

Pitching Novelty

Persuasive Pitches: From Awareness to Commitment

Rosalie McKersie

u3158414

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Abstract

Problems are solved with novel ideas. However, risk and uncertainty prevent the easy acceptance of these ideas. Persuasive pitching is a communication tool used to bridge the gap between the problem, its solution, and the audience who would benefit from its adoption. However, while pitching is a communication tool relevant to almost every industry, very few actually develop it as a professional skill.

The aim of this project was to develop a dynamic curriculum based in communication theory and pedagogy that could be adapted to teach persuasive pitching as a communication skill to professionals in any industry, regardless of their previous experience. This exegesis explores the theory and research behind the curriculum moving from a literature review of the relevant communication theories, into a series of case studies of similar courses, and then analyses the development of the curriculum in terms of various pedagogy and industry practices.

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Introduction

The initial goal of this research project was to design and develop a curriculum to be used alongside the emerging greenlight platform developed by Compton School and Greenlight Technologies. The platform is designed to be a collection point and sounding board for novel ideas, and as such, relies on its user's ability to coherently and persuasively pitch their ideas on the platform. The goal was to develop a curriculum that could be used with this platform to provide pitchers with the necessary skills to effectively use the platform, as outlined by the research questions below:

1. What is Pitching? What are the elements that make up a persuasive pitch?
2. How can these elements be applied by and taught to pitchers in the context of crowd-based decision-making platform?

However, over the course of the project, we determined that the most significant aspect of the curriculum was its inbuilt feedback mechanisms, and it was useful and generalisable outside the scope of the greenlight platform. The research question therefore changed to reflect this:

Research Question

What are the elements that make up a persuasive pitch, and how can these elements be applied by and taught to pitchers in the context of a feedback-based curriculum?

Theoretical Framework

Answering this question required drawing from multiple fields of study, including persuasion and communication theories, diffusion of innovation theory, decision-making, pitching, industry research and pedagogy. The research also included two case studies based on previous greenlight pilot programs run by the Compton School. These case studies were based both on informal interviews with staff member involved in the projects, and the executive reports developed at the completion of the projects.

What is Pitching?

Innovation, the creation of something novel and different, is the driving force behind change in almost all industries, markets, and fields of research. However, in order to go from idea to reality, the key benefits of a new idea, a plan for its execution, and the actions required from various stakeholders must be clearly communicated to different audiences, with different levels of experience, during different stages of the development process, with the end goal of persuading this audience to invest their time, money, or reputation, into the project. This is the purpose of a pitch; to take a key decision-making audience from a place of ignorance to a place where they are willing to act upon their support for the communicator and their idea, through the use of effective, persuasive communication (Steel, 2007).

Pitching an idea is always done with some end goal in mind, whether it be with the intention of gaining a partner, investment of resources, or adoption of the idea (Rogers, 2003; Steel, 2007). The goal of pitching, therefore, is to persuade the relevant audience that this idea is a worthwhile investment of their attention. However, when it comes to novelty the lack of existing evidence of success that typically underlies investment decisions makes this persuasive effort much more difficult (Rogers, 2003). Instead, investment in novelty is based on subjective evaluations of potential, determined almost entirely by what message is communicated to the audience, and how persuasively it is communicated (Falchetti et al., 2022). In addition to the difficulty of introducing novel ideas, individuals will require different levels of information and persuasion, depending on the level of investment and the action that is being asked of them. An effective pitch must take all these elements into account and adapt to meet the communication requirements of each situation. The curriculum was developed to guide students through the challenges of building a persuasive pitch for a novel idea.

Persuasive Communication

What is Persuasion

Pitching is, fundamentally, an act of persuasion. Persuasion is a communication process in which communicators use messages to try to convince an audience to make some form of attitude or behaviour change (Perloff, 2010). The audience receives this information, and their attention to, understanding of and interest in the message will affect the impact the persuasive message has on them (Perloff, 2010). The greater the impact of the persuasive message, the more likely it is to lead to attitude change.

Attitudes are learned emotional evaluations that influence behaviour (Perloff, 2010). They are typically based on cognitive knowledge, emotional reactions, or behavioural experience and form when individuals process an attitude object and evaluate it through the lens of their emotional response, values, and beliefs (Fennis & Strobe, 2020; Perloff, 2010). The effect an attitude will have on an individual's behaviour, and how receptive to persuasion this attitude will be is referred to as attitude strength. Identifying weak attitudes that may be open to change is an important skill for persuasive communicators, however, encouraging the formation of strong positive attitudes from the introduction of a pitch is a much stronger approach to persuasive communication (Fennis & Strobe, 2020). Understanding how to form and shape these attitudes through persuasive communications is a key element of the curriculum.

Models of attitude-behaviour relationships show that while attitudes can be used to predict behaviour in standard circumstances, factors such as attitude strength, social pressure, and the ability to recall the attitude object can affect the impact of the influence of attitude on behaviour (Perloff, 2010). Effective persuasive messages in pitches encourage the formation of strong attitudes by relaying messages that hold attention, are personally relevant to the

audience, and make rational and emotional appeals that encourage deep processing (Fennis & Strobe, 2020; Perloff, 2010).

How are Persuasive Messages Processed?

The processing of persuasive messages refers to how they are received, understood, and remembered by the audience. While there are several models that attempt to explain this communication, the dual-process theory of persuasion, and more specifically the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), are the most widely referenced and accepted models within the relevant fields of communications, psychology, and advertising and marketing (El Hedhli, & Zourrig, 2022; Kitchen et al., 2014). As the name suggests, the dual process model identifies two routes of processing that occur when audiences receive persuasive messages- a cognitive route that requires attention and active processing of the contents of the message, and a subconscious route that relies on emotional reactions, symbols, heuristics, and source effects (Fennis & Strobe, 2020; Morin & Renvoise, 2018). Its ability to explain the difference between explicit and implicit attitude change, between the stable, self-aware attitudes produced by the central route and the less stable, subconscious attitudes produced by the peripheral route respectively, is one of its main strengths when compared to other communication models (El Hedhli, & Zourrig, 2022).

Within the ELM these two processing routes are described as the central processing route, characterised by motivated, reasoned, and engaged processing of persuasive messages, and the peripheral processing route, characterised by a more passive, reactive approach to receiving persuasive messages (Frings, 2018; Perloff, 2010). The central route is activated when the message captures and holds an individual's direct attention, causing them to analyse, rationalise, and agree or disagree with the message, forming a relationship and committing it to memory (Frings, 2018; Morin & Renvoise, 2018; Petty et al., 2009). Due to this evaluation process, individuals form strong, persisting attitudes that are easily recalled

from memory and are resilient against other messages (El Hedhli, & Zourrig, 2022; Perloff, 2010). The peripheral route, however, relies on emotional cues and other heuristics directing an individual's partial attention to the persuasive message (Fennis & Strobe, 2020; Friggs, 2018). This route is especially triggered when an individual lacks the interest, involvement, or ability necessary to process a message, and while persuasive messages designed to engage the peripheral route can result in favourable immediate low-risk decisions, they do not often result in stable, long-term attitude change (El Hedhli, & Zourrig, 2022; Perloff, 2010; Petty et al; 2009).

