

11 Ways To Be More Convincing When Pitching An Idea To Your Manager

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Expert Panel

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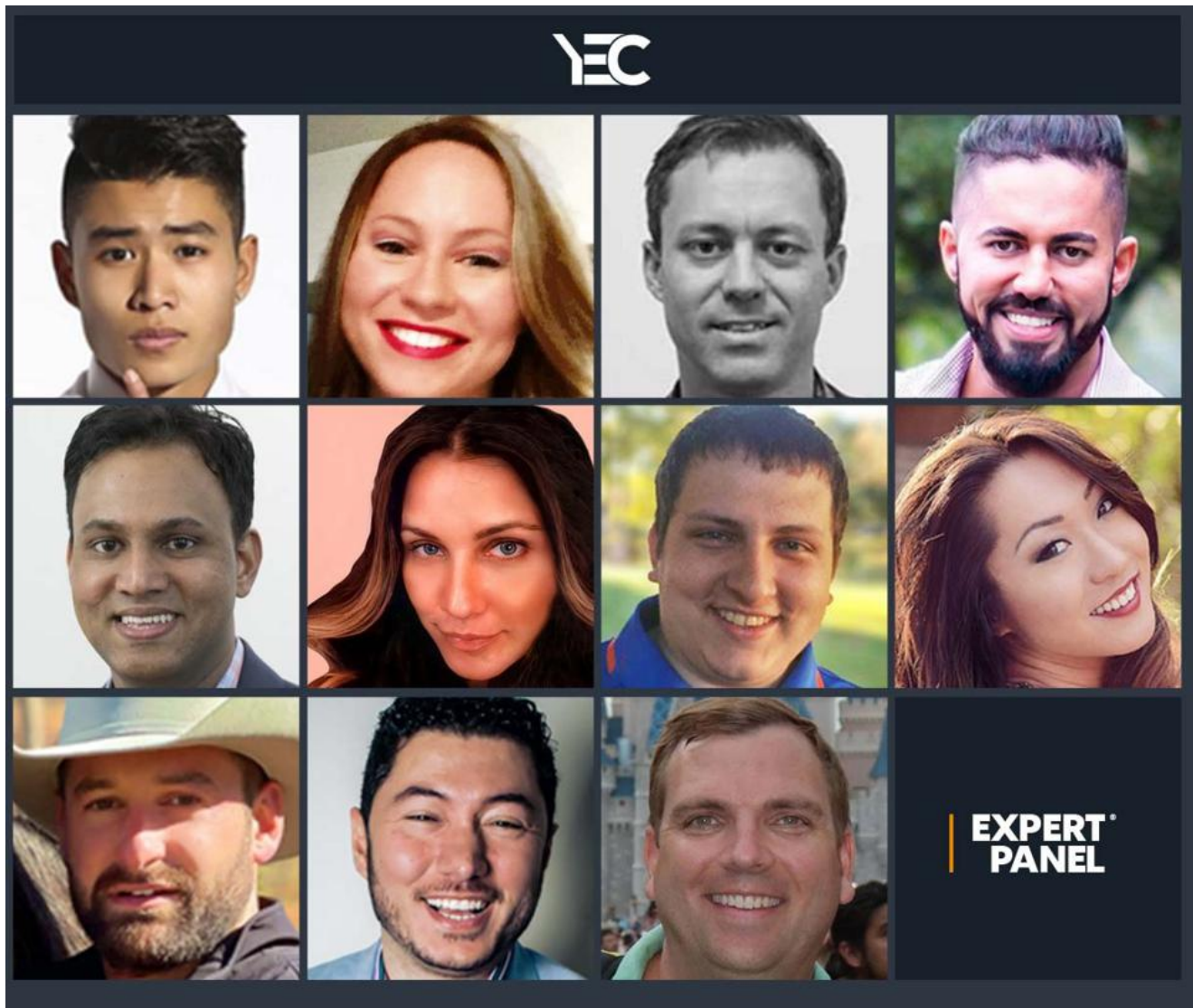
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When you have an idea—whether it’s a simple tweak to an ongoing project or a major overhaul to an ineffective work process—and you want to share it with your manager, pitching it can be as simple as walking into their office or messaging them on Slack and explaining the idea. However, if you want to ensure your pitch is successful, you may need to think through your overall strategy first.

As business leaders, the members of Young Entrepreneur Council have listened to many pitches from their employees. In order to help you succeed, they recommend the following 11 tips for pitching an idea to your manager and explain why this advice will help you sound a lot more convincing.



Young Entrepreneur Council members offer advice for pitching to your boss.

Photos courtesy of the individual members.

1. Focus On The Big Picture

When we pitch an idea, we want it to be about what the overall mission of the team gains rather than what we alone stand to gain. For example, when asking about earning more, focus on the expanded good you do for the team rather than, for example, inflation. Your personal needs should be part of the story, but not the only part! - Tyler Bray, TK Trailer Parts

2. Have A Story To Tell

A great piece of advice for pitching is to have a story. This will make your idea interesting and memorable. Stories are powerful, and they are the way we learn things. Stories are the essence of books, movies and more. If you want to pitch something, try to find a story and then tell it. If you just list the pros and cons, you may miss an opportunity to make a point. - Kelly Richardson, Infobrandz

3. Be Prepared

Come with the ability to explain what the idea is, why it is important and how it improves the current procedure. A well-thought-out idea that you are prepared to explain and defend will give you the best opportunity to be successful in convincing your manager it is a good idea. - Zane Stevens, Protea Financial

4. Explain How You'll Manage Your Responsibilities

Explain how you'll help take the lead on the project and how doing so won't interfere with your core responsibilities. As an employee, you play a crucial role in your current position. Until hiring has ramped up, it can be hard to make a case for substituting some of your time doing your main duties in order to work on other new projects. Instead, carve out time so it's a no-brainer. - Firas Kittaneh, Amerisleep Mattress

5. Think Like They Do

You're selling, you know? When you want to sell anything to anyone, focus on what benefits they'll love to have. When selling your idea to your boss, you might have to take a step back to understand what your boss would love to gain from the execution of your idea. - Samuel Timothy, OneIMS

6. Keep It Short, Simple And Realistic

Firstly, remember to keep it short. If the idea takes more than a few minutes to present, it's probably too complicated to be immediately effective. The second thing is to be realistic. For example, presenting a PowerPoint deck with pie charts and graphs is impressive, but the whole thing can seem silly if the numbers don't make sense. Finally, make it simple to take action. - Candice Georgiadis, Digital Day

7. Back Up Your Claims With Evidence

The best way to give a convincing pitch is to provide evidence that backs up your theory or claim. It's easy to walk into a room and say, "I think we should do X," but you won't get far. Instead, you should approach the situation by saying, "I think we should do X because Y, and here's the data that proves my point." - Chris Christoff, MonsterInsights

8. Pitch What You Know

Make sure you are good at what you're pitching. If your manager thinks your pitch is not your forte, it is kind of hard to make them believe that you know what you're saying and that you're capable of executing it. Back up the idea with a concrete plan and explain your main role in the task at hand. Make sure that you're pitching something valuable and not just trendy. This is effective because everything's laid out. - Daisy Jing, Banish

9. Consider Any Objections

I always welcome ideas to improve operations from my employees, but I think it's important for them to consider objections to their ideas—and then why we should implement the concept anyway. Even the best concepts have some drawbacks, but enduring corporate policies have always successfully addressed their shortcomings. - Kyle Michaud, Carolina Dozer

10. Adjust For The Method Of Communication

Keep it simple and short, and adjust your pitch for the method of communication. Everyone's workday is packed, so you want to convey your idea with efficiency. Are you pitching via Slack? Video call? During an in-person office visit? If pitching during a video call or while in person, you need to enunciate and project. On Slack, make sure that your ideas are clear and organized. Clarity is key. - Duran Inci, Optimum7

11. Tie It Back To The Company's Goals

Pitching a new idea to your manager requires you to understand the company's long-term goals. When giving your presentation, find ways to tie your vision back to existing products and future goals. Your manager will easily grasp your message if they can see how it will help the business as a whole. - John Turner, SeedProd LLC