

## It's about them, not you! How to create a successful pitch



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How often have you sat through a pitch from a potential supplier only to spend the first half hour with them talking about themselves? So often we sit and watch or listen to the following as an opening slide or as the opening conversation.

- Who **we** are
- Us** and **our** organisation now
- The history of **us** and **our** organisation
- What **we** do
- What **we** have done in the past
- How **we** run **our** organisation

They start off telling you about how old the company is, where it first started, how, because they're a gazillion years old, they must be the best, how Old Jim was the first in a particular department and, at 90 years old, he's still there!!

When talking to a potential client, the first thing we should focus on is them – not us! They will be sitting there thinking **WIIFM – What's In It For Me?**

Start off by talking about the benefits you will bring to their organisation. The start of the pitch is the time to 'sell' your services not by talking about yourself but by focusing on what positive things will happen to them when they start working with you. VW placed an advert on billboards at railway stations, which illustrates the point perfectly. The advert ran as follows:

~~Our Blue Motion range combines lighter materials, enhanced aerodynamics, economical engines and tyres that create less friction which~~ **saves you** ~~fuel and can reduce your tax, which means you will have more~~ **money**

VW could sit all day and talk about their engines, how long they've been around, what materials they use, but they chose to focus on what they knew the customer was thinking. How will I benefit from buying a VW car with a Blue Motion engine?

### Pain and pleasure?

Try to find out what their pain is and tell them how you are going to relieve that pain. Are their current suppliers too slow? Demonstrate how quick and responsive your organisation is with its other client and how you achieve that. Focus on how they will be able to make quicker decisions and move forward due to your fast response.

What pleasure are they trying to achieve? Do they want to get information out to their own customers more quickly than they can with their current suppliers? If so, then demonstrate how your speed of response will help them achieve that. Focus on how your organisation, due to the constant access they will have to you, will mean they can respond more quickly to their customers as a result.

Finding out what pain or pleasure they are trying to avoid or seek can be obtained before the first meeting with a simple phone call; you are then ready, at the first meeting, to show them how you will relieve the pain and provide the pleasure.

## PowerPoint

If you are going to use PowerPoint, make it interesting. Use images that illustrate the points you are trying to make; images are much more powerful than text and you can be the text through the talk you give to accompany the presentation. Simply putting up lots of words and reading those words is not only boring but causes your potential client a problem; they are trying to read the text and listen to you at the same time and doing neither well. Powerful or amusing images, even when pitching for legal work, will make a greater positive impact than text.

## Them

Whenever you're preparing a pitch for a potential client meeting, go armed with the weapons you need to **win**! Tell them what they want to hear from the start – what they will achieve because of working with you, how their business will be enhanced through working with you, how their service to their clients will improve with you on board and do that from the first words you speak.



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Stewart Graham will help you to enhance your service, increase your profit and reduce your costs through coaching and presentations.

Stewart coaches in business and schools, coaching owners, MD, CEOs, Partners, Headteachers, Deputy Headteachers and Senior Leadership teams resulting in a more efficient and customer-focused organisation, decreasing costs, increasing profit and retaining more customers.

Stewart has managed organisations at the highest level for over 15 years. He is a regular speaker on networking, successful pitching, successful networking, selling more with little effort and no cost, and presenting to be remembered as well as other management and motivational topics. He is also a published author.