What Makes Messages Persuasive

As previously established, the ELM states that which route is activated by the persuasive message is determined by the motivation and ability of the individual to process the message (El Hedhli, & Zourrig, 2022; Perloff, 2010; Petty et al; 2009). If the message variables that increase motivation to engage with the message are present, elaboration of the message through the central route is more likely to occur. For example, personal relevance, source trustworthiness, individual need for cognition, message framing, using multiple sources, and message unexpectedness are all message variables that increase the elaboration likelihood and trigger the central processing route (Petty et al; 2009). Similarly, if the message is constructed or presented in such a way that makes it difficult to process individuals will often rely on the peripheral cues rather than the inaccessible message content (Perloff, 2010; Petty et al; 2009). Therefore, persuasive pitches should be constructed to prioritise the features of a message that catch and hold attention, that motivate further elaboration and that ensure message organisation and clarity (Fennis & Strobe, 2020; Morin & Renvoise, 2018; Perloff, 2010; Petty et al; 2009).

Three further variables are known to have an effect on the processing of persuasive messages: source effects, message factors, and individual characteristics (Miller & Levine, 2008;

Perloff, 2010). Source effects refer to the receiving individual's perceptions of the source of the message that impact how motivated they are to elaborate on the message. Characteristics such as credibility, social power, authority, attractiveness, trustworthiness, attitudinal similarity, and likeability can act as motivation for elaboration and provide the message with a persuasive advantage (Miller & Levine, 2008). The message construction itself can also be a persuasive variable. The three major message factors are structure, content, and language. Structure refers to how the message is constructed; how many sides of the argument are explored, whether the conclusion is vague or explicit, and the order of evidence and arguments presented. Content includes the evidence and emotional narrative of the message, as well as the actual argument, message position and discrepancy, that is, the difference between the audience position and the message position. Language simply refers to the language used in the message; selecting the correct language for the correct message circumstance (Miller & Levine, 2008; Perloff, 2010). Individual characteristics are characteristics of the individual such as personality, intelligence and educational level, age and gender, etc, that can affect how an individual will receive a persuasive message (Miller & Levine, 2008). Each of these variables impact how persuasive messages are received, and should be carefully considered during the construction of a pitch.

Narrative Persuasion

According to Fletcher (2021), narrative is a technological tool developed early in human history to create answers to the existential questions of everyday life. He argues that narrative is neurological framework used to connect events, establish beginnings and endings, and process and understand emotions. In other words, narratives and stories function as a method for creating and processing meaning, and as humans we learn to engage with these stories and look for meaning in them from a very young age (Lakhani, 2005). This ability that narratives have to capture attention and impart messages strongly aligns with the goal of persuasive

messaging, and so the study of narrative persuasion has become a popular topic of study across fields such as psychology, communications, and advertising (Hamby et al., 2017; Hamby et al., 2018).

Narrative persuasion is effective because it holds attention by drawing its audience into the story, and then encourages the audience to process and remember a message (Lakhani, 2005; Hamby et al., 2018). Narrative absorption is the term used to describe the processes that capture and hold the attention of an audience, allowing them to immerse themselves in the story and emotionally and cognitively engage with the message, facilitating narrative persuasion (Hamby et al., 2018; Slater & Rouner, 2002). These processes, including emotional shifts- the emotional journeys that result from narrative engagement (Winkler et al., 2022), and transportation- the act of losing oneself in a story (van Laer et al., 2014), work to keep the audience cognitively and emotionally focused on the narrative, while subconsciously influencing them by producing strong emotional responses that have a greater effect on attitude change and message recall, and reducing their ability to produce counterarguments and negative cognitive responses (Escalas, 2013; Hamby et al., 2018; Slater & Rouner, 2002; van Laer et al., 2014; Winkler et al., 2022). Reflection is a form of post-narrative engagement, and is the second major element of narrative persuasion; as the audience attempts to understand and contextualise the message into their reality, they engage in process of interpretation and meaning construction (Glaser & Reisinger, 2021; Hamby et al., 2017; van Laer et al., 2014). This reflective process acts similarly to the central processing route in the ELM, in that it prompts critical thought, allows for a deeper processing of the persuasive message, and leads to stronger understanding, acceptance, and adherence to the message (Hamby et al., 2018; Slater & Rouner, 2002; Winkler et al., 2022). The ability to create emotional connections, capture attention and interest, and provoke deep,

subconscious processing makes narrative persuasion a key tool in the development of persuasive pitches.

Diffusion of Innovation

In order to determine the best way to communicate new ideas to audiences, it is important to first understand how new ideas spread through a social ecosystem. Diffusion of Innovation is a communication theory that examines how novelty and innovation are communicated through various communication channels, over time, among members of a social system (Mahajan & Peterson, 1985; Rogers, 2003). The theory explores the relationships between four major elements: innovation- the implementation of novelty, how this novelty is communicated through both mass media and interpersonal channels, the time frame and speed of this communication and subsequent adoption, and the social system in which the process takes place. Key aspects of this theory addressed in the curriculum include the adoption curve and adopter categories, and the innovation-decision process.

The adoption curve explores the rate at which innovation spreads through the population (Rogers, 2003). The distribution of adoption varies slightly with each social system, but generally takes the shape of an S-curve, with adoption slow at the beginning, rising rapidly as the innovation spreads through the majority and leveling off as the innovation becomes normalised (Mahajan & Peterson, 1985). Audiences can be divided into relatively stable segments along this curve that describe the rate at which members of the segment accept and adopt new innovations. Two key groups that drive early acceptance and dissemination of novelty are the innovator and early adopter groups. Individuals in these groups are more likely to be from a higher educational and socioeconomic background, experience greater social connectedness and mobility, and are more open to risk, uncertainty and seeking information than their slower to adopt peers (Rogers, 2003). Understanding what persuades

these groups and uncovering their decision-making process is an important step in developing effective pitches (Bianchi et al, 2017; Frattini et al., 2014; Saaksjarvi & Hellen, 2019) and therefore is a key theoretical element present throughout the curriculum.

Decision Making

The goal of the curriculum is to teach students to create persuasive messages that encourage audiences to adopt their innovative ideas. Adoption is the outcome of a decision-making process known by Rogers (2003) as the innovation-decision process. It describes the 5 sequential stages individuals progress through, beginning when they first discover the innovation and ending once the adoption decision become a permanent behaviour. The five stages are: 1) Knowledge- the individual learns about the existence and function of an innovation, 2) Persuasion- the individual forms an attitude towards the innovation, 3) Decision- the individual engages in adoption or rejection behaviour, 4) Implementation- individual trials the innovation and 5) Confirmation- the individual seeks reinforcement or goes back on the decision (Rogers, 2003). This decision-making process is not strictly linear, does not occur within a set timeframe and may be difficult to map to specific individuals, however, it does provide a generalised overview of the process, which can be used to identify individuals at each stage and determine what messages to deliver to them (Rogers, 2003).

