, leaders. All need to present something, and get to a "Yes" (more examples here). You can read the PFL book, participate in 30DPC, and learn from materials on the website (I explain further the BMC, if I have more time). I talk about my background, experience, and give tips (Team/Traction). Subscribe to my YouTube channel for more insights and tips (Ask).

Comments.

*Opening: present the title of your topic in an engaging way (5 secs-1 min)
PSB/VCU: describe your topic, and mention the USP/SEs (25 secs-5 min)
BMC: who is it for, how much value it brings, where is it done, how to reach people, or other BMC parts. How to capture and deliver value. (10 secs-1,5 min)
Team/Traction: who is doing this, and what has been done (10 secs-1,5 min)
Ask: Subscribe today, and include the reason for doing it (10 secs-1 min)*

USER ACQUISITION FOR APPS OR MOBILE GAMES

User Acquisition (UA) is a function, in which a digital marketing manager wants to acquire users for an app. Apps are services, so you pitch the experience. UA is done in traditional, and modern ways such as social media, via emails, in videos, or campaigns in App Store. So, UA managers have to explore many marketing methods including person to person marketing (e.g. in conferences), TV ads (e.g. Clash of Clans' Super Bowl ad), online campaigns, and perhaps even radio. All right, radio ads might be dead, but the logic to approach UA when pitching is the same, as we have seen in the 25 cases in this book. Understand the scenario, design your pitch, crystalize your USP and SEs, and produce/deliver the pitch on the right platform. Your App's profile on Apple/Google Stores, or any online page, is a pitch. Balance the content: be it a text, or videos. Make it consistent, and memorable. For example, you want to make an effort for users to remember your app's name, and/or your company's brand.

COMMON MISTAKES

Unclear Message/USP. If users do not understand the experience behind your app, it is hard to persuade. Show the best parts of your app quickly.

Inconsistency and noise. Convey your message, and USP clearly and consistently. Communicate with the least amount of noise. Protect your users' ears/eyes when pitching. Make them like your app.

Same, same. Millions of apps are uploaded each year on different stores. Deliver your message in a memorable way. Stand out. Make them remember your app incl. names, IPs, logos, and USP.

CONQUERING THE VARIABLES

Timing: Depends on campaign. **Content:** Make an effort for users to remember your app's name, and USP. PSB for functional apps, and VCU for games or similar. **Time:** 4-8 secs and 30-60 secs variations work best for UA. Public talks are longer e.g., UA Manager speaking in a conference. **Tone:** Between fun, and functional. **Listening:** Have an engaging, and memorable content. People switch off easily. **Mindset:** Apps are part of life, thank you Steve Jobs. The competition in the app market is fierce. Promoting apps requires a great deal of strategy, and communication. Prepare mentally for this!

SCENARIO	SCRIPT & COMMENTS
<p>WDWE Grow your business / create a success story (Why). You want players (We) to like and download (Ask) your game from App Store (Exist)</p> <p>USP Your game has a unique experience (Describe briefly)</p> <p>SE#1 Unique Art, IP, Mechanics etc.</p> <p>SE#2 Fun e.g. social features or game play</p> <p>SE#3 Free to Play (F2P) Anything that describes further the USP.</p>	<p>Script #1. Profile on App/Play Store. (Name of the Game) is (explain in clear and simple way the USP, or the concept) and SEs (e.g. It is Fun, Social, and free game or EUR 2.99 to download). Players enjoy (show the experience in text, photos, or videos). Or, show what players feel when playing the game). The game is available for download, and we have weekly updates. 'Click to Download' or 'Get the Game Now' (Ask or Call to Action).</p> <p>Script #2. Mobile Game Trailer (8-30 Seconds Videos). <i>Similar to Pitching on Videos with focus on presenting your game as a concept.</i></p> <p><i>Opening: show the best parts of your game in an engaging way (4-6 secs)</i> <i>USP/SEs: show how players engage with the game e.g., with the unique art, characters, environment, or mechanics (2-15 secs)</i> <i>BMC: show how/where players obtain it e.g., Free from App Store (1-4 secs)</i> <i>Team/Traction: show the team behind it + other games in your portfolio, if any (1-2 secs)</i> <i>Ask: Download now (1-2 secs)</i></p> <p>Comments. Help players to understand the experience of the game in text, and video formats. Make them feel something. Make them remember the game, and the brand. Make them talk about it to their friends. Keep things simple, but also bring the magic to the table. Create star moments when pitching games!</p>



PART VI

PRESENT YOUR COMPANY

In this part, you learn to present your company to customers, partners and investors and to pitch your company for acquiring cofounders. You get examples, and tips of common mistakes. You learn how to conquer variables for each case. You understand how to use the Scenario Framework to create scripts for different pitches.

PRESENT YOUR COMPANY TO CUSTOMERS

Presenting your company is different than presenting yourself, your product, or service. Companies create, and deliver value for owners, and users/customers. For owners, they bring financial (money), or emotional (meaning) contribution. For users/customers, they deliver a functional (food to feed hunger), or useful (fun with games) contribution. Pitching to customers means that you show the value of the company to the customers e.g., restaurants feed people, game studios entertain players, Nokia connected people, and so on. In return, people use and/or buy products and services from the company. It is important to distinguish a company pitch from the product and service pitch. Companies, as well as, products and services have brands e.g., Apple and iPhone. You want your customers to remember your company's brand when pitching a company. Customers care about what is in it for them; they might not care what investors or partners think of the company. So, pitching a company to customers is about raising awareness, and building trust in the eyes of the customer.

COMMON MISTAKES

Company vs. Product Brand. A company pitch shows all products, and the entire value of the company. Sometimes a product brand can be more popular than the company brand (Angry Birds vs. Rovio). Think about what customers need to know in each case. It is different to build a brand for a company than a product. Think of Apple and iPhone, not all iPhone owners have a Mac.

Customers' view. They want to trust that brands are trustworthy, consistent, and perhaps even ethical. They seek to buy quality products.

CONQUERING THE VARIABLES

Timing: When you want customers to know and trust your company, its entire offering, and brand.

Content: Basic Pitch Structure: PSB/VCU, USP, BMC, Team/Traction, and Ask. Pitch the company, and select relevant parts. **Time:** It depends e.g. ads (8-180 secs), presentations (3-10 min), Public talks (5-60 min). **Tone:** reliable, and Professional.

Listening: Clear message on different channels and frequent/repetitive USP. **Mindset:** Pitch companies to raise awareness and build trust in the eye of the customer. Brand awareness is crucial for growth. Pitch strategically and in a memorable way.

