

PITCHING



101

A Crash Course for CS & Software Engineering Students

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Tech Community Builder



WHAT IS A PITCH?

"A pitch is a persuasive, concise story that gets someone to take action."



NOT a Demo

Showing features isn't enough — tell a story



NOT a Report

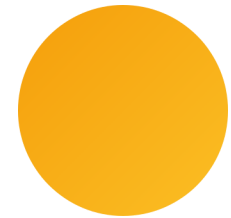
No one reads walls of text under pressure



A NARRATIVE

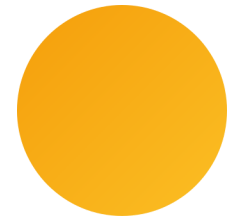
A story with purpose, emotion & a clear ask

Why Pitching Matters



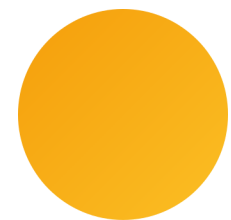
Win Competitions

A great pitch can be the difference between winning and being overlooked, even with a strong technical solution.



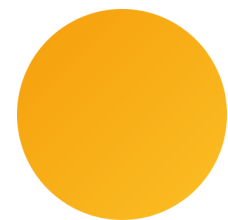
Attract Funding

Investors and sponsors need to believe in your vision. Your pitch is how you earn their trust and support.



Build Partnerships

Whether it's mentors, collaborators, or customers, pitching helps you communicate value and build relationships.



Launch Your Career

Pitching skills translate directly to job interviews, presentations, and entrepreneurship in the real world.



Your idea deserves to be heard—pitching is how you make it happen!

5 QUESTIONS EVERY PITCH MUST ANSWER

01

What is the **PROBLEM**?

Make the audience feel the pain. Be specific.

02

WHO has this problem?

Define your target user or customer clearly.

03

What is your **SOLUTION**?

Explain it so a non-tech person gets it in 30 sec.

04

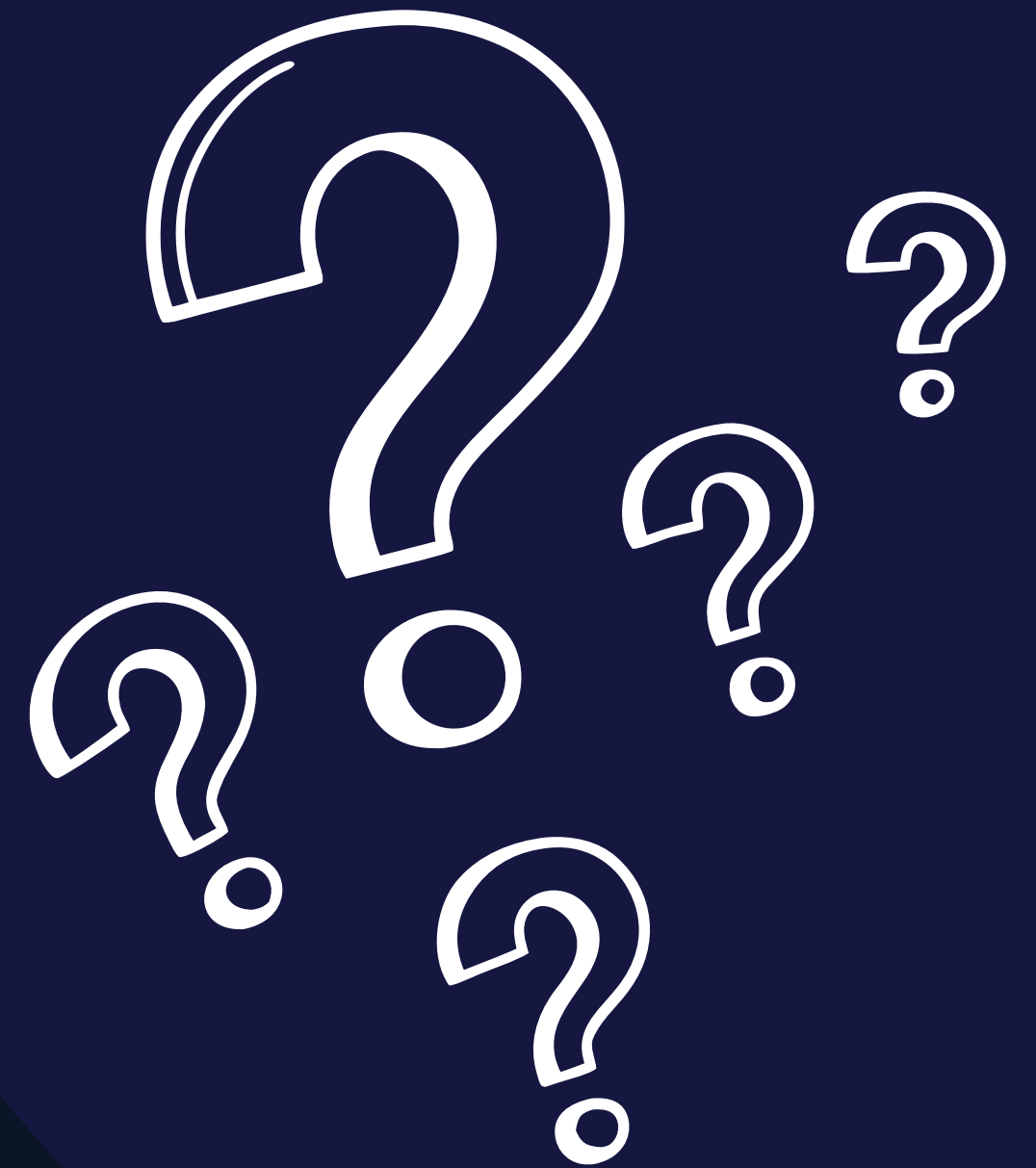
Why **YOU** / Why **NOW**?