This decision-making process is similar to the hierarchy of effect models of consumer decision-making popular in advertising and marketing research (Wijaya, 2012). These models explore the process of introducing messages and products to individuals and the decision-making process the individual goes through before making a behaviour change. Of the models, the most recognised and used is the AIDA model, which was developed in the early 1900's by E. St Elmo Lewis and has changed relatively little since (Polk, 2018). AIDA stands for the stages of Awareness- when the individual first becomes aware of the product/message, Interest- the individual becomes interested in understanding what is being offered to them,

Desire- the individual wants what is offered, will seek information and begins to compare life with vs without the benefits of the offered product/message, and finally, Action- the individual takes a purchase or behaviour change action either in favour of the message or exits the decision-making process (Lee & Hoffman, 2015; Polk, 2018; Wijaya, 2012). This model has formed the basis of many other hierarchy of effect models, with most keeping the main structure and adding new stages, such as conviction, communication, trial, adoption, comprehension, and satisfaction (Wijaya, 2012). While these models cannot fully describe the decision-making process of any individual, they do provide a framework for identifying how invested an audience is in a message, and how to connect with the audience at different levels of investment.

Pitching as a Process

While “The Pitch” is often seen as an isolated presentation, usually made to a room of potential supporters or investors, pitching should rather be seen as a process that starts with conception of an idea and includes every stage up to and beyond the decision and post-decision relationship with the audience (Steel, 2007). These stages can be broken down in different ways, depending on the nature of the pitch and its audiences, but generally correspond to the stages of the decision-making process outlined above (Rogers, 2003; Wijaya, 2002). A successful pitch moves through stages, beginning by generating 1) Awareness, by introducing the audience to the idea and capturing attention, developing 2) Interest, by revealing selling points to the audience and encouraging them to form an opinion, encouraging 3) Consideration, by persuasively presenting evidence that allows the audience to make a decision, leading to 4) Commitment, entering into a relationship with the audience , who has agreed to fulfil an ask from the pitch, and is expecting results. An effective pitch utilises strong persuasive techniques and communicates the appropriate information at each of these stages while maintaining a relationship with the audience (Teague et al., 2020). It is

clear, therefore, that effective pitching should be seen as a continuous process, rather than a collection of one-off presentations.

The Content of a Pitch

Alongside teaching students to develop their pitches a step in a multi-step process, this curriculum will also inform what students include in their pitches. This information, the content of the persuasive messages they will be delivering to their audience, will be highly informed by context; their industry, the wants and needs of their audience, what information and evidence they have available to present, and how they are presenting this information to their audience are all factors that should influence the content and delivery of individual pitches. However, there are some key points that every pitch will need to cover: who is pitching, the problem and solution at the heart of the pitch, the product or service, the plan, the ask and any current evidence (Kamps, 2020). These key points can be arranged in any order to best fit the narrative of the student's pitch, but all cover information that is vital to the audience's decision-making process (Kamps, 2020).

A pitch deck refers to the slides that accompany a traditional pitch presentation and serves as a useful tool for analysing the typical or expected content of pitches. Pitch decks are often sent to investors to accompany or precede a presentation, and serve as an introduction to the pitch, pitchers, and project. However, with investors spending an average of less than three minutes with each pitch deck they receive, developing a pitch deck that contains only the most relevant information, presented in a concise, persuasive way, is a key aspect of the pitching process (Kamps, 2022). The key sections of these reports, where investors spend the majority of their time, are the sections on the product, the business model, and if applicable, the company purpose (Kamps, 2022). They want to know what is being pitched, whether and how it will be financially sustainable and why they should trust or relate to the people involved. Other key slides include the explanation of the problem and solution, the market

breakdown, including the competition, the team, the financial position, traction and evidence of success, and the ask (Cremades, 2018; Kamps, 2022; PwC, 2021). While the specific information given in each of these sections may differ between industries and audiences, the sections broadly remain the same throughout all pitches.

Why Teach Pitching?

Case Study: Sydney Children's Foundation Greenlight Pilot

During 2020 the Sydney Children's Hospital Foundation ran a 'Greenlight Pilot' to identify, develop and rank/evaluate new paediatric research projects and to explore new ways to secure funding for these projects. The program encouraged researchers at the Westmead and Randwick Children's Hospitals to pitch their ideas in the pilot, which were voted on by a 'wise crowd' comprised largely of researchers and other stakeholders within the two hospitals; the projects were then 'shopped' to interested investors and donors. As part of the process, the Foundation retained Compton School staff to provide pitch training to the researchers. One of the key lessons of the Pilot, and the focus of this case study, is how this training influenced the way pitches of the researchers pitched their' projects.

The Greenlight Pilot Evaluation report released by the SCHF examined the effectiveness of the Pilot, through surveys and interviews with researchers and board members. The report found 82% of respondents agreed that the development of pitching skills and refining ideas through feedback were the most beneficial elements of the course, followed by the chance to spread awareness of projects through both the foundation and hospital community, the development of key communication skills, and networking opportunities both within the hospital network and with outside investors. 100% of respondents felt that the content was

just right, and 91% agreed that this course was an effective way to develop both skills and the pitches themselves. The biggest concern with the training aspect of the experience was the time commitment. 61% of participants considered the time commitment to be among their biggest challenges in the course, with many suggesting that online or other flexible delivery would have made a positive impact on their experience (McCrindle, 2022).

As part of my research, I was able to interview two of the researchers involved in the training and the pilot program. These informal interviews took place over the phone and addressed the researcher's experiences with the pilot program. Both researchers highlighted that the benefits-first approach to pitching that the program encouraged was different to how they had approached research pitching in the past, and that it offered a new framework that was useful for connecting with donors, foundation members and other non-experts, and allowed them to develop useful pitching material that could be used beyond the campaign. The feedback element of the course was highlighted by both researchers as being an important opportunity both to develop and rehearse pitches with the input of other people, as well as being able to validate that these ideas and the pitches behind them are significant and will resonate with audiences. The networking opportunities were also highlighted, with one researcher commenting on the networking opportunities created within the hospital and foundation community, and both suggesting that more opportunities to network with donors would have improved their experiences. Other suggestions to improve the course experience were the inclusion of performance training/coaching sessions for video and live presentations, and a more guided approach to the peer feedback during workshops, to ensure that all participants are comfortable giving useful feedback and criticism.

Case Study: Picture 2022- Compton School and Vista Foundation

From March to July of 2022, the Compton School and Vista Foundation ran a program called Picture for New Zealand film producers. Eight projects and twelve producers were recruited

to take part in the program, which culminated in a film pitch competition. Alongside the competition, the Compton School also ran a curriculum designed to develop the pitching skills of participants and teach them to effectively present their pitches on the greenlight platform. This curriculum consisted of 8 workshops, each led by a different industry expert, who would spend some time explaining their perspective of the film industry, before hearing and working with participants on various aspects of their pitches. At the completion of the course, the 8 teams pitched their film projects on the Greenlight/4th wall platform, where a panel of industry experts were able to follow, comment on, and vote for the projects with the highest potential for commercial success. The two winning teams with the highest votes went on to pitch at Road Test pitch competition in Sydney.

