

HOW TO DEVELOP AND DELIVER A SALES PITCH FOR YOUR PRODUCT

BC Ministry of Agriculture Marketing Guide Series



Building Good Relationships is Key

Developing and delivering a sales pitch comes naturally for some people and is very difficult for others.

Business owners must make sales pitches all the time: to buyers, consumers, employees and investors in order to grow the company. Presenting the right information in a convincing manner is key to making the sale.

Domestic and international retail and food service buyers always emphasize the importance of building good relationships. Relationship building starts with your first contact with a buyer.



KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

First identify the person who makes the purchasing decisions for your product category. Get to know who you are meeting with and be prepared to provide the information he or she needs.

DO YOUR HOMEWORK

Research the buyer's needs, what their challenges are and how your product can help them achieve their goals. Learn about their company, their industry, their and your competitors.

Good research demonstrates to the buyer that you understand their business. Focus on the product features that will matter to them most.

Ideas for research include:

- Tour stores or visit restaurants to understand how the product fits in their product lines and can help the organization meet its goals;
- Talk to staff, store managers, chefs, restaurant owners or consumers and identify needs;
- Attend industry events: conferences, workshops, and tradeshows and network with other industry members to learn who the buyers are and what they are looking for;
- Keep up to date with market drivers and trends related to food consumption in the target market; and/or
- Check out the competition: remember there is always competition! Be prepared to answer how the product compares to competing products in terms of product quality, availability, pricing, special deals and promotional allowances, etc.

For more information, see the Ministry of Agriculture's guide on "How to Conduct and Use Market Research".

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Present Solutions

HOW LONG SHOULD YOUR PITCH BE?

A good sales pitch gets the point across by captivating the audiences' attention. Keep your pitch simple, relevant and engage your audience.

The length of your pitch depends on the audience and the situation. Most networking transactions are less than 30 seconds, so it is important to have a pitch ready for these situations. This is usually the first interaction with a person and if a connection is made, it can lead to longer pitches. A short pitch might include introducing yourself, your company and what you do.

Longer pitches are appropriate for audiences that are interested in hearing more about the company and the products offered.

Tip **Captivate your audience.**

This guide focuses on developing sales pitches for buyers that have agreed to meet in a formal setting and learn about the company and products. Plan your pitch according to the amount of time available, how much information needs to be shared and allow time for discussion.

Regardless of the length of the pitch, remember to spend time on perfecting how the pitch is delivered.

Many people concentrate on content only and wonder why buyers lose focus during the presentation.

SALES PITCH CONTENT

Your sales pitch should tell your story and include:

- An introduction of yourself and your role in the company;
- A brief description of the company, operations, product(s) and channels of interest (retail, foodservice, export);
- A description of product(s) being pitched;
- Why you decided to produce the product(s);
- An explanation as to what differentiates your product from the competition (i.e. your value proposition);
- The market drivers and trends that your product addresses;
- Information on where you have successfully sold your product(s);
- Showing that you understand the buyer's challenges and how you can help; and
- Sharing the next steps for your company.

FOCUS ON PRESENTING SOLUTIONS

For instance, tell the buyer how your product will solve their problems, help them achieve their goals faster, save time or protect them from risks.



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Let Your Passion Shine Through

PRACTICE YOUR DELIVERY

Practice your pitch. And practice some more. Watch yourself in a mirror or have a friend video you practicing your pitch. You will be amazed at what you learn about your presentation skills when you watch yourself.

Make people want to listen to you through body language and a tone of voice that demonstrate confidence and enthusiasm – let your passion shine through.

ASK FOR THE SALE

Project confidence when making the close and rehearse it carefully. The goal is to make the buyer feel confident about your solution, that buying your product will make their life better.

EXPECT REJECTION

It is likely that you will hear “no” more than “yes”. Learn from a “no”. Ask for feedback: What will it take to get a yes? Who else might be interested?

QUESTIONS

When meeting with a buyer be ready to answer questions. Think of some common questions that the buyer might ask and prepare answers to them.

If the conversation is waning, ask and answer questions yourself to show that you have done your research; but be careful not to be a “Know it All”.

Your answers should be concise, demonstrating confidence and expertise. It’s all about building trust and relationships. The buyer will feel that he or she can trust you and your company because you know what you are doing.

SAMPLE QUESTION: Do you have a HACCP program?

Potential answer if a program is in place:

“Yes we have a Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) program in place that is recognized by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA).”

Potential answer if a program is not in place:

“We are working on our Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) program and expect to have it in place soon.”

If the conversation is waning:

“You might be wondering if we have a HACCP program – Indeed we do!”

Other questions to consider include:

- What volume of product can you supply if sales take off?
- Do you use a distributor or broker?
- Does the product require any special care?
- Do you have a marketing plan?
- Do you have a social media plan?



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Follow up is Key

BUYER INFORMATION PACKAGE

Be sure to bring all the information a buyer will need to contact you and detailed information about your product(s).

Provide:

- Business Card;
- Sell Sheet;
- Price Sheet; and
- Product Samples.

For more information, see the Ministry of Agriculture's guide on "How to Develop a Sell Sheet for Your Product" and "How to Determine the Right Retail Price for Your Product".

FOLLOW UP

Follow up is one of the most important aspects of a sales pitch. What is done after the pitch will often determine whether or not a sale is made. Be sure to follow through on what was promised.

Buyers are busy, never interpret a lack of response as a definite no. Keep following up until a definite answer is received. If it is a 'no' be persistent and try again.

HELPFUL TIPS

- Be focused and organized: your mission is to sell your product;
- Practice, practice and practice: your pitch should roll off your tongue;
- Look professional: like someone that can be trusted;
- Be compelling: make them want to buy your product;
- Include humour in your presentation
- Include "Aha" moments where the buyer can relate to what is said; and
- Use props: to demonstrate product and features.



MORE INFORMATION

See the Ministry of Agriculture's Marketing Guide Series for more information and additional topics by visiting <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/statistics/market-analysis-and-trade-statistics>

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