SCENARIO	SCRIPT & COMMENTS
<p>WDWE Building a company brand in the eyes of the customer (Why). You want your customers (We) to know and trust (Ask) your company (Exist)</p> <p>USP Your company has quality products (expand on what kind of product)</p> <p>SE#1 We care SE#2 Consistency SE#3 Transparency</p> <p>Share your company's values, or 1-3 things your customers should know.</p>	<p>Script. "Hi, (Name of the Company) is (explain, in clear and simple way the USP, for example you have quality products) and SEs (everything we do, we do it with transparency, consistency, and care). We care about our customers (or explain the value of a customer to the company). Our products are (describe your offering briefly, or present your entire portfolio e.g., we have four mobile games in our Studio). Introduce your BMC (our prices are affordable, we have a web store, you can pay online or with a credit card. Our customers are housewives). We have a dedicated team to help you anytime, or similar (Team). We have been around since 1982 (or tell something about your experience in doing what you do. Show briefly the key milestones). We are here to serve you and guarantee you 100% satisfaction in all our products (or similar to make customers trust your brand). For more information visit our website (Ask). Thank you."</p> <p>Comments. A company pitch is a promise of brand excellence to customers. Be honest, and consistent in your pitch. Customers are not stupid, they will find out if something is fishy! Keep it simple. The more you complicate the text, the more your customers will feel you are hiding something. Focus on brand awareness. Show the value behind your company. Use various online, offline, and traditional marketing channels when pitching.</p>

PRESENT YOUR COMPANY TO PARTNERS

Pitching your company to partners is about finding common benefits, and/or value to exchange between your company, and the partner. You give something, and receive something in return. It depends on what your company needs, and does not have, but the partner has. You might need a partner that is good at a particular skill or experience (marketing, localization, doing business in Asia, running a restaurant etc.). A university might need a food and beverage partner to provide coffee and sandwiches to students. A product manufacturer might need a sales agent to gain market share in a new location. Pitching to partners requires you to describe clearly your reason for partnership, and explain the benefits for collaboration. Show the winning outcome for both parties. Explain how you could be stronger/better together, and how you both win from the value exchange.

COMMON MISTAKES

A weak proposal or a pitch is not explaining the benefits and/or value of the partnership. You need to highlight the winning outcomes in your proposal.

Pitching to wrong partners is a waste of time. Find the right partners before you create scenarios, and design your pitch, or else it is a useless pitch.

Partnerships require synergy from both sides. Make sure that you are in the right position to approach a partner. If your company's offering is irrelevant or the timing is off, you will struggle to persuade, even if you are a master pitcher.

CONQUERING THE VARIABLES

Timing: When a partner is needed. **Content:** Explain the reason and outcome of the partnership.

Time: It is a process: raise awareness (8-60 secs). Follow-up (10-30 min). Negotiations (30+ min).

Tone: professional. **Listening:** Map down partners in order of preferences. Look for synergy, and benefits for both parties. Communicate clearly and honestly. **Mindset:** Partners can help you do things faster/better/cheaper with their skills or expertise that you might not have. Approaching a partner is the first step, following-up and negotiating can take time. Prepare mentally for the process.

SCENARIO

WDWE A university partner helps to reach a large number of students (Why). I want to find a university partner (We) to recommend PFL (Ask) to students (Exist)

USP PFL helps students to improve their presentation and pitching skills

SE#1 Easy to read
SE#2 25 cases
SE#3 PFL is free

SCRIPT & COMMENTS

Script #1. Raising Awareness. *Pitching is an essential skill for students; they are the future workers or leaders (Why is it important). PFL helps them to adopt pitching skills to succeed at school and work (How it helps). PFL is free. It has 25 case examples, and the 30DPC – a practical way to learn about pitching (What is PFL). Recommend PFL to your students; they will learn to present themselves and their ideas, sell products, promote online, and raise funding. (Ask).*

Script #2. Follow-up / Negotiations / Closing Deals.

Focus on expanding the arguments: Product, BMC, Team, Traction and Ask e.g., I would explain the Pitch Scenario Framework, the importance of USPs/SEs, the 25 cases, and the 30DPC. BMC is crucial for closing deals. I explain how PFL helps students, and how to deliver PFL to the partner, e.g. from the website, you can download the book. You can also arrange workshops, and customized courses for students. How should we proceed? (Ask).

Comments. Your initial pitches should be straightforward and clear, highlighting the benefits from the partnership. The negotiation starts once the partner understands the winning outcome, and decides to engage in the collaboration. Prepare to pitch for every stage, using different pitch variations (4 secs-1 hour).

PRESENT YOUR COMPANY TO INVESTORS

Presenting your company to investors is a process that has three steps: 1) create hype, 2) build trust, and 3) raise funding. It is somewhat similar to pitching for partners, in which the final outcome is defined by an investor putting money in your company. In return, your company delivers value via dividends, or an exit. So, the ultimate purpose of talking to investors is to eventually raise funding for your company. The challenge with getting funded is always trust, or the belief that your company will generate a significant return to the investors. Companies focus on the third step – the outcome of raising funding. Founders often forget about the importance of the first two steps that require you to approach an investors, meet them, present your company, get them excited about your offering, and finally make them trust you. Persuading investors takes time, and it is best to present your company as soon as possible to them. This case focuses on the initial steps 1) create hype, and 2) build trust. Raising funding from investors is covered in part VII, on page 46.

COMMON MISTAKES

Companies wait too long to show that they exist, which makes it harder or more stressful to get noticed later. Competition is fierce. Stand out as soon as you have something valuable. Create hype, and build trust with investor early. Once trust is there, funding is easier, perhaps an email away.

Focus on the short-term. Investors want to trust that your company is profitable including the product, BMC, Team, and Traction. Companies rise and fall, teams might survive longer. Create and maintain long-term relationships with investors. Contact them again with new companies!

CONQUERING THE VARIABLES

Timing: when investors are around. **Content:** Pitch the concept, the magic, the unique technology, or method. Whatever it is, get it out! Think of a memorable USP for creating hype, and strategic arguments for building trust. **Time:** 8-30 secs (Hype), 1-10 min (Trust). If you have more time, expand the argumentation part. **Tone:** Likability, credibility, and trust-building. **Listening:** Investors are busy, approach, and pitch to them as smoothly as possible. **Mindset:** Funding is earned not given. It is a process. Invest time, and effort for investors to notice and trust you as early as possible.

SCENARIO

WDWE Being on investors' radar makes it easier to get funding when the time is right (Why). You want investors (We) to notice and trust (Ask) your company (Exist)

USP Your company has something special e.g., a product, unique technology, secret methods or similar.

SE#1/SE#2/SE#3
Focus on Hype and Trust e.g., show the magic, uniqueness, or awesomeness.