A major feature of the course was feedback. Students were regularly able to pitch their ideas to different guest lecturers, which allowed them to receive varied feedback over the course of their pitch development, and also to target different 'weak areas' of their pitches with different experts who were focused on different aspects of the pitches, helping them build a stronger pitch overall. Student feedback also highlighted that the regular pitching also helped them refine their ideas and practice and feel comfortable presenting their pitches, which was a vital part of the final live competition.

At the conclusion of the course, students were surveyed to better understand how their understanding of the 6 key topics had been developed by this curriculum. Students ranked their understanding of each topic as "not much", "the basics", "enough to get by" and "enough to feel competent" and while at the beginning of the course there was a relatively even spread across the four knowledge stages for each topic, by the completion almost all answers indicated that they knew either "enough to get by" or "enough to feel competent", highlighting the development of the students.

Student feedback has highlighted that this curriculum was incredibly helpful in filling in the gaps in their industry knowledge and provided a strong base for developing a film pitch. They felt that the timing, flexible in-person/online delivery and mix of guest lecturers with a permanent tutor/facilitator was a very effective way to present the content. Suggestions for improvements to the course included the possibility of running longer, intensive workshops, hearing from an international perspective, and setting aside time to ask and answer student questions about the subject material.

Insights from the Pilot Programs

The two case studies outlined above both involved pitching competitions run alongside some form of curriculum/workshop-based development provided to the participants by the Compton school. Though the context of each group of participants was different, with one group made up of filmmakers with some experience of this style of persuasive pitch, and the other group being medical researchers, with little to no experience with the style of persuasive/narrative pitch demanded by the platform, both programs found that participants reported that they greatly benefited from the curriculums, suggesting that there is a desire for a guided curriculum to accompany the development of a pitch, regardless of the level of experience. Discussion and feedback from participants highlighted areas of the curriculums they felt worked well and provided insights into what needed to be developed further for this version of the curriculum.

Feedback was one of the major benefits highlighted by participants in both programs. Each program gave participants the opportunity to pitch and get feedback from different experts and tutors, and this process of rehearsal and refinement was highlighted as being a key developmental feature for their pitches by participants in both courses. As such, this curriculum has been built to offer as many opportunities for feedback as practical, both from

the professionals running the course and by taking advantage of the class as a setting for group feedback.

Another key insight from these programs was the need for flexible delivery. Both groups stated that the time commitment was one of their biggest concerns. The Picture course was run as a series of workshops, occurring at a set time, which could be attended physically or digitally, whereas the SCHF course was only held as in person workshops. Both groups felt that having the ability to attend digitally was an important choice for participants who are unable to attend in person, and the Picture course highlighted that digital content has the added benefit of allowing for guest educators to take over particular lectures. Both groups also highlighted that they would have liked some asynchronous content, that allowed them to participate in the course and catch up on material at their own speed. Therefore, this curriculum was developed to include a mix of both pre-recorded lectures participants can view at their own leisure, as well as a series of workshops that can be adapted for in-person or online attendance, intended to be comprised mostly of group activities facilitated by an appointed tutor.

How Are We Teaching Pitching?

Pitching in the Hollywood Industries

When developing the teaching material for the SCHF pilot, the Compton school drew inspiration from the Hollywood style of pitching. This pitch style is characterised by audience connection and narrative over existing financial evidence, and generally relies on capturing the attention of the audience with the most relevant information first, before filling in the rest of the story (Rotcop & Shea, 2001; Yoneda, 2002). Pitches are built around the logline- a one to two sentence hook for the film that describes what it is about and why will audiences go to see it (Yoneda, 2002). By starting the pitch with the major selling point, filmmakers aim to

immediately gain and hold the attention and interest of their audience, whose interest is rewarded by the information and narrative delivered in the rest of the pitch, which covers the other important aspects of the film, including plot, genre, support, and any current progress or production material that may exist (Rotcop & Shea, 2001; Yoneda, 2002). This initial hook is the key to the Hollywood style of pitching, however, is often missing from fields that expect a more evidence-based approach, where the hook and key selling points of a pitch can be buried at the end of a data presentation. This was one of the major areas the Compton school sought to address with the pilot program at the Sydney Children's Hospitals.

Pitching in Tech Sector Context

Important insight for effective ways to teach innovation and the communication of novelty can be drawn from the tech sector, particularly the entrepreneur/ start-up scene. Curriculums in this environment typically exist as some form of Venture Creation Program- where students develop a new venture as the focus of the course, an Incubator- designed to support and further develop early-stage ventures with appropriate coaching, networking and resources, or an Accelerator- designed to support and launch late-stage ventures through access to investor networks, funding, mentors and management resources (Isabelle, 2013; Lukosiute et al., 2019; Smith et al., 2022). Although the specific content, materials and networks provided in each type of curriculum differ depending on the specific needs of the venture stage they accommodate, at their core, these courses, like the curriculum designed in this project, are designed to connect people with ideas to the resources they need to make these ideas happen.

Entrepreneurial education emphasises learning through experience, with the venture creation/development process representing a major aspect of the curriculum (Edelman et al., 2008; Jones et al., 2021). This learning-thought-doing approach means that, alongside the obvious benefit of working on their current ventures, entrepreneurial students are able to

develop the key professional and personal skills needed to succeed in not only their current venture, but in many future opportunities (Smith et al, 2022). These key skills include communication and persuasion, critical thinking and risk-assessment, social networking, problem-solving, creativity, and negotiation (Kirby, 2004). Successful entrepreneurial curriculums are designed to give students the theoretical tools they need to launch/develop their venture, encourage self-directed learning, develop emotional intelligence, problem solving, risk tolerance and resilience, and provide access to practical resources such as funds, materials and networks that are necessary in venture creation (Blass, 2018; Kirby, 2004). In order to facilitate this style of learning, the instructor involved in the course should be encouraged to take on the role of a mentor or supervisor, guiding students and facilitating their learning experience, rather than taking on a more traditional teaching role (Neck & Corbett, 2018).

Adult Education: A Dynamic Curriculum

One of the key difficulties associated with developing a dynamic curriculum that can be adapted for use across different industries is the variation in the existing skill and knowledge of students. This variation in knowledge and skill that exists within the class or cohort is a major challenge of developing curriculums for adult education that are effective able to address the needs, goals and learning styles of all individual students (Jones et al., 2014; Martínez & Muñoz, 2021). Academagogy is an emerging field of study that seeks to address the limitations in adult educational material by combining pedagogy, andragogy and heutagogy (Jones et al., 2014; Jones et al., 2019; Martínez & Muñoz, 2021). Pedagogy describes the traditional style of learning, where students are expected to meet external goals and learning is controlled by an educator (Jones et al., 2014). Andragogy is more often associated with self-directed learning, meeting internal goals and student participation in the development of learning activities, still guided by an educator (Neck & Corbett, 2018).

Heutagogy gives students the power to negotiate what and how they learn and is primarily controlled by the learner rather than the instructor (Agonács & Matos, 2019). By combining the approaches of all three, academagogy facilitates the creation of flexible, adaptable curriculums that are able to adjust their content, level of educator involvement and learning outcomes based on the current and developing skills and needs of their students (Jones et al., 2014; Jones et al., 2019; Martínez & Muñoz, 2021; Neck & Corbett, 2018).

