



Sales Pitching

For one night and one night only... The opportunity to pitch to a prospect is a golden opportunity it's like an audition, a one off command performance; when it's all on the line.

It's perhaps tempting to think that after all the hard labour of direct mailing, cold calling and appointment setting that once you've been invited to pitch it's downhill all the way from then on. Sadly that's never true.

Make sure you optimise your chances of success by asking yourself these questions to prepare a great sales pitch;~

The top 9 ½ questions to ask

1. **What's their problem?**

You have to know why they might buy your product or service. How do I research my prospects? What problems do they have that I could solve? What opportunity can I help them grab? What's it going to DO for them? And what's it going to do that's different from what they're doing now?

2. **What's the missing link?**

The key is to ensure you build a clear and overt link between their needs and your products/ services. Is there a clear link between what they need and what I can supply? Am I talking about solving their problems? (solutions) or am I just telling about the bells and whistles of my product (features) Will they perceive the benefit as something that valuable, a need to, not a nice to?

3. **What would you tweet?**

We're all drowning in information overload, your prospects don't want War and Peace, and they haven't the time or energy. So try the Twitter strategy, if you had to summarise your message to your prospect in 140 characters what would you say? If your main points were presented as a 90 second news segment what would that include and critically, what would be edited out?

4. **Am I ready for this?**

In a competitive environment, gift of the gab, back of the envelope, wing and a prayer, is not good enough. This is a one time opportunity; it must deserve high quality preparation time. What do I need to know? Who should I involve? What research could I do? What paperwork? How do I ensure it's professionally produced?

5. **Who are they?**

Do you know who you are pitching to? What can you find out about them? What do they like or not like? What have they done before? Checking out prospects on Google or Linked-in for example is so quick and easy, there's no excuse not to be well informed.

6. **What's their attention span?**

How much time have they got? Are they likely to want or need much detail? Technical people for example are more likely to want chronologically presented data, proof and facts, time poor directors often just want the top line. Is my pitch tailored to their attention span?

7. **Does this need to be a performance?**

A pitch is a performance. No actor is going to go on stage without adequate rehearsal; neither should you. What is the layout of the venue? What equipment will I have /do I need? How do I ensure that in the first "magic minute" I create the right impression? How do I ensure I overcome any nerves?

8. **Why wouldn't they?**

Attack is the best form of defence. Understand the reasons that a client might not want to buy from you. What are their likely objections and issues? Why might they favour a competitor? Don't run away from these issues face them head on and build them into your pitch. What do I need to include to manage potential objections?

9. **What are their questions?**

You need to prepare as well for the Q&A section of a pitch as you do for the rest of it, even though you don't know what they will ask. What might they ask? If you were in their shoes what would you ask? What the one question you don't want them to ask and how do you answer it? Get colleagues or consultants to think of questions if you're too close to the trees to see the wood.

9½ Less is more! So we'll end here!

Patricia Seabright is a director of Archimedes Consulting Ltd a Hertfordshire based training and consultancy business that operates internationally to help organisations and individuals, persuade, present influence and sell.

***Call us to find out how we can help you and your team prepare optimally for sales pitches
on 01727 850668***