SCRIPT & COMMENTS

Script #1. Create Hype (Answers usually to the question: What do you do?).
"I am a founder/I work at (Name of company). It is (describe its USP). We change/improve/create something awesome (make it memorable, you have 4-8 seconds). Mention one unique SE preferably from your BMC (e.g., we do this cheaper, or no one is doing this in that way). We are currently working on (what is your current status e.g., MVP, Prototype, Beta, full product/service, filing for patent etc.). Happy to tell you more / how about a cup of coffee to discuss? (Ask)"

Script #2. Build Trust. (Answers usually to the question: Where are you now or how are you guys doing?). Focus on expanding the arguments: Product/Service, BMC, Team, Traction, and Ask. *"We have a live Beta service. Our core team is solid. We just hired a CFO, and ready to raise funding next month. We have great retention, and initial sales. Everything is going smoothly and beautifully! How about we meet, and I tell you more about our strategy?"*

Comments. Take it step-by-step, and as early as possible. Do not wait for long to start talking to investors. Do not ask for funding when you have not earned it. Ask for more time to explain, or build trust in your product/vision/team. Once trust is established, and the company is ready, the investment game begins!

PITCHING YOUR COMPANY TO FIND CO-FOUNDERS

Pitching your company to find co-founders means you look for people who are willing to work for sweat-equity i.e., they receive a percentage of the shares from the company. They do not receive a salary, at least not in the beginning, and not without a separate agreement. Co-founders want to join a company that they can contribute to, and/or a cause that they believe in. You want to inspire them with a strong vision, a great product or service, a challenge that tickles their fancy, a journey that will change their lives, or simply something beautiful they cannot refuse. Use VCU to describe the vision, or PSB to highlight the challenge they are embarking on. Make an effort in the argumentation part to select the right BMC elements, in particular the costs (mostly their time), return (money), targets, marketing strategies, key resources, and activities. Show that the team is great, and that the traction is something you can achieve together. Explain that he/she is the missing link in your team, someone who completes the group in a remarkable way. Use facts, and emotions!

COMMON MISTAKES

Facts vs. Emotions. In your pitch, if you focus only on hard facts, without emotions, you might not address the brain's frontal lobe, the part of the mind, in which people make decisions.

A shaky pitch. If you seem desperate, needy, or pushy, you will struggle to get someone on board. People want to join a team with a strong vision, a great team, and the winning mindset.

Expectations vs. Responsibilities. A good pitch explains clearly the company, and co-founders' expectations, as well as, responsibilities.

CONQUERING THE VARIABLES

Timing: When you need a co-founder. **Content:** Vision, and the challenge presented to the co-founder (e.g. CTO to design a software, CFO to raise funding) and relevant parts of the BMC, Team and Traction. **Time:** Initial pitch to raise interest (8-60 secs). Meetings and negotiations. (30-60 min). **Tone:** Knowledgeable, honest, passionate, and optimistic. **Listening:** Personal and career decision. **Mindset:** You want great not only good co-founders. Ideally you are both looking for each other. If it is a one-sided pitch, you need to pull him/her to your side. Be patient, strategic, and positive!

SCENARIO	SCRIPT & COMMENTS
<p>WDWE A co-founder with IT background will transform PFL into the number one platform for pitching worldwide (Why). I want to find a great CTO (We) to create a dedicated platform (Ask) for PFL (Exist) (Example of a Pitch in Person).</p> <p>USP The number #1 platform for pitching in the world.</p> <p>SE#1 Helpful. SE#2 Reliable. SE#3 Social.</p>	<p>Script. A pitch to a potential CTO cofounder for PFL (Small talk first, then the pitch starts at the right timing) "I imagine PFL to become the number one platform for pitching in the world, in which startups, artists, designers, salespeople, or anyone can pitch an idea, product, service, concept or a company, and get to a "Yes" (Vision + USP). I see it working like this (I describe the Concept). PFL is helpful, reliable, and social (I expand a bit on SEs). It will be amazing to help people pitch for their dreams, and goals in life (or I share my emotions). Then, I talk about BMC e.g., the platform is free to use but we take some commission on transactions (similar to AirBnb). The Team (Me + designer: TBD, and You: CTO). Together we will build this awesome platform (I explain briefly the technical challenge with examples, visualizing the experience). I explain the Traction (where we are now, and where we could be). Ask: I know you are the best at what you do, and I have heard amazing things about your work! I am ready to offer 10-20% of the company in return for (describe tasks and responsibilities, and introduce the shareholders' agreement). What do you think?"</p> <p>Comments. Finding a cofounder is similar to finding a spouse - a long-term commitment. It starts with meetings, negotiations, acceptance, living/working together and tons of compromise. Pitching is in the air, everywhere!</p>



PART VII

RAISE FUNDING

In this part, you learn how to raise funding from different options such as: Friends, family, and fools; banks; investors; and donations. You get examples, and tips of common mistakes. You learn how to conquer variables for each case. You understand how to use the Scenario Framework to create scripts for different pitches.

RAISE FUNDING FROM FRIENDS, FAMILY, OR FOOLS

Raising funding from friends, family or fools (FFF) is probably the first step after investing your own money. You borrow money from FFF because no institution is ready to risk its own capital for your benefit. The first step is to start with your connections, people you know. Friends and family want to support your initiative because they love you. Fools, or more like enthusiasts, support you because they value your cause. They believe in your idea(s). Investment institutions usually calculate risk objectively and logically, while FFF tend to do it subjectively and emotionally. Use VCU or PSB to describe your idea, depending on the context. Explain the best and worst case scenarios for FFF. Focus on the big picture and the most important details about your ideas. Similar to all investors, FFF want to feel that they will get their money back someday, but they tend to be leamer about calculating risk. Be extremely honest and give reliable assurances.

COMMON MISTAKES

Emotions and Facts. Pitching to FFF is an emotional pitch. Facts are also important. Balance both. Show FFF the vision and the potential behind their investment in your idea, or company.

It is not personal, only business. When FFF says “No” to your investment proposal, it does not mean they do not like you or your ideas. They simply do not feel it; or they sense the risk. Listen to their concerns. Perhaps, you learn something from their comments. Ask yourself: is your project/business more important than your relationship with FFF?

CONQUERING THE VARIABLES

Timing: FFF are people you often know very well. Book a proper meeting with them. **Content:** The vision and potential behind your ideas. Give as much details as possible. Clarify and simplify your USP and SEs. **Time:** 3-60 min. Book enough time to share and discuss. **Tone:** Honest, open-minded, professional, and loving. **Listening:** FFF will listen to you more than others, and will ask questions. **Mindset:** Pitching to FFF is a natural thing when starting a project/business. It is an opportunity, but a delicate matter. Prepare yourself for awkward criticism and tons of questions.

SCENARIO

WDWE Raising money from FFF takes your ideas to the next level (Why). You pitch to Friends, Family or Fools (We) to ask them for funding (Ask) to your ideas (Exist). Create a separate pitch for each.

USP depends on the ideas. Focus on vision and potential.

SE#1/SE#2/SE#3
Depends on the ideas. Show the uniqueness and passion.