Conclusion

Persuasive pitching is a skill that applies to anyone with the need to pitch a novel idea, however, it is rarely taught to those outside of the business start-up or creative industries, and even within these industries there is often room for personal skill development (Steel, 2007, Kirby, 2004). This curriculum was developed based on the feedback and insights generated from earlier attempts at a similar program run with both the SCHF Greenlight Pilot and the Picture 2022 competition. According to these insights, a dynamic curriculum was developed; a curriculum which prioritises rehearsal and feedback of pitches, accommodates flexible learning schedules and is able to adapt to the needs of the current cohort. The curriculum and exegesis have answered the research question in uncovering the elements that make up a persuasive pitch and incorporating them into a curriculum. Future applications and the next logical stage for this research would involve testing and adapting the curriculum in live course settings.

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Pitching Novelty Curriculum

Introduction

Persuasive Pitching is a vital communication skill for anyone who finds themselves in the position of developing and building support for a new idea or innovation in any industry. The purpose of this curriculum is to enable students to build support for their ideas by developing strong persuasive pitches. Students are led through the stages of the pitching process, and given opportunities to develop, present and receive feedback on their pitch at each of these stages, completing the course not only with the theoretical knowledge of how to pitch, but with a fully developed pitch for their project.

Core Ideas

1. *What's the "Big Idea"?* This course is about stripping away the layers of a project to get to the key idea at its centre, and then building a persuasive story around this "Big Idea"
2. *Practice makes Perfect:* Practice, rehearsal and feedback are key to the development of persuasive pitches and confident presenters. This curriculum is designed to take advantage of as many opportunities for practice and feedback as is practical.
3. *There is no single blueprint:* Every Industry, Every Cohort, Every Pitch requires a different approach. As such, this curriculum will be dynamic, easily adapted to the needs of each new cohort and will continually evolve through development and feedback.

Students

This course was designed for professionals with a novel idea that would struggle to gain support through the traditional funding/ backing channels. These professionals are likely to come from a range of industry backgrounds and have varying levels of experience when it comes to pitching ideas. As such, this curriculum is designed to consider the needs of its current cohort of students, with lecture material and workshops designed to be adapted to the needs of the current class.

Course Outline

This course covers seven major models that guide students through both the theoretical and practical process of developing and designing a persuasive pitch.

1. You Have an Idea, Now What?
2. Know Your Audience
3. Changing Attitudes: Awareness to Consideration
4. Pitching: Selling an Idea
5. Pitching: Telling a Story
6. Seal the Deal: Stakeholder Commitment
7. Where to Now: Maintaining Momentum and Relationships

Course Design

- This course is designed to help students develop a pitch for an idea or project, as such, students or student teams will be expected to already have some idea to pitch before starting the course.
- The course is designed to be flexible, with asynchronous online lectures and workshops that can be delivered either online or in-person.
- Rehearsal and feedback are integral aspects of the course, and students will be expected to prepare and pitch at most workshops as these will be treated as an opportunity for peer and tutor feedback.
- Students are in control of their own learning, and will get more out of the course if they invest in the lectures, feedback and readings.

Lecture Notes

- Lectures will be pre-recorded videos, ideally running for 30-45 minutes
- Pre-recorded video format allows greater flexibility in who is delivering the material, and more opportunity to reach out to a wider range of experts in various industries as guest lecturers.
- The goal is to build a bank of pre-recorded lectures for each unit, with each topic covered by multiple lecturers, allowing students to choose the lectures most relevant to their pitch and industry.

Workshop Notes

- Workshops should be conducted with between 5-8 project teams to allow adequate time for each team to present and discuss ideas.

- Constructive feedback is key and students will be guided on how to give feedback that is both honest and useful.
- Teams vs Groups: a team is a project team working on their project during the curriculum, may be an individual or multiple people. Groups are individuals in the workshops from different teams placed together to discuss and support each other facilitating peer learning.

1. Intro: You Have an Idea, Now What?

1.1 Overview

Introducing participants to the program and the platform, emphasising the need to break down their ideas, step back and approach this program from an unfamiliar angle

Breaking down the idea into its most basic state and preparing to build it back up in its most persuasive form

1.2 Learning Objectives

- Participants understand the greenlight process as accumulating support
- Participants understand where they are in the process
- Participants understand the next steps they need to take in the process
- Participants are introduced to the platform

1.3 Practical Objectives

- Participants register and set up an account with Greenlight
- Participants strip down idea to core points and contextualise the idea

1.4 Lecture Content

1.4.1 Lecture 1: *Communicating Ideas*

Slide 1: So You have an Idea

Novel, innovative ideas often struggle to gain traction. Traditional funding models including many grants often impose strict requirements and conditions that filter out many of the more inventive entrants.

Similarly, many organisations are more likely to invest in ideas they see as a safe bet rather than novel ideas that entail larger risks.

Learning how to pitch your idea, how to sell it to your audience in a persuasive way, will be a key skill necessary to building momentum and gaining traction for your idea.

Slide 2: Developing Communication Skills

Pitching is a communication skill. It is not the same as public speaking, or as being able to present information, although both are useful contributors towards pitching. Selling an idea by connecting with an audience, communicating to them the right

story, and achieving actual attitude change through this persuasive messaging, is a communication skill that is often only taught in highly specific circumstances and industries, despite being a vital skill for anyone attempting to put forth a new idea.

The goal of this curriculum is to develop pitching as a communication skill among its students. To do this, students will learn about the theory behind pitching: the process of a pitch, persuasion, how ideas spread, how decisions are made, why relationships are important, and how to develop their ideas. Alongside this, students will be working on their own projects, meeting goals each week to develop a pitch of their own.

Slide 3: *Persuasion: The Basics*

Pitching is an act of persuasion. Persuasion is a communication process in which communicators use messages to try to convince an audience to make some form of attitude or behaviour change. In order to effectively sell your idea you, the communicator, must select an effective message that must first gain the attention of your audience, will then cause them to process and consider the message, and will affect their own attitude, hopefully leading to the behaviour change of investing in your project.

Pitching is a way of delivering this message, to an audience interested in receiving it. We will explore persuasion, audience attitude change and decision making, and how to construct messages throughout the course. To begin with, you should think about what message you intend to deliver. The core message of your campaign should be relatively simple, introducing your audience to a problem, and showing them how your idea can provide the solution. This solution is the 'big idea' of your pitch, and should be the main message communicated to the audience, so start breaking down your ideas to discover what is at its heart.

Slide 4: *Course Context*

Explain the context of the course: e.g. Greenlight competition, Uni class, training/development workshop.

Who is taking the class and why. How will it be tailored to them.

How will the course be delivered? Online/in person/mixed delivery?

Slide 5: *Course Overview*

This course is structured into 7 modules, designed to work through both the theory and practical aspects of developing a pitch.

Include: Timeframe + assessable items(if any?) + deadlines. What are the expectations of the course? Are students preparing pitches for a competition? Are they preparing pitches for investors? Are there assessable items? What do students have to do each week to stay on top of the course work e.g. readings, pitch prep etc.

1.4.2 Lecture 2: Pitching; The Basics

Slide 1: *What is a Pitch?*

Define a Pitch: a pitch is usually defined as a presentation used to sell an idea or product to an audience with the potential to invest something of value.

At its centre, pitching is about delivering the right message, to the right people, at the right time, in order to change some belief or attitude and influence a decision that benefits your goal. Often, a pitch is the simplest expression of the major selling point of your project.

Slide 2: *Pitching is a Journey*

While it might be tempting to think of a pitch as a singular presentation, this course will encourage you to think of pitching as a process, where you connect with your audience at different stages, giving them different information at each step, and presenting it in an appropriate persuasive manner each time, until they have been through the stages of their own corresponding decision-making journey. Each stage is designed to push the audience to the next, until they complete the action at the end of the decision you have presented to them.

Slide 3: *Pitching Novelty*

Novel ideas present their own unique benefits and risks to be addressed during the pitching process. These types of novel pitches most often occur in entrepreneurial/venture capital scenarios, but can arise in almost any situation from research development, to new projects in the creative industries, to new policy. The key aspect of novelty is that it deals with a problem and solution combination that has

not been addressed or is relatively unknown. Lessons to learn from these pitches include:

- Personalisation- relating to the current audience- is key
- Only give the audience the information they need right now, pitching happens in stages, and they will need different information at different stages
- Tell a story- cohesive narrative pitching is more persuasive than statistic based arguments

Slide 4: *The Diffusion of Innovation*

Diffusion of Innovation is a theory describing the process through which new ideas are communicated via certain channels to the population over time. The 4 key elements of the theory are 1. the **Innovation**, 2. the **communication channels** used to reach 3. the **audience** over 4. **time**.

Adoption of innovation typically forms an s-shaped curve with slow initial adoption that gains traction over time until it reaches rapid mainstream adoption, and plateaus at market saturation.

Slide 5: *Innovators and Early Adopters*

The adoption curve broadly maps onto five categories of the audience grouped by when they are likely to adopt innovation; Innovators (2.5%), Early Adopters (13.5%), Early Majority (34%), Late Majority (34%), Laggards (16%). Over the course of your pitch, the most important of these categories to understand and target will be the innovators and early adopters.

When used for audience segmentation, adopter categories are usually explored along the characteristics of socioeconomic status, personality variables and communication behaviour. Innovators and Early adopters typically have a higher education and greater social mobility associated with higher socioeconomic status, are more open to risk and uncertainty are more empathetic, have a larger interpersonal networks, engage in more information seeking and are looked to as opinion leaders.

Optional, to included if the curriculum is being run alongside a greenlight program.

Slide 1: Fostering Novelty

Novel, innovative ideas struggle to gain traction. Traditional funding, i.e., grants, establish strict requirements and conditions that filter out many of the more inventive entrants.

The majority of industry bodies are driven by financial gain, and are far more likely to invest in ideas they see as a safe bet for a return on profit, rather than novel ideas that represent a larger risk

Greenlight was developed as a platform where these novel ideas would be allowed to develop and thrive, with no conditions for entry and no restrictions on ideas

Slide 2: The Goal

The goal of the program is to create traction behind innovative ideas through reputational and potentially financial support.

The platform is based on the wisdom of the crowd theory, and functions by giving participants the opportunity to test ideas through feedback from peers and stakeholders, allowing multiple iterations of a pitch to be developed, rehearsed and evaluated before it reaches its final audience.

Slide 3: You're here because you have an idea

Greenlight is built to showcase novel, innovative ideas. Without your ideas, there is no platform, no voting, no community. The idea you develop over the course of this program and present at its completion shapes this competition, the community, and the future of the platform.

The purpose of this program is not only to develop your ideas through repeated rehearsal and feedback, but to create a pitch for your idea that will continue to develop and grow throughout its stages until its completion

Slide 3: Room to explore

Greenlight's approach to pitching is to develop a pitch that will 'sell' to the audience. Regardless of industry or experience, this course will be focused on

drawing out the 'Big Idea' of your project, the single impact that will appeal to the audience.

This method of presenting an idea may be unfamiliar, or even feel lacking in professional evidence, but trust the creative process. (proof of creative pitching: film, advertising)

Slide 4: *The Current Competition*

Provide details about the current competition (if applicable?) including:

- Who is hosting the competition? What is their goal? What are they awarding the winners?
- Who are the voting experts? What general industry are they coming from? Are they involved with the hosts? Etc.
- What is the timeline of the competition? What are the deadlines for participant submissions? When will the voting commence/finalise/places be awarded

1.5 Workshop Content

Workshop Week 1:

Welcome to the class + Expectations + Daily itinerary 10-20 min

Exercise 1: 90 second pitch introductions 30 min

Teams have 10 minutes to prepare a 90 sec pitch introducing their team and project. Key points should include their background, the problem/ inspiration behind their project, the big idea/ solution, and current progress.

Feedback: written/ 1-5 ranking on the questions:

- How engaged were you?
- Was the problem clear?
- Was the solution clear?
- Did you feel the presenter communicated clearly?
- Did you feel the presenter was confident in their project?
- How much confidence do you have in this project right now?
- Are you interested in this project based on this pitch? (yes/no)

Exercise 2: Breaking Down the Projects (1hr 30min)

The goal of this exercise is to encourage team members to dig deeper into their project and break down the basics of the need or problem they are attempting to solve and their 'big idea' or the solution at the centre of their project.

Break up teams and mix the workshop into groups of 3 (or 4 if necessary). Each person in the group should explain the main need/problem/gap their team has identified, and their solution to this problem, taking time to discuss this process with the other people in the group, and taking notes on the feedback they are given about their project. (40min)

Teams come back together to discuss the feedback they received from peers and explore any insight gained. Suggest that they pay attention to the different ways they have each explained their idea, and how these different 'pitches' have elicited different feedback. (20min)

Bring the whole group back together to discuss any insight gained from the activity: did the groups have constructive feedback on each other's ideas, did the teams find that members had different angles to pitch from, did any team receive feedback that challenged, confirmed, or encouraged them to further explore their ideas etc. (20 min)

Exercise 3: What Do You Want From the Course (30 min)

Working as teams and individuals, have teams develop a list of goals to be achieved during the course. Consider:

- 3 key milestones for the project
- 3 key goals for the team
- 3 personal development goals for each team member

Come together and discuss some of these goals and how they may be facilitated by the course/ workshops. Consider keeping a copy of these goals in order to tailor learning content to your cohort, and to return to at the completion of the course.

Closing: (5-10min)

Briefly outline the plan for the next workshop, including any reading/ project work that should be done ahead of time.

1.6 Key References

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2. Know Your Audience

2.1 Overview

In-depth explanation of how the greenlight voting system works, what voters can see and interact with, what information they can and should be given, possibly meet the voters, or at least an overview of who they are/ where they are coming from

The importance of tailoring a pitch to meet the needs of the respective audience

2.2 Learning Objectives

- Participants are introduced to the audience involved in the competition
- Participants understand the innovation-decision process
- Participants understand the information-expectations/ wants and needs of their audience
- Participants understand adopter categories, particularly innovators/early adopters

2.3 Practical Objectives

- Participants identify the key wants/needs of their audience
- Participants identify what they need from their audience and develop wishlist
- Participants submit title, image, and tagline for feedback

2.4 Lecture Content

2.4.1 Lecture 1: Meet Your Audience

Slide 1: Wisdom of the Crowd

Greenlight's crowd-based voting system draws heavily from Surowiecki's wisdom of the crowd theory, which states that a group of well-informed individuals will almost always make a decision or judgement that is equal to or better than that of a single expert in the field.

Therefore, the Greenlight voting system is a more effective way to judge the value of novel ideas than the systems that rely on the judgement a committee or one or two "experts".

Slide 2: Sourcing a Wise Crowd

Surowiecki describes a wise crowd as a group of individuals who all have some useful information about or stake in the decision being made. According to his

theory, groups will often make better decisions than an expert. Therefore, group feedback on your ideas should be more helpful than the opinion of one expert.

However, a wise crowd relies on diversity of thought and perspective to avoid the problem of group think. Diversity of thought can be actively practiced and promoted within a group, and Bourke outlines a framework that argues for six main approaches to problems. Each of her six approaches has a different motivation, and therefore encourages a different cognitive approach to a provide, providing diversity in the group's solutions. The approaches are:

1. Outcomes: goal and objective focused approach
2. Options: possibility and exploration approach, focused on what if
3. Evidence: Facts and data driven decision making approach
4. Process: implementation driven approach, focused on how the solution will work
5. People: audience and staff focused approach, focused on who
6. Risk: planning and risk management approach, focused on what could go wrong and planning ahead

Slide 3: *Meet the Crowd*

Specific breakdown of the audience for this campaign. Include:

- What industry/ industries are they coming from?
- How were the audience members selected? Have they been part of former campaigns?
- Are any audience members tied to the host? i.e. specific donors asked to be invited?
 - Are any audience members tied to outside companies/charities/organisations?

Slide 4: *Who's Who: Key Audience members*

Briefly explain wishlist to candidates as an opportunity to make specific requests of the audience and develop relationships that can continue outside the timeframe of the campaign. Highlight key audience members who may have certain

connections/skills/resources **and** have volunteered to interact with wishlists/ or generally highlight skills/resources/connections that exist within the audience without calling out any specific audience members.

2.4.2 Lecture 2: Know Your Audience

Slide 1: *Why are they here?*

Understanding your audience is key to understanding how to develop a persuasive pitch. Understanding what motivates your audience is a key part of developing a pitch tailored to them. What motivated the audience members to engage with your pitch?

*Potentially explore answers from surveyed past voters. Could include things like professional/industry interest, financial/investor interest, relationship to charity/cause, personal interest in the field etc. Do these motivations come with different expectations/levels of investment in the project?

Slide 2: *What do they want?*

Once you understand why your audience has chosen to become involved with novel ideas, and which of the above motivations is their primary reason for being involved, understanding what they want from the projects they interact with is the next step.

Identifying both what the audience wants as an end goal of a project, and what they want in terms of their involvement is essential to developing the 'Big Idea' and the major asks of your project.

Slide 3: *What do they need to know?*

Pitching is about presenting the right audience with the right message at the right time. What the audience needs to know will develop as they become more involved with the project, but at every stage consider why and how.

Why are we telling them this? What persuasive purpose does the current information being presented serve, and does it relate to the wants/needs of the audience?

How are we presenting this information? Is the information being presented in a way that a) can be understood by the audience, but just as importantly, b) is interesting and relevant to them.

Slide 4: *What are they used to seeing?*

Cover the basics of standard pitches for the industry, highlight typical layout/format, patterns in the way information is presented and evidence standards. Emphasise that while it is important to recognise the standards of evidence and information in an industry, presentations outside the expected format are the ones that cut through the noise. Examples of creative/engaging presentations if possible

2.5 Workshop Content

Workshop Week 2:

Weekly Overview + Daily Itinerary (10-20 min)

Briefly go over the lecture topics for the week, addressing any questions the group may have and directing them to further resources if necessary.

Exercise 1: Audience needs and wants (40 min)

In groups discuss the audience for their campaigns; are they business investors, charity donors, industry experts, venture capitalists, funding bodies etc. Why do these individuals become involved with new campaigns? For financial gain, charitable outreach, project discovery. As a group, brainstorm the reasons that motivate these individuals to become your audience. (20 min)

As teams, discuss the motivations your groups came up with; these are the audience wants. Which of these wants can your project fill? What are you selling them through your pitch? This should also be tied to problem/solution of the big idea of the project as discussed in the previous week's workshops. Challenge teams to frame their big idea as an audience need. (20 min)

Exercise 2: Title, Image, Tagline (prepped week before) (70 min)

Teams prepare a Title, cover image/logo and tagline/slogan for their project during the previous week. Each team presents to the full workshop in order to receive

feedback from the group. Feedback should be written and should address the 6 frames of diversity of thinking- outcomes, options, evidence, process, people, people, risks
*guided feedback questionnaire? * (15 min)

Each team is given their feedback and time to continue refining their title, image and tagline. Encourage teams to continue pitching at each other and at instructor during this time (40 min)

Bring everyone back to pitch the latest version of their title, image and tagline, giving each group 2 minutes to explain why changes were made and how they are evolving. Provide each group with new feedback * *Questionnaire's again? Simple for timeframe* * (15 min)

Exercise 3: Wishlist (30 min)

Audience members may bring value to a project beyond the main ask through networking. In groups students discuss what gaps exist in their projects (i.e. distribution, particular skills, access to particular networks/resources) and if any of these gaps may be filled by networking with audience members. Help each other brainstorm a wishlist of tasks that could be achieved by stakeholders outside the project to be discussed with the teams.

Closing: (5-10min)

Briefly outline the plan for the next workshop, including any reading/ project work that should be done ahead of time. Over the next week students should be directed to work on a summary of their project to pitch at the next workshop.

2.6 Key References

Bourke, J. (2021). 1.2: Diversity of Approach and the six building blocks. In *Which Two Heads are Better Than One? The Extraordinary Power of Diversity of Thinking and Inclusive Leadership* (pp. 77-108). Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Surowiecki, J. (2004). Chapter 1: The Wisdom of Crowds. In *Wisdom of Crowds*. Doubleday.

3. Changing Attitudes: Awareness to Consideration

3.1 Overview

Understanding the decision-making process and the pitching process as parallel journeys.

Decision-making is based on attitude change, pitching is based on changing attitudes.

3.2 Learning Objectives

- Participants understand pitching as an ongoing, evolving process
- Participants understand attitude change at each stage of the decision-making process
- Participants understand pitching as the act of changing attitudes in their audience
- Participants are introduced to persuasion tactics used to change attitudes at each stage

3.3 Practical Objectives

- Participants develop summary of their project and submit for feedback
- Participants outline attitude change journey their pitch will require of their audience
- Participants begin to develop a pitch roadmap that outlines the stages of their pitch and the general actions to be taken at each stage

3.4 Lecture Content

3.4.1 Lecture 1: *Knowledge to Confirmation- Making Decisions*

Slide 1: How do we make decisions

Decision making is an everyday cognitive process that requires individuals to identify the problem or question being presented and analyse the choices and outcomes of each choice to determine the best action to take.

Making a good decision requires the ability to recognise what decision must be made, identify promising option, seek more information on the outcome of these options, make the decision, and follow through.

Slide 2: Innovation-Decision Process

The innovation-decision process is separated from other decision-making processes due to inherent ties between innovation and risk. The novelty and uncertainty associated with innovative ideas slightly changes an individual's decision-making process into the 5 stage process outlined in the next slides.

Slide 3: Knowledge

This stage begins when an individual learns about the innovation, either by being made aware of a need the innovation fills, or by being exposed to the innovation itself.

Once awareness of an innovation is gained, individuals will seek out three types of knowledge about the innovation: “What is it?”, “How does it work?” and “Why does it work?”. Understanding these questions will help individuals form favourable opinions at later stages in the process, however, failing to answer these questions may halt their progress in the process entirely

Slide 4: *Persuasion*

In this stage individuals form attitudes- mainly favourable or unfavourable- about the innovation. Here the individual seeks to understand the advantages and disadvantages of the innovation relative to them and will often turn to peers and their social network, rather than mass media to do so.

Slide 5: *Decision/implementation*

The decision-making stage occurs when the individuals decides whether to adopt or reject the innovation. Implementation is the following stage, after the decision has been made, where behaviour change has occurred.

During implementation, the innovation enters a trial phase, and may undergo re-invention as it is shaped to fit the individual’s needs. This greater flexibility often leads to a faster and more sustainable rate of adoption as more individuals are able to fit the innovation to their needs.

Slide 6: *Confirmation*

The uncertainty associated with innovation remains until the end of the decision process, even after the behaviour change of the implementation stage. During the confirmation stage, individuals may seek reinforcement of their decision. They want to ensure they have made the correct decision, by comparing their experience with that of peers and may change their decision based on exposure to conflicting messages.

3.4.2 Lecture 2: *Awareness to Consideration- Changing Attitudes*

(Note: Sections in italics specific to greenlight programs and may be removed if unnecessary)

Slide 1: *The Consumer Journey*

Now that you understand the stages of the innovation-decision process, it is important to look further into the attitude change that occurs at each stage, in order to provide insight into what attitude change each stage of a pitch should be attempting to elicit in your audience.

In industries that rely on generating this attitude change, such as marketing and advertising, this process is often referred to as the consumer journey, and is represented as a funnel. Awareness is the first, and largest part of the funnel, representing the easiest attitude conversion and therefore the largest potential audience, and is followed by the stages of interest, consideration and commitment, each stage becoming smaller as less of the initial audience ‘funnels’ through.

Slide 2: *Awareness*

Awareness is the first step on both the consumer journey and the innovation decision process, correlating with the knowledge stage. It is simply about introducing the audience to an idea, and the audience in turn forming an initial attitude. While at this stage of the pitch there is very little persuasion, as we are not seeking to change attitudes, it is important to form a good first impression, as this is the stage where you will likely reach the most members of the audience.

For the greenlight project specifically, awareness of your idea will be built into the platform simply by displaying your idea on the platform.

Slide 3: *Interest*

Interest follows awareness as the next stage on the consumer journey. Unlike awareness, it does not map directly to the innovation-decision process, as both the interest and consideration stages of the consumer journey funnel represent the persuasion stage of the innovation-decision process.

At the interest stage you are attempting to drive engagement with your project; to create a desire in the audience to learn more by completing an action.

In the case of the greenlight platform, the action you want your audience to take is to open your project rather than any of the other choices they are presented with. In order to do this, you will have to present a persuasive title, image and logline that captures and holds attention.

Slide 4: *Consideration*

During the consideration stage, audiences seek more information about the project, determine its alignment to their own values and goals, and weigh the pros and cons of their potential decisions. The goal of this stage of the pitch is to shift the attitude from a desire to know more to a desire to be actively involved.

At this stage with the greenlight platform, the audience has clicked through to your pitch, and you are able to control what information about the project they see. Your summary, wishlist, and video will all be critical information at this point. Try to use any evidence or information you have in creative ways that will satiate the audiences desire to know more and answer their questions without compromising the project.

Slide 5: *Commitment*

Commitment represents the smallest segment of the consumer journey funnel, and aligns with the decision stage of the innovation-decision process. The goal of this stage is commitment, or a favourable decision, from the audience, but the this will represent the smallest segment of the audience so far.

For the greenlight platform, commitment to your project is first and foremost reflected in the votes you will gain at the end of the competition, and therefore this stage may feel like the one in which you have the least amount of control. However, the desire to commit may also be expressed through the fulfilment of wishlist items, comments and follows, so interacting with audience members and forming relationships is an important aspect driving attitude change at this stage of the process.

3.5 Workshop Content

Workshop Week 3

Weekly Overview + Daily Itinerary (10-20 min)

Briefly go over the lecture topics for the week, addressing any questions the group may have and directing them to further resources if necessary.

Exercise 1: Pitch Summary (70 min)

Teams are given up to 5 minutes each to pitch the project summary they prepared over the week. The summary should address the needs/wants of the audience and the attitude change journey they will be expected to take, by highlighting the problem presented to the audience and presenting the big idea of the project as the solution to this problem. Include the chance for verbal and written feedback from all class members.

Exercise 2: Attitude Journey (40 min)

Groups discuss their understanding of the decision-making process, and the attitude change journey audiences will likely undertake during their pitch. Encourage students to think about the initial attitude their audience will likely have towards their own ideas, and how they will use their messaging and evidence to shape and change these attitudes. What will they do to foster positive attitude formation? What attitudes need to be addressed at each stage of their pitch? How will they strengthen positive attitudes at each of these stages?(20 min)

Come together as a class to discuss the attitude journey and any insights gained from the group discussion. Ensure there is a good general understanding of pitching as a process of shaping attitude.

Exercise 3: Pitch Road Map (40 min)

In teams, students should take the insights they gained from the previous exercise to begin mapping the stages of the audience attitude change and decision-making journey onto the stages of their pitch. Are they presenting the most effective information to capture attention at each stage of the pitch? Are they being interesting without giving the audience too much information in early stages, or too little in the late stages? What evidence does the team have to back up their persuasive messaging, and when would it be most effectively presented?

Closing: (5-10min)

Briefly outline the plan for the next workshop, including any reading/ project work that should be done ahead of time. Teams to prepare an initial 'first draft' pitch to present at the next workshop to use as a base for the sounding boards in week 5. Presentations should include the audience need/want, the related problem that the big idea of the campaign is solving, the audience attitude/decision journey and the evidence that teams will be presenting at each stage of this journey.

3.6 Key References

Perloff, R. M. (2010). Chapter 2 Attitudes: Definition and Structure. In *The Dynamics of Persuasion: Communication and Attitudes in the 21st Century* (4th ed) (pp40-79). Routledge.

Rogers, E. M. (2003). Chapter 5: The Innovation-Decision Process. In *Diffusion of Innovations* