

Week 2
After the Design Thinking activity

1. How to Pitch

Explain that the time has come to begin to sort out which products will be produced and sold by the Company. During next week's meeting, participants will pitch their ideas; but, before, you get to that stage, you need to spend some time learning about pitching ideas.

Instructions

1. Distribute one copy of the *How to Pitch* handout to each group of 6 participants.
2. Then ask them to read the handout as a group and follow the instructions.
3. Once the participants are prepared to pitch, have them present their pitches to their small groups, as per the handout instructions.
4. Have each group choose one "best in class" to present to the whole group. Watch these pitching finalists. Have the whole group consider which pitching techniques were most effective.

Note: You may want to reward these pitching finalists with a small treat of some kind.

2. What to Pitch?

Explain that the time has come for participants to decide on their product or service ideas that will form the basis of the companies.

Note: Every participant needs to come up with one idea, prepare a pitch, and pitch the idea in 30 seconds next week.

Explain to participants that if their idea is selected as the basis for one of the companies, then, that means, they will be a "company founder". As a company founder, they may or may not have an executive role. In other words, founding the company and taking a leadership role are two separate things. That is not to say that the founder won't be the CEO. They might be. But they might not be, too.

As part of this activity:

- Review JA Product Guidelines
- Explain the concept of Triple Bottom line and Break Even
- Review Product Research Worksheet

3. Organizing the Pitching Challenge

Participants will need to be given time to generate their ideas and to prepare the pitches before they deliver them. Preparation time can be given during JA Company time (if available) or it can be done at home where participants can develop their unique ideas, and plan and practice their pitches.

How to Pitch

In this activity, you will learn about, and you will practice, pitching an idea. You will be given an idea to pitch and you will prepare and present a pitch to your small group using one of the techniques below.

Pitching means bringing an idea to someone who has resources you need. Movie screenplays, apps, business plans, or just about anything you might call “an idea”, is pitched from one person to another.

Although the industries where pitching occurs may differ, the basic skill is the same.

Chapter 7 of Daniel Pink's book *To Sell Is Human: The Surprising Truth about Motivating Others* features six types of pitches. Use them to play up what's unique about your product or service idea.

The One-Word Pitch

"Companies compete for global ownership of one word in the public mind. For example, what technology company do you think of when you hear the word “search”? What credit card company comes to mind when you hear the word “priceless”? Writing a good teaser isn't about cramming a huge concept into a tiny little box. Instead, it's about finding one thing that makes your idea truly awesome.

The Question Pitch

If we are trying to persuade, questions can out-perform statements.

The Rhyming Pitch

Use a rhyme but don't make it up yourself. Go online and find a rhyming dictionary.

The Subject-Line Pitch

Pink's notes: "Your e-mail subject line should be either obviously useful (Found the best & cheapest photocopier) or mysteriously intriguing (A photocopy breakthrough!), but not both.

The Twitter Pitch

Limit your pitch to 140-120 characters so that others can pass it on. Remember: The best pitches are short, sweet, and easy to retweet.

The Pixar Pitch

Use a small story to engage the audience.

Once upon a time ...Every day...One day ... Because of that,....Until finally,...

And when it's time to present: Be yourself.

Instructions

1. Once you have familiarized yourself with the 6 pitching strategies, distribute one slip of paper to each person in the group. On each slip of paper is an idea to be pitched and the technique to be used. Each pitch should take less than 30 seconds.
2. You have 5 minutes to plan your pitch. Use whatever resources are at your disposal.
3. Each person will then present their idea to the small group using their assigned technique.
4. Choose one “best in class pitcher” to present to the rest of the Company Program participants.

Week 3

1. Present the Pitches

Explain that now participants will present their pitches that they prepared at home, and, in doing so, everyone will be trying to become a company founder.

Instructions

- a. Number students and then draw a number to announce who will pitch next.
- b. Keep the time limit to a maximum of 30 seconds for each pitch.
- c. Following each pitch, everyone should record the points they are awarding on the **Judging the Pitching Ideas Score Sheet**. After all of the pitches, Advisors will review judging sheets to narrow down to the top 3 products based on scores - there can only be 2 Companies MAXIMUM.

2. Select the Products/Services

- a. You will tally the votes and announce the top 3 products around which the companies will form. All of the “company founders” should be recognized in some special way (e.g. a t-shirt that says *“It’s hard to do a really good job on anything you don’t think about in the shower.” - I’m a JA Company Founder*” or *“Trust your instincts.”-I’m a JA Company Founder*).

3. Choose Your Company

- a. Once the final products ideas have been selected by all the participants, then it is time ask participants to rank their top choice product in their personal order of preference (1-3). Each participant must submit this to volunteer before the end of the session. For the top three choices, participants must provide a reason for ranking. Their reason must speak about what they, individually, can bring to the team. Some participants may not wish to rank; they may be happy on any team. That is fine.
- b. It is up to volunteer to review the selections and be ready to form the Companies next week.
- c. Advisors must review selections, and discuss their choice with JA staff prior to the following week

Note: When choosing the mix of participants on teams, you should do your best to end with balanced company teams—balanced in terms of gender, age, interests, and any evidence to date of leadership strength. In balancing the company teams you exercise great control over the outcome of the experience for all participants. Don’t squander your opportunity to help construct success by forming companies carefully.