SCRIPT & COMMENTS

Script. *I have an amazing idea that could be the next big thing because XYZ (or a similar strong opening). I imagine this idea being (show the vision from the idea). It works like this (describe it briefly) and mention how unique it is (1-3 things). It is an amazing opportunity (or share how you feel about it and make them feel it too). Use the BMC to describe the potential (people: how many users/customers, price: how much profit/impact you could make, place: how big is the opportunity/market, and promotion: where will it be available and how?). Team and Traction are next. Finally ask (When asking make sure to give reliable assurances and honest promises e.g., I need EUR 20,000 and I promise to pay you back by 15.2.2022 in full!).*

Comments. With FFF, you want to have clarity and simplicity in your pitch. You need their help, but you probably want them to be in your life too. So, it is wise to separate private and business lives. These are the few precious people in your life who know you the most, it is perhaps easier to communicate openly with them. Explain the vision and potential in a way that they understand it. Make promises you can keep.

RAISE FUNDING FROM BANKS

You ask money from banks and pay it back with interest. This is how banks usually make money. They want calculated assurances or guarantees that they will get the money back on time. A business plan alone is not enough without contingencies e.g., assets. You apply for loans from banks when the deal is better than losing shares to investors, or when your business needs some cash to start. By now, you have probably invested your own money, and raised funding from FFF, and banks are one of the options to move forward. When pitching to banks, you usually book a meeting and present your business plan - a very detailed document about your business idea. For your pitch, it is important to describe clearly and strategically all parts of the Basic Pitch Structure (PSB/VCU, BMC, Team, Traction, Ask). Banks care about Cash Flow, the money coming and leaving your business. Banks want timely and regular payments e.g., monthly returns. Focus on showing how your Cash Flow is healthy, meaning that you are able to pay salaries, bills, and the money you owe to the bank. Calculated projections with evidence are crucial to have in your business plan, and also pitch!

COMMON MISTAKES

Applying too early. Banks manage and borrow money; they know how to calculate risk. They simply do not lend to a business without guarantees or without a healthy Cash Flow. Apply when you have sales (cash coming in), or a house/land to lose, if cash will dry out. Cash is king!

A weak pitch. In your pitch, if you do not show the potential of your idea, or the ability to pay back the loan to the bank, it is a deal-breaker. Clarity and simplicity are needed to apply for a loan. Banks process many requests every year.

CONQUERING THE VARIABLES

Timing: You book a meeting. **Content:** A detailed business plan, covering all BPS parts and showing a healthy Cash Flow. **Time.** 30-60 min. **Tone:** Clarity, strategic focus, and business-savvy. **Listening:** Banks want to listen to loan requests. They understand Cash Flow businesses. Think of them as the goblin bankers from Harry Potter, or the Iron Bank of Braavos from Game of Thrones. **Mindset:** A loan boosts your business for expansion or helps you to pay urgent bills. It might be the solution for a problem, as long as you can pay it back, with interest!

SCENARIO	SCRIPT & COMMENTS
<p>WDWE A bank loan boosts your business (Why). You want a bank (We) to give you a loan (Ask) for your idea or business (Exist)</p> <p>USP Idea is feasible, or company is making money.</p> <p>SE#1/SE#2/SE#3 depends on the idea. Something around paying back on time, healthy Cash Flow, or solid team and/or traction parts.</p>	<p>Script. <i>"Hi. I need a bank loan to (explain the proposal e.g., grow the business or cover urgent bills). My idea/business has/is (USP e.g., an Italian restaurant with steady income of 100,000 EUR per month, be specific). The loan helps with (Explain the BMC parts especially how you make money, pay bills, and pay back the loan and interest to the bank on time). Team and Traction are important to demonstrate how you operate your business (e.g., our chefs are world class, the business is growing 10% yearly, our yearly income is EUR 1 million). Ask (show Cash Flow projections, assurances, and the amount needed for you). Thank you"</i></p> <p>Comments. Applying for a loan requires you to have a good business plan, and presentation skills – a solid pitch! You have 30-60 minutes in the meeting to show your idea, and answer questions about the business potential, Cash Flow, and payback methods. Financial projections are needed too. The Ask part is important to justify with facts and numbers. Tell the bank how you intend to generate income, and pay back the loan on time. It is important to understand when to pitch to banks versus other funding options such as Crowdfunding, angel investors, or venture capitals. Sometimes it is a good option to get funding from banks, while other times it can be destructive. Do your research on this matter, or get help from experts on the topic e.g., hire a consultancy firm to way out the options for you.</p>

RAISE FUNDING FROM INVESTORS

Pitching to investors is selling your company's shares to investors e.g., EUR 1 million in return of 20% equity. Investors make money from sharing your company's profits, which in business is called 'dividends'. They seek teams with exceptional products or services, product development skills, and management capabilities. They want teams that can deliver a significant financial return, usually it is ten times of their initial investment. The process may involve several rounds of investments e.g., Seed Funding, Series A, B, C and so on. Each round investors take a percentage of the company's shares with the ultimate goal in their minds is to exit the business i.e., cashing on their investment. The most common exits are acquisition (selling the company) or Initial Public Offering (stock market). The investor-company relationship lasts for many years. It is similar to a marriage, some end in happily-ever-after, and some end in tragedies. When pitching to investors, show the potential, in particular the profitability part, of your company using the Basic Pitch Structure.

COMMON MISTAKES

Unhealthy Traction. Ideas alone are not investable i.e., pitching a company without a healthy traction is close to forfeit. A disruptive technology could be a good investment, in the case when an investor sees the potential of technology. It is a rare case!

Teams are Magic. Having a great product, an innovative business model, and a healthy traction is not enough. Investors want to work with cofounders who are professional, coachable, kind/friendly, and open-minded. They look for solid teams that can pivot, from idea to idea, to create a profitable business!

CONQUERING THE VARIABLES

Timing: Whenever needed. **Content:** Pitch the company, and show how profitable it can be. **Time:** All variations e.g., networking (8-60 secs), pitching on stage (1-5 min), and meetings (5-60 min). **Tone:** Confident, hungry, humble, and professional. **Listening:** Investors want to see the value in the company, and the return on investment. Any doubt in their mind will affect your pitch. Clarity, and simplicity are crucial! **Mindset:** Every pitch is an opportunity to get closer to your goals or dreams. If you have some seconds or minutes with investors you want to Aim for Max, always!

SCENARIO	SCRIPT & COMMENTS
<p>WDWE You seek to grow your business (Why) You want an investor (We) to give you EUR 1 million (Ask) for your company in return of 20% (Exist)</p> <p>USP A great product/service or unique technology/team.</p> <p>SE#1/SE#2/SE#3 Product/service is more functional/beautiful/practical or technology is faster/cheaper/better/stronger than other solutions</p>	<p>Script #1. Networking (8-60 seconds). Answer to: What do you do?. <i>"I work at/I am CEO of (Company Name). We have a (USP e.g., a great product/unique technology) that (does what...). It is (SEs e.g., More functional or faster/cheaper than the competition). Here name one interesting/memorable thing from the BMC/Team/Traction (happy users, EUR 2 million in sales, a secret sauce/method, a super team). We are looking for investment. I can tell you more.</i></p> <p>Script #2. Stage Presentations (1-5 minutes). "Hi, start with a strong opening (e.g. Script #1 above) and go straight to the PSB or VCU. Then, explain the BMC and profitability (e.g. We make EUR 100 profit from each unit sold, 1% of our target market is EUR 50 million in the USA alone, our partnerships are strong, our marketing strategy is effective...). Team is Magic (tell why this team will deliver until the end). Traction is important (show what has been done so far). Ask (Earn the right to ask from investors with relevant arguments! Be specific i.e. how much you want in return of what?). Summarize key points and end with Thank you"</p> <p>Comments. In Script #1 you want to raise interest to arrange a follow-up meeting. More time and information are needed to persuade investors. In Script #2, you want to stand out and put your company on investors' radar.</p>

PITCHING FOR DONATIONS

Pitching for donations comes in many ways e.g., a non-profit organization raising money from public and private sources, a Crowdfunding campaign raising money for products and services, and other examples. In this part, I will exclude Crowdfunding because it has been covered extensively, and you can learn about it by searching online. In addition, there are several Crowdfunding platforms that are specialized for this purpose, and you can apply the notions from previous cases in this book to pitch a product, service, or company. So, I will focus on charitable donations, which requires you to pitch strategically and emotionally. People donate to charities to make a difference in this world, and to support causes that they believe in such as education; human services; health; public society benefit; and arts, culture, and humanities. A charity in return promises to use the money in transparent, reliable, and ethical ways. When pitching, charitable organizations must describe their cause, and explain their actions in order to receive donations from people.

COMMON MISTAKES

Clarifying the cause is probably the hardest thing for charities. They often have systematic processes or detailed projects, which are complex to describe in a short time. Avoid complicating the description of “What you do”, and “Why you exist”.

Structure and consistency. Charities have diverse and large teams who need to pitch in person, over the phone, via a website, an app, or email. Unstructured approach to pitching, and the lack of consistency when delivering the message or arguments, confuse donors. Everyone, including managers, need personalized pitching training.

CONQUERING THE VARIABLES

Timing: Whenever needed. **Content:** Use VCU or PSB to show the cause (vision/solution) and explain actions (BMC/Team/Traction/Ask). **Time:** in person or on the phone (4 sec-5 min), meetings (10-30min), or on stage (10-60 min). **Tone:** Emotional and professional. **Listening:** people want to be sure that their money is used well for the cause they are supporting. **Mindset:** asking for donations is a good thing especially if you believe in the cause you are selling. It is for sure scary and uncomfortable to hear a “No”, but it is part of the process. It is ok, just keep swimming, and pitching!

SCENARIO	SCRIPT & COMMENTS
<p>WDWE A university scholarship could change someone’s life to better (Why) You want donors (We) to donate money (Ask) for a scholarship program (Exist)</p> <p>USP Your scholarship program helps talented students, who cannot afford the tuition fee, to attend a good university</p> <p>SE#1 20 university partners worldwide SE#2 Track record SE#3 Reliable and transparent</p>	<p>Script #1. Short presentation (4 sec – 5 min). <i>“Hi, (name of charity or I work for X that) offers scholarships for talented university students, who cannot afford the tuition fee, to attend a good university (USP). We have 20 university partners worldwide, we have helped thousands of students since 2010, and we are transparent in everything we do (SEs). Describe your cause (VCU/PSB), and explain your actions (BMC). Ask: your donation can help to change a student’s life. Any amount (or specify) is helpful. Thank you.”</i></p> <p>Script #2. Presentations on stage (10-60 min). <i>“Hi, start with USP/SEs. Our vision is to help 100-200 students each year to get a university education. We double any donation and take care of all practicalities (explain a bit the concept). Our approach is efficient because (explain the uniqueness). Our students are (describe the ‘People’), we accept donations via (credit card, cash or describe ‘Place’), you can find us on our website (Promotion), or other BMC parts. Describe your Team/Traction (e.g., your track record). Ask: similar to Script #1 (expand a bit your arguments). Thank you.”</i></p> <p>Comments. Charities have large teams of workers and managers, who pitch for donations. They all need to learn how to pitch using different pitching variations. Charities could benefit from pitching techniques in their websites, videos, newsletters, and even marketing campaigns (Check the relevant previous cases).</p>

“ *It's the possibility of having a dream come true that makes life interesting.*

And, when you want something, all the universe conspires in helping you to achieve it.

There is only one thing that makes a dream impossible to achieve: the fear of failure.

The secret of life, though, is to fall seven times and to get up eight times.

People are capable, at any time in their lives, of doing what they dream of.

”

— **Quotes about
Realizing Your Dreams by
Paulo Coelho, The Alchemist**



PART VIII

THE CONCLUSION

AND FEW MORE TIPS

In this part, you have the conclusion and few more tips, in which you learn how to approach someone, engage in small talk, deliver a public speech, network, and tell stories in a pitch.

THE CONCLUSION AND FEW MORE TIPS

THE CONCLUSION

Now that you have read the introduction to pitching and scanned the 25 cases in this book, you have an idea or two on how to create scenarios for your presentations, and design your pitches. You can use pitching techniques to persuade in any situation in person, online, and on the phone. Remember to conquer the variables and to use a structure in order to maximize your pitch.

Aim for Max. Do your best when pitching; every pitch is an opportunity to get closer to your dreams and goals in life. Use pitching techniques whenever needed, just like a toothbrush, they are both tools in your life. One is for cleaning teeth, the other is for persuading people and getting to a “Yes.”

Keep it clear and simple. You do not need to complicate your pitch to get results. Communicate the message, the arguments, and the ask. Present to people in a way they understand you, and grasp the main point (USP) and the benefits (SEs).

Be strategic. Most pitches succeed because you say the right things to the right people at the right time and place. Avoid talking too much about the same things, for example, over-describing your concept. Instead, try to have a variety of arguments that are relevant for your audience. Sometimes, less is more when pitching and persuading.

Confidence comes with practice. The only way to become good at pitching is to practice. Pitch often; you will learn about yourself and improve your pitching skills. Practice with people versus pitching in front of a mirror. You get more insights from their comments and body language. I recommend you to participate in the 30 Days Pitching Challenge, to apply theory to practice. You can do the challenge at your own pace, and for your own personal need. Not everyone needs to become an expert pitcher. Yet, having some knowledge about pitching will help you in many situations, in which you need to persuade e.g., when introducing yourself or your ideas in school or work, selling products to customers, promoting online, presenting on a stage at conferences or events, networking, or raising funding.

