

Pitch Deck Outline

This document describes the contents of an investor pitch deck that can be delivered in 10 slides. The order shown is not required, but is generally effective – that is defining the problem first and the solution and business behind it. Some people may find a different structure to be a better fit for their business. However, companies need to communicate the information described below by the time they're done presenting.

The crucial attribute that must be present is clarity of thought!

Consider having a pitch deck and a leave-behind deck. The first is what you present live, while the second serves as the copy that investors / funders can keep for their reference and to share with their team. This can be done with two completely separate decks (which can be challenging to manage), or by using the Speaker Notes feature to provide the necessary text / talking points to deliver the information you would have communicated live. This leave-behind version can also serve as a send-ahead prior to a live meeting.

The pitch deck should be kept high level, and then use back-up slides that will enable you to drill deeper into many or most of the topics in the high-level deck during post-pitch discussions. In many cases you will not use your backup slides in the first meeting, but rather, they will come in handy when investors want to follow up and dig deeper. Avoid using a deck of bullet points that you read through. If you're saying something, then it should be in the speaker notes – and therefore part of the send ahead / leave behind. Also, see Resources at the end of this document for tips on presentations.

It is crucial that you weave your story into the narrative to draw investors into your journey. Why do you NEED to bring this company to reality? Why is this important for you?

1	Cover slide	Keep it simple: company name and little else.
2	The Problem	Clearly identify the pain point that you're addressing including environmental, social or health issues. What's happening in the marketplace / not happening? What are customers / stakeholders doing / not able to do?
3	The Business	Describe your solution. Map directly what you're doing as the solution to the problem(s)/pain point(s) identified above.
4	Market Opportunity / Strategy	Describe the size of the market. Focus on the overall serviceable market and should give potential investors a view on how BIG your business could get, or in the case of non-profits, how big an impact you could have. Also, how will you reach these customers?
5	Products or Services / Technology	Describe at the next level of detail, your product or service offering and any technology that you are developing or protectable / defensible IP.

6	Competitive Summary	This is your opportunity to identify but also frame your competition. This should not be a large, random list of companies or organizations, but ideally your competition placed in a framework around what drives customers. At a high-level you can pick two attributes that customers care about and that you can show superiority. Also, have a backup slide or materials that provide a detailed analysis of your competitors that can serve as follow on material when investors want to proceed into further diligence.
7	Customers / Accomplishments	Here's your opportunity to brag! Have a lighthouse customer? Winning awards? Customers love you? Investors will view what you say skeptically, but will always value third party (customers, partners, industry professionals, etc.) opinions very highly. Anecdotal stories are good here. Be prepared to make any customers or others identified here available as references later on in the process.
8	Business Model	Describe here what type of business you're building. For example, are you selling a product with consumables? A freemium SaaS service? A product through various distribution channels? A consulting business? Detail the costs, margins, and end-customer pricing through your value chain.
9	Management Team	This should provide a brief bio for each of the key team members. Why are they the best-suited people to build the business? Include advisory board members if they add credibility to the team from an investor's perspective. In general, you don't need to reference the fiduciary board. Prior to institutional venture capital, it should be only the founders. Investors will want to reconstitute the board of directors to have a balance of common shareholders (management) and investors, with a tie-breaking independent director.
10	Financials (income statement)	A very high-level income statement that shows 3-5 years of how you plan to grow the business. For the pitch deck, this high-level view is all that's required. <i>(see example below)</i> However, you should have a detailed monthly budget for the entire period that the amount you are fundraising for would cover in a backup slide. For example, if you're raising money sufficient for a 1-year or 2-year plan, then monthly financials for that period should be in your backup. Your Year-5 financials should represent your business when it is scaled to a sufficient size so that your percentage of expenses (sales & marketing, research & development, and general & administrative) are consistent ratios when compared to other similar businesses.
11	Summary	Here is where you remind investors / funders how big the market or opportunity for impact is that you're pursuing and you make the ask: how much are you raising? What form? Anyone already committed?

Example structure for pro-forma financial table (the key take-away from this example is that this chart should be kept at a high level and by the fifth year begin to show metrics around margins, headcount and expense categories consistent with comparable businesses, or if not, why your business will have different metrics):

(000's)	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Revenue					
COGS					
Gross Margin					
GM %					
Expenses					
- R&D					
- S&M					
- G&A					
Total Expenses					
Operating Income/(Loss)					
Headcount					

Note: Different businesses may use alternative vocabulary. Also, some additional metrics can/should be added to this chart depending on the specific business. For example, in a SaaS business, you might report total users and/or monthly recurring users. As noted in the upper left hand corner, you should report in thousands of dollars for most cases.

Key:

COGS: Cost of Goods Sold

R&D: Research & Development

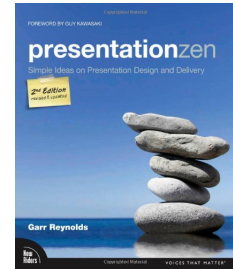
S&M: Sales & Marketing

G&A: General & Administrative

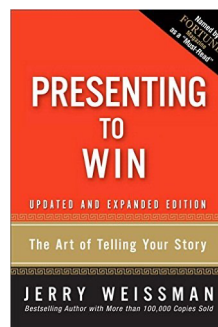
Resources

The following resources can be helpful in developing and refining your pitch:

Presentation Zen, by Garr Reynolds <https://www.presentationzen.com>



Presenting to Win, by Jerry Weissman
<https://suasive.com>



Communicating Data and information by Edward Tufte
<https://www.edwardtufte.com/tufte/>

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"Edward Tufte is the revelatory retina of our time, ever connecting eye and brain in enlightening new ways. He creates masterpieces about design that are themselves masterpieces of design. **Seeing with Fresh Eyes: Meaning, Space, Data, Truth** takes all that he knows into a yet deeper level of wisdom and wider realm of inquiry. A completely delicious work."
Stewart Brand, creator of the Whole Earth Catalog

SITE SEARCH

INGE DRUCKREY: TEACHING TO SEE

"An absolutely beautiful film. It picks up where Helvetica left off. Inge Druckrey's wonderful teaching is an inspiration." Luke Geissbuhler, cinematographer of Helvetica "A great story beautifully told." Ken Carbone
An ET MODERN film, 37 minutes, all for free click above.
Produced by Edward Tufte. Directed and Edited by Andrei Severny