What makes your team uniquely positioned?

05

What do you **WANT**?

Always end with a clear ask — funding, users, a meeting.



KNOW YOUR FORMAT

Elevator Pitch

30–60 sec

For hallways, networking & chance encounters. One problem, one solution, one ask.

Best for:

Hackathon corridors, networking events

Demo Day

3–5 min

Startup competitions & accelerators. Full narrative arc with slides and a live demo.

Best for:

Hackathon finals, accelerator programs

Investor Pitch

10–20 min

Full deck with financials, market size & traction data. Requires thorough preparation.

Best for:

VC meetings, angel rounds, pitching competitions

THE CLASSIC PITCH STRUCTURE

For a 3–5 minute demo day or competition pitch

1

HOOK

Grab attention — a bold stat, story or question

2

PROBLEM

Define the pain clearly — make them feel it

3

SOLUTION

Your product or idea — simple & crisp

4

DEMO

Show, don't just tell

5

MARKET

Who are your users & how big is the opportunity?

6

TRACTION

Any early proof? Users, feedback, prototypes

7

TEAM

Why are YOU the ones to build this?

8

ASK

What do you need? Be specific.

The 3-Minute Rule

Make Every Second Count



10 sec

Introduction

Introduce yourself and your team in a memorable way

20 sec

Problem Statement

What problem are you solving? Whose lives will improve? Show the impact!

60 sec

Your Product/Solution

Explain technical aspects, decision-making process, and what makes you different

60 sec

Demo & How It Works

Show your solution in action—live demo or clear visualization of key features

30 sec

Wrap-up & Next Steps

Summarize key points and end with a strong closing statement

Total: 3 minutes (180 seconds) — Practice with a timer to master your timing!

What Judges/Panel Look For

Understanding the evaluation criteria is key to winning



CRITERION 1

Creativity & Innovation

Originality, fresh perspectives, and new approaches to solving problems



CRITERION 2

Technical Execution

Code quality, functionality, performance, and architecture



CRITERION 3

Problem-Solving

How effectively your solution addresses a real, relevant problem



CRITERION 4

Impact & Potential

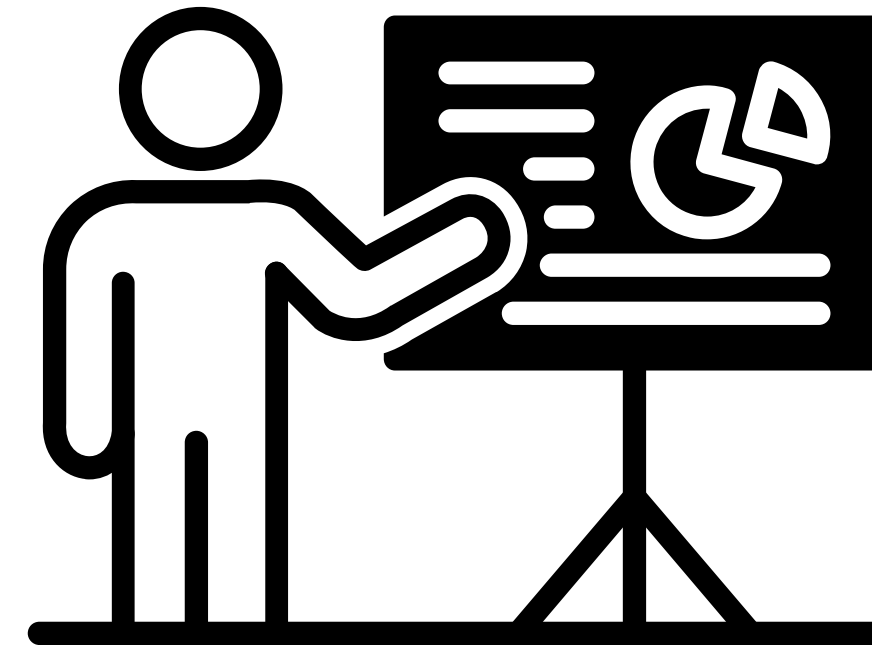
Real-world adoption, economic viability, and long-term sustainability



CRITERION 5

Your Pitch Delivery

Clarity, confidence, passion, and how well you justify your decisions



All criteria matter, but your pitch ties everything together

Even the best project can lose without a compelling presentation



BIGGEST MISTAKES TO AVOID

X Leading with the tech

Investors care about the PROBLEM first. Nobody invests in a stack.

X Too much jargon

Avoid acronyms. If a grandparent can't follow it, simplify.

X No clear ask

Every pitch must end: "We are looking for X." Never leave them guessing.

X Covering everything

A pitch is a teaser, not a manual. Less is more.

X Reading from slides

Slides are support. YOU are the story. Memorize your core narrative.

X Underestimating market

Being specific about market size builds massive credibility.

YOUR 60-SECOND TEMPLATE

Use this formula as your starting point

For **[target user]**, who struggles with **[problem]**, our product **[name]** is a **[category]** that **[key benefit]**. Unlike **[alternative]**, we **[key differentiator]**.

✓ Be specific

✓ Use plain English

✓ Practice out loud

✓ Time yourself

MINDSET SHIFTS FOR TECH STUDENTS



FROM

Presenting a project



TO

Selling a vision



FROM

Waiting for perfection



TO

Confidence > perfect



FROM

Assuming they understand



TO

Answer 'So what?' first



FROM

Complex explanation



TO

Simplicity is a skill

NOW GO



PITCH SOMETHING.

The best pitchers aren't born — they practice.

→ Practice your 60-sec pitch

→ Join a hackathon

→ Find a problem worth solving