AND FEW MORE TIPS

Designing a pitch is one thing, yet delivering a pitch can be tricky, especially if you need to initiate it. When you are invited to present on a stage, timing is assigned for you. People expect you to speak. You design your speech, perhaps even think of a story to tell, and prepare for networking after your talk. Yet, when timing is not assigned for you, for example in an event or party, you might need to approach someone, and engage in small talk. Here are some essential tips for that.

Approaching someone can be awkward or scary. You summon courage from your mind, thinking that pitching is an opportunity. It is a good thing to do! You identify the persons, preferably even do your homework about them before the event, if possible. You prepare what to say (message, USP, and SEs), and wait for the right moment to approach and initiate the conversation. It is easier to approach someone in strategic places where people are relaxed or waiting e.g., elevators, bar/cafe desks, food stands, or other similar places. If the persons are alone, it is even easier, you simply approach them, say “hello”, and engage in small talk.

Small talk before pitching. Try the following: 1) smile, 2) say “hello”, 2) give compliments, and/or 3) ask questions. Avoid saying personal compliments, or asking inappropriate questions. Try genuine and positive comments about people’s skills (I liked your presentation, you were good at), appearance (I like your style, hat, shirt...), or achievement (I heard about the big news, congrats!). Examples of questions are: Where are you from?, Have you been here before?, Are you having fun?, What do you think about the event?, or similar. Questions stimulate discussions. Wait for the right timing to pitch, or for someone to ask you a question. Do not rush pitching, otherwise you might seem needy, desperate, or pushy. Keep it on a human level, make them like you as a person before you start pitching. Maintain the conversation by listening, commenting, and asking questions, for as long as it needs for the person to give you a chance to pitch. You can also ask if you could pitch an idea, saying: “do you mind if I pitch an idea to you?”, “Do you have a minute for a short pitch”, or similar.

THE CONCLUSION AND FEW MORE TIPS

PUBLIC SPEAKING

How to prepare before your talk. You design your pitch and practice at home, or at the venue, if possible. You tell yourself “I am excited” whenever you feel nervous. Anxiety or excitement are both aroused emotions. In both, your heart beats faster, you sweat, the level of cortisol rises, and the body prepares for action. You can trick your brain to convert anxiety into a positive buzz. Once you have tackled your nerves, check the stage, scan the room, visualize your walking i.e., think where you will stand first, how you will walk, and where you will end. Finally, check the supporting material for your talk such as slides, audio/visual tools, demos, samples, equipment, etc. What else is important?

During the talk. A strong opening grabs the audience’s attention. Tell straight away what your talk is about, and why they should listen. A strong ending helps them to remember the key points. People listen the most at the beginning and end. Breathe, and take regular pauses, especially before important parts in your talk, highlighting your Unique Selling Point and Supporting Evidence. Hold something in your hand, for example, a pen or a clicker. It helps you to relax or feel less anxious. Look at your audience. Avoid staring back at your slides, or reading extensively from your notes. The ‘Tone’ and ‘Listening’ variables are crucial to conquer; you want to seem credible, confident, and passionate on the stage. If you are speaking to a diverse audience, I recommend you to use short sentences that are easy to articulate. Express clearly how you feel about your topic. Minimize the noise. Finally, check videos from experts, and watch how they deliver speeches. For example, check videos from Steve Jobs, Simon Sinek, Marissa Peer, Will Smith, Al Gore, Susan Cain etc.

NETWORKING

Networking is a process, in which you meet people and explore opportunities. Some people you already know, while others you get to know them. A great networker understands the process from start to end: she raises awareness, follow-ups, and closes deals. She targets a specific person who she considers the Mark, creates a strategy, approaches, and engages in small talk.

Mentors. Sidekicks. Connectors. In addition to the Mark, she looks for other types of persons: Mentors, Sidekicks, and Connectors. Mentors are people who can advise you (Yoda), Sidekicks are the ones who support you or replace you when you are unavailable (think of Batman and Robin or Frodo and Sam), and Connectors open doors with crucial introductions (Barney Stinson: “Have you met Ted?”). Once she has found a person, for example a Mentor, she prepares a pitch in her head, delivers it, and uses qualitative asking to motivate the Mentor to give her insights, tips, or guide her. Imagine a situation when you are stuck, your ideas are running dry or your performance is dropping, a Mentor’s opinion could be valuable to help you unfold a problem or explore a new angle that you have not yet considered. Pitching is the most useful in these types of situations when you get answers to questions or solutions to problems. Always ask when networking, for example, what do you think or could you help me? (for feedback), let’s have a meeting or I will email you tomorrow (follow-up), and is this going somewhere or can we proceed with this? (for closing deals).

Strategic tips. Networking is not about luck, it is a carefully planned and executed process. Yes, it does take time to meet people, present something, get them to trust you, and persuade them. In your mind, you want to put the time in a smart and strategic way, to maximize your efforts and get the results. The best way to network is to help people; likability and reciprocity are two powerful methods when persuading. Be kind and helpful to people, you never know when the good Karma strikes your way. You can be a Mentor, Sidekick, or Connector to someone, for example, you help someone with a crucial introduction or give an advice about a topic you are an expert at. To them, it could mean the world, but to you it takes a couple of minutes of your time. If you are aiming at becoming an expert networker, I advise you to learn how to present people to each other and their ideas, not only pitching yourself and your ideas. For example, I often pitch my clients’ products or companies to relevant customers and/or investors. Finally, I enjoy reading books about networking, cross-cultural communication, negotiation, persuasion, or similar. When it comes to meeting and talking to people, you want to be prepared as much as possible.

THE CONCLUSION AND FEW MORE TIPS

STORYTELLING

Storytelling in a pitch. Every pitching coach tells you that stories are the best way to convey an idea. It is true, but it is also stressful for anyone who is not used to tell stories. I recommend that you understand the basics of pitching first, before you think of telling stories in your pitch. Think about your first training session, for example Basketball, swimming or any sport/activity, you started with the fundamentals and then learned the advanced tricks or techniques. It is the same when thinking about telling stories in a pitch.

Stories create a physical reaction in people: your heart races, your eyes dilate, and your breathing escalates. You get excited and you feel something because stories evoke emotions via hormone injection in your body. For example, Dopamine makes people more focused and motivated, while Oxytocin stimulates empathy and trust, and Endorphin makes us laugh (watch “The Magical Science of Storytelling,” by David JP Phillips).

We have been telling stories for 100,000 years, and we, humans, keep developing storytelling techniques to our present day. There are many ways to learn about storytelling, for example, start with Aristotle Story Structure, Gustav Freytag’s Dramatic Story, and Joseph Campbell’s Hero’s Journey. I advise you to watch videos on YouTube, there are many good examples on the topic. The one that I like the most is “The Secret Structure of Great Talks” by Nancy Duarte. She introduces a storytelling framework, which is easily applicable in pitching. Let’s compare Duarte’s Structure with the PFL’s Basic Pitching Structure. She mentions that a presentation has three parts:

What is is your idea that you are presenting. In pitching, it is the message you are conveying.

What could be is the impact from this idea.

Transitions until the New Bliss is the narrative, or the process of argumentation, in which you present the idea (what), provide reasons (how), and influence an outcome (why). You seek to inspire some kind of change or behavior in people’s mind.

Every presentation seeks a desired outcome. You show the value in your ideas, to receive value. For example, you show that your company is profitable to receive funding from investors, you explain that the new Bruce Willis movie is exciting to convince your friend to join you, or you describe a concept of a new game to get approval from your manager.

Stories help you to evoke this excitement, that is why the beginning of any story, as well as a good pitch, has an interesting setting. The middle part brings the Star Moment: the actions, the things to do, the characters who are embarking on an adventure, and the emotions along the journey. The end brings the New Bliss, the vision of a new world, the wisdom, or the lessons to remember. In your pitch, you can position the Star Moment (USP) in any part of your argumentation process, whether it is your idea, the impact behind it, the team, the actions (or traction), or the ask. Storytelling in pitching helps you to use exciting persuasion techniques such as the use of metaphors, visual words, videos, repetition, songs, scriptures and others. It helps you to engage with your audience, and increases your chances of getting to a “Yes.”

How to start? Write down your stories, index them (which hormone/emotion you seek as an outcome: focus/motivation, empathy/trust, or humor), and deliver them with a purpose. Your main objective is to grab people’s attention, stimulate a positive reaction, and avoid any negative emotion that inhibits people’s focus.

A final word. Your ideas are important! You want to communicate them and persuade people to get closer to your dreams or goals in life. Be proactive when using the tips from this book. They are the most useful for you when you want to get to a “Yes” in your life. It has helped me personally, and many of my students. In fact, I decided to write this book because I saw the impact on many of you, and I was extremely inspired by your success, and wanted to help more people. Thank you!

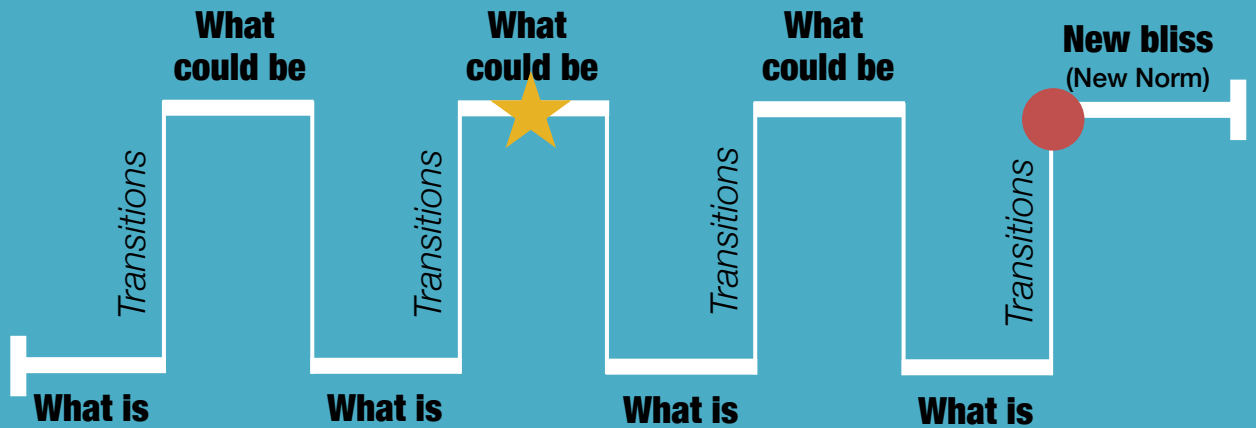
“And, when you want something, all the universe conspires in helping you to achieve it”

– Pablo Coelho, The Alchemist.

Pitching is for life, I wish you all the best!

STORYTELLING IN A PITCH

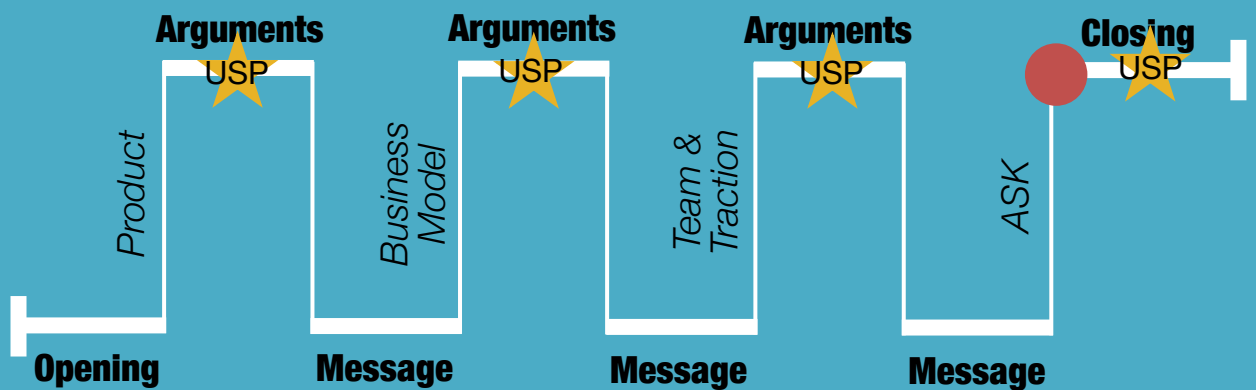
Structure Your Presentation Like a Story – Nancy Duarte



Components of a Pitch



Storytelling in a Pitch: Basic Pitch Structure and Nancy Duarte's Structure



“

You have the power to change the world. I'm not saying that to be cliché, you really have the power to change the world. Deep inside of you, every single one of you has the most powerful device known to man. And that's an idea.

So a single idea, from the human mind, it could start a groundswell, it could be a flash point for a movement and it can actually rewrite our future.

But an idea is powerless if it stays inside of you. If you never pull that idea out for others to contend with, it will die with you. Now, maybe some of you guys have tried to convey your idea and it wasn't adopted, it was rejected, and some other mediocre or average idea was adopted. And the only difference between those two is in the way it was communicated. Because if you communicate an idea in a way that resonates, change will happen, and you can change the world.

”

— **Nancy Duarte**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR – WALID O. EL CHEIKH



- Author of Pitching For Life
- Coach, speaker and mentor about pitching and entrepreneurship
- Coached thousands of people since 2016
- Coaching style: learn by doing, build confidence and exercises
- Lebanese / Ukrainian living in Helsinki, Finland
- Background in entrepreneurship, hospitality and sales.
- Executive Education experience designing world-class courses
- More www.pitchingforlife.com/about

"I am a coordinator at a startup hub and I hear pitches every day, and if I were to ever come up with a top 10 list of the best pitching masters I've known, Walid would be on that list. He is very discerning in life and this manifests in his work too. His knowledge is based on incisive observations and he delivers it in a frank, practical and experience-based ways" — Rashad Ismayilzada, Partnerships & Events at Terkko Health Hub - Finland

"Walid is a highly engaged professional who pays attention to detail yet maintains a big picture perspective. He is very good at listening and understanding your need, and connecting you to people that may help you achieve your mission. He organized and executed two pitching workshops - one in the company, one for our school project. Both were well prepared, structured. They put the audience out of their zone of comfort to get the best out of them. In one day, he was able to translate what his great skill is into a wonderful training experience for the audience." — Lucia Šicková, Chief Learning Officer at Pixel Federation - Slovak Republic

"Walid did a great job coaching us about pitching and networking. We learned a lot. I have a background in acting and performing and I found his training to be very useful (and fun 😊). We got many tips about how to create and deliver a good pitch. We loved the structure and the practical approach in learning by doing." — Mia Ehrnrooth, Startup Founder and CEO - Finland

"An awesome pitching coach and a wonderful human being, an absolutely pleasure to be working with Walid! Highly recommended for professionals of all industries. He really can help you take your start-up to the next level or simply loose the stage-fright and perform with more confidence." — Marie Skavø-Sinisalo, Flying is my business, Finland

"After taking Walid's pitch class I gained confidence, focus, and a concrete strategy to pitch. Not only did I have an amazing time at the class—Walid is a great combo of fun, inspiring, and tough—but I also just landed the bank loan I pitched for, more than three times bigger than my goal. Super grateful to Walid, and his guidance, and warmly recommend his class." — Maria Friström, Real Estate Investor - Finland

WHAT IS NEXT?

Thank you for reading. Writing this book has been an unforgettable journey, an extreme challenge, and a beautiful milestone in my life. I have put my heart, my soul, and my knowledge, writing the book for almost a year, to inspire and help people learn about pitching as a topic, and where it can be applied in life. PFL is free to download for everyone, and always will be. Your support is extremely appreciated, and will help me to create more cases, exercises, and perhaps even write a new book.

PLEASE SHARE

I am extremely grateful if you could share this book with one friend. Maybe you could make a difference in his or her life. The book and materials will always be free for everyone!

30 DAYS PITCHING CHALLENGE

I highly recommend you to participate in the challenge (Page 57), even if you do it just for fun. I can promise you that you will learn something more about pitching, and about yourself as a pitcher.

CONTACT THE AUHTOR

Feel free to contact me via the contact form on PFL's website, the link is on page 58. You could write your feedback about this book, and/or the challenge. You could also suggest cases, or improvement ideas. All feedback is welcome! Finally, I would be interested to visit your school or company to give a talk, lecture, or workshop about pitching.

30 DAYS PITCHING CHALLENGE

SEVEN PRACTICAL STEPS

- 1** Read the PFL eBook
- 2** Pick a topic and create a scenario
- 3** Design your pitch
- 4** Pitch to people
- 5** Collect feedback, and improve your pitch
- 6** Watch inspirational videos
- 7** Make three videos

INSTRUCTIONS

Warning, this is a challenge! It is called a challenge because you will probably sweat a lot, but learn even more, provided you are brave enough to start and finish. Start by reading the book. Pick a topic that you want to learn how to pitch. It can be yourself, your idea, product, service, concept, or company. Do not pick an imaginary topic. Pick something you really want to master; it is important to you. And, remember it is only for practice and learning purposes. Use the Pitching Scenario Framework to create your scenario. Be specific about Why, Do (Ask), We (Who), and Exist (What). Design your pitch, and write it down. You can download the Basic Pitch Structure from PFL's website, the link is on the following page. Pitch often to people, and aim for 1-5 pitches per day. The more the better. After you pitch to someone, tell them to give you feedback about one thing they liked and one thing they would have wished to hear more about. Collect all feedback, and use it to improve your pitch over time. Watch all inspirational videos, the links are below. They will help you! Finally, make three videos, one in the beginning before you pitch to anyone, one in the middle (Day 15) and one at the end (Day 30). Happy learning!

LIST OF INSPIRATIONAL VIDEOS TO WATCH

- How to give the perfect pitch - with TedX speech coach David Beckett <https://youtu.be/Njh3rKoGKBo>
- Science Of Persuasion <https://youtu.be/cFdCzN7RYb>
- How To Eliminate Stress And Anxiety FOREVER - Srikumar Rao <https://youtu.be/uLDz7emCnZI>
- How To Improve Self Esteem - Marisa Peer Motivational Video <https://youtu.be/2i0E12PbGCg>
- Start with why - how great leaders inspire action - Simon Sinek | TEDxPugetSound https://youtu.be/u4ZoJKF_VuA
- How to speak so that people want to listen - Julian Treasure <https://youtu.be/elho2S0Zahl>
- Your Body Language May Shape Who You Are - Amy Cuddy <https://youtu.be/Ks-Mh1QhMc>
- The Business Model Canvas - 9 Steps to Creating a Successful Business Model <https://youtu.be/IP0cUBWTgpY>
- Steve Jobs' 2005 Stanford Commencement Address <https://youtu.be/UF8uR6Z6KLc>
- Steve Jobs - iPhone Introduction in 2007 <https://youtu.be/9hUlxyE2Ns8>
- Think Fast. Talk Smart - Matt Abrahams - TEDxMontaVistaHighSchool https://youtu.be/o3K_HbpWNpg
- The art of innovation - Guy Kawasaki - TEDxBerkeley <https://youtu.be/Mtjatz9r-Vc>
- The 110 techniques of communication and public speaking - David JP Phillips <https://youtu.be/K0pxo-dS9Hc>
- Nancy Duarte uncovers common structure of greatest communicators <https://youtu.be/1nYFpuc2Umk>
- The magical science of storytelling - David JP Phillips - TEDxStockholm <https://youtu.be/Nj-hdQMa3uA>
- Know You Can Have It All - Marisa Peer <https://youtu.be/IKeaAbM2kJg>

LINKS AND ABBREVIATIONS

LINKS

- PFL Website www.pitchingforlife.com
- PFL Templates www.pitchingforlife.com/products/templates
- PFL Videos and Materials www.pitchingforlife.com/materials
- Contact the Author www.pitchingforlife.com/contact

ABBREVIATIONS

PFL	Pitching For Life
USP	Unique Selling Point
SE	Supporting Evident
WDWE	Why Do We Exist (Scenario Framework)
I.E.	That is
E.G.	Example / For Example
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
MIN	Minute(s)
SEC	Second(s)
ASAP	As Soon As Possible
PSB	Problem-Solution-Benefit (Structure)
VCU	Vision-Concept-Uniqueness (Structure)
BPS	Basic Pitch Structure
BMC	Business Model / Business Model Canvas
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CTO	Chief Technical Officer
UX	User Experience
VS.	Versus
IPs	Intellectual Properties
F2P	Free To Play
UA	User Acquisition
TBD	To Be Determined

