

Elevator pitch

Lessons learned by Marco Spruit

Not just useful for Applied Data Science...



Overview

A good pitch in any case meets the following elements:

1. Your pitch provides insight into the problem that you solve or the need you meet.
2. You show *how* your idea solves the problem or meets that need.

PLUS-ing

Then you make the pitch stronger by ensuring:

1. **"Pulling demand"**: your pitch must leave the listener with a need to buy your service or service.
2. **"Lasting"**: your pitch must linger with the audience. You only have 2 minutes to make a good impression. Start with a catchy opening (example, question, anecdote), and then introduce yourself very briefly.
3. **"Undeniable"**: Provide clarity. Be 'to-the-point'.
4. **"Simple"**: The pitch must not contain any complicated language or jargon. Both your grandmother and the grandchildren must be able to understand it.

Guidelines

According to "Presenting without pictures - The perfect presentation in eight steps:

1. The Law of the three Ps: Prepare, prepare, prepare!
2. Your objective: Touch your audience
3. Trigger emotions
4. Use your body language
5. The magic of the number three
6. Come up with one-liners
7. Deviate from the standard
8. Conform to best practices

1. The law of the three Ps: Prepare, prepare, prepare

Do not fall into the trap of "Just do it". Presentations and lectures are rarely interesting. They are boring, long-winded, contain too much information and / or lack direction. Cause: too little preparation. Good preparation means formulating objectives; stakeholder identification and customisation of the message and means of presentation. And yes: comprehensively practicing before the mirror and your family. You may be thinking, "But the people I listen to also don't do this." Right! This is exactly why most presentations, lectures and speeches are deadly boring as well. Think of it as an advantage: you can easily score with good preparation.

2. Your objective: : Touch your audience

Knowledge transfer is almost never the basic objective of a presentation. Knowledge comes from paper, a training, from 1-on-1 conversations, from meetings or email contact. But not from presentations. Speech is often far too volatile for that. Of course: your story must be sound, but to get a 'click' with your audience, more is needed. Use your presentation to create a 'mindset', to enthuse, to convince, to excite, to be annoyed (not to yourself of course), yes: to be emotional. Once the interest has been awakened, you will present an informative reader with your business card after your presentation. More preferably, of course, you make the necessary appointments immediately after the presentation.

Example

A publisher of a leading professional journal was often invited to give a presentation about the possibilities of collaboration and advertising. The man did not take any sheets, beamer or cheat sheet. He simply joined the people in the room and talked to them in an anecdotal way about interesting interviews that had been written in the magazine ('Oh, you know him?'), The good relations he maintained with captains of industry and the occasions where he was customers regularly encountered. In fact, he said: you can join that world too. Placing a sharp quotation, listing all kinds of sales arguments, was hardly necessary. The issue of the rate card was sufficient.

3. Trigger emotions

If your goal is 'emotion', that requires emotional characteristics from you as a presenter. That's different than to worry about whether you get the full text and all 23 sheets within 15 minutes. Forget the message you want to transfer and focus on your audience. Who are they, how do they view you and your message and what effect do you want to achieve? Is it enthusiasm? Be enthusiastic, but not before you have determined how your audience is 'involved'. Think of the comedian who climbs the stage and confronts hundreds of expectant but critical people. The cabaret artist makes a joke of a joke and suddenly the spirits are cleaned collectively. The tone has been set. Humor is liberating. You achieve that your listeners fully open up to your message. When transferring a serious message, choose the opposite order. Start seriously and use humor to put things in perspective. Are not you funny? No need, use a tool. A cartoon of Fokke & Sukke from the NRC or a Dilbert comic from De Telegraaf. An anecdote or 'inside' joke is also possible. Sometimes the atmosphere under your hearing is serious; then skip the humor variation wisely. Nothing more painful than humor that does not arrive or is misunderstood. Use your professionalism. Someone who knows what he is talking about always impresses.

Example

The director of a large technical company allows a large group of economics students to interest them in a career in technology. He starts with a sheet, which states 'This is the last sheet'. Nice - everyone laughs. The director has mastered himself in the clichés that students live about his sector and visits them one by one and confirms that they are all true: Technicians are boring, technology is complicated and there are far too few women. At the same time, he tells which nice things he has made with it. Great deals ('that techie was still talking about bits and bytes, while I was dragging millions in') and exciting situations ('If it had gone wrong it would have cost a minister'). The students practically evaluated the lecture 'very good' without exception. In the months that followed, the company received more than a hundred open trainee requests and the years after he spoke again the lecture hall was packed full. He never talked about terms and conditions of employment, functions and career development opportunities.

4. Use your body language

How you come across is mainly determined by your body language, we know from the gurus of neuro-linguistic programming. Not your words, but the way in which you express them, your attitude, your facial expression, your glance and your movements create the most important impression. The rule of thumb is: adjust your body language and intonation to the emotion you want to convey. If you want to emphasize something serious, stop the time to make an impression. Stand still, drop a silence, look at your audience in a penetrating way and speak with a lot of emphasis. "... Three ... million ... Euro ... Loss." As soon as you enter the solution sphere, you change your body language and intonation completely: you move, make gestures and speak fluently, confidently and with enthusiasm. Do not be afraid to do something crazy. An HBO student suddenly appeared on the table during a primal and long-winded presentation about strategic management to copy a scene from the cup-a-soup advertisement. He left - literally - an unforgettable impression. Do not forget your clothes: You are who you are, of course, but if you hold a presentation you usually have to deal with people you do not know or do not know enough. Otherwise you would have been face-to-face with them at the table. So dress impeccably, wear your best suit. Use the Sinterklaas effect, a bishop who is always dressed in an impressive garment. Even the biggest macho feels as small as the one asked for on Sint Nicolaas, does not it? Even if Sinterklaas is the dressed up neighbor.

5. The magic of the number three

From advertising research it is known that an advertising message only lasts well after it has been shown three times. Why would that be different in presentations? Repeat your message at least three times, whether or not packaged in other words. Do not just repeat your message three times, but make even more use of the magic of the number three. The human mind can hardly handle more than three things at once. Do you remember how difficult it was to memorize at school? Right. So always aim at three: treat up to three topics, give three powerful arguments, three examples.

6. Come up with one-liners

Your presentation is already successful if your listeners pick up and remember one aspect of your presentation. Be helpful to your audience and take care of one-liners (no more than three) that last.

A one-liner is something different than a motto. A one-liner contains your most important message in very short terms, but very concretely, while a motto reflects your objective in general terms. Making up one-liners is difficult. A tool can be you yourself the 'head maker' of a newspaper to imagine. Make up the newspaper head above your speech and voilà! Examples of one-liners are: 'With this software system sellers will sell more, marketers put more into the market and more controllers', 'Every day we wait with the introduction of this product we let 100,000 Euro turnover go 'and' With more childcare places you invest not only in satisfied employees but also in satisfied children '. With the latter, a sheet with a cheerful child's face can be functional by the way.

7. Deviate from the standard

Do something that your audience does not expect. Let the tables move, give everyone 3-D glasses, use 'secret language' in your reader, introduce a new term, break something, film the reactions of your listeners, say that you do not really feel like it, give a gift away. Deviate and the attention is entirely on you.

Example

A product manager had placed a spotlight on the door prior to a product introduction, played some exciting music ... but instead of coming in through the door, the man appeared to be in the audience right on the other side of the room. 'Can someone turn off the music and that spotlight, then I can start my story.'

8. Conform to best practices

These steps are not intended to replace existing 'presentation laws'. They only serve as an addition. Ancient principles have not lost value: formulate a clear objective, provide a story with head, torso and tail, speak in clear and short terms, avoid details, do not present, but communicate and interact. And of course: look at your audience.