The 50-Word Blurb and the 5-Slide Deck



An avalanche of information is not what potential investors seek on the first meeting.

February 2, 2019 4 min read

Opinions expressed by *Entrepreneur* contributors are their own.

All startups agree on one thing: They need more money. Over the past decade we've worked with many startups. Even though we offer three decades of hard knocks business experience and a ton of contacts, what do you think is the first thing they want from us? You guessed it, money!

They typically ask for an NDA right off the bat, then present us with over 1,000 words of copy, and a 30+ slide deck. They try to anticipate as many questions as they can in advance and they go into extensive detail on how and why their solution is

what the world needs.

Although we appreciate the time involved preparing all this documentation, we are almost discouraged by the sheer time commitment we have to make before we have determined if we're interested. It forces us to drag our heads through a lot of information that we may not even be looking for. The sheer size of the presentation also discourages us from sending it around to folks in our network.

Related: 13 Tips on How to Deliver a Pitch Investors Simply Can't Turn Down

We think this "over-kill" presentation style of trying to "head off objections at the pass" can be counter-productive to the real goal of quickly identifying the parties who are already looking for solutions like yours. Save the details for later, *after* they have asked for more information. When it comes to soliciting funds, we suggest a more practical initial approach that will get read, allow others to quickly become interested (or not), and encourage them to share your pitch with others.

The biggest problem you face is not so much raising the funds, it's getting the potential funder to sit still for your pitch! And that's why we believe in what we call the 50 Word Blurb in the Five Slide Deck. Simply, when the reader can see that the end is in sight, they are much more likely to give you their precious time.

Oh, and as far as the interest-killing NDA is concerned? Forget about it! Your goal on this initial communication is to pique their interest to the point that they ask for more. Then you can ask them for the NDA. When they see the Spartan size of your initial presentation, you're saying, "Don't worry; this won't take all night!"

The 50-Word Blurb (3 to 4 sentences)

In just a few short sentences, describe the size of the market, the problem your product uniquely solves, and, in very general terms, how you solve that problem, and what benefits your solution delivers.

The 5-Slide Deck

After many years of viewing hundreds of decks, we offer some basic best practices that have been proven to be most effective. First, keep your text uniform. We recommend a non-serif font such as Arial or Calibri. There's a good reason why the road signs use this font – it's easy to read!

Second, keep your font size no smaller than 18 (24 is ideal). Third, don't use more than three or four bullets on the slide with simple graphics surrounded by plenty of white space. Three bullet points to the left of your graphic is ideal. Lastly, use the professional and calming background color of "Twitter" blue.

Slide 1: Describe the problem (and/or the current pain it causes)

Slide 2: Describe the size of the industry and the potential opportunity

Slide 3: Describe what your solution *does,* not how it *works* (save the IP for the NDA)

Slide 4: List the main current competition and why your business model is superior

Slide 5: Make "the ask" and state the offer (let them ask for more)

Related: The 5 Best Pitch Tactics I Heard as an Angel Investor

Use the 50-Word Blurb and the 5-Slide Deck to help you quickly locate the very few, truly interested investors out there. For one thing, they will have read your pitch, and for another, they will feel more confident about passing it around to other potentially interested parties. You'll be more likely to pique their interest and get them to want to know more.

After all, isn't that what you want? Why not say less, create more interest, and reach a larger number of prospects more likely to yield the interested investor you've been seeking? First, you've got to get their attention!

https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/327330