

PITCH YOUR IDEA FOR FINANCE

DO

- Keep your pitch short, concise and factual - around 5 -15 minutes long. Get to the point.
- Provide visuals, either a tangible product or visual images of your concept.
- Demonstrate the opportunity. Specifically tell the panel you are pitching to exactly how there is going to be a return on the investment that's made and demonstrate why.
- Show your commitment. Explain clearly and concisely what you have done and what you intend to do next. Reveal what you have given up, what you are prepared to do and how determined you are. Show how you will be sharing the risk. Passion and commitment are vital ingredients of a winning pitch. In the entrepreneurial dictionary, action comes straight after decision. Committing to getting things done is an invaluable ally on your road to success.
- Be confident. An inner self belief is like a foundation stone under the tallest building. You need to convince potential investors that you have the courage of your convictions and why.
- Practice your pitch in front of a mirror until you know it by heart and it is word perfect. Practice in front of anyone you can rely on to give you honest feedback. Some business angel networks provide dummy investor panels and workshops to help entrepreneurs practice their pitches.
- Persist. Dealing with rejection is all about passion and conviction and never giving up. When Thomas Eddison, who invented the light bulb, was asked what it was like to have failed 1000 times in trying to invent it, he replied that he didn't fail, he just found 1000 different ways not to invent the light bulb. That sort of analogy is what it's about, that's the way we should view life. Successful entrepreneurs have two undeniable qualities, determination and persistence. Develop a "keep on keeping on" ability.
- Protect your idea before entering a pitch situation.
- Keep calm. Take five seconds to breathe and let your pounding heart to slow down. Look down if necessary. Compose yourself. Silence is fine. Then, spring into life.

DON'T

- Exaggerate! Know your figures inside out and off by heart. Be realistic about the risks your business faces and turn yourself into an expert on how to deal with them.
- Come unstuck. Know exactly what you'll be spending the invested money on and provide realistic valuations and projections.
- Stop using your imagination. Once your business is up and running your imagination will act as a catalyst for other people's imaginations. As long as your imaginative visions and ideas remain deliverable and realistic. An imaginative leader is encouraging to those around them.
- - Look un-inspirational. Make me like the look of you. Don't look like you're utterly desperate for money or that you've just been dragged through a hedge backwards because you're wearing ripped jeans and a t-shirt. Wear a suit.
- Be condescending. Have confidence in your idea but do not patronise those you are seeking investment from.
- Argue. Do debate. There is a fine balance between debating and arguing with somebody. The minute you start arguing with a potential investor, you're now in a state of conflict and it's going to go wrong for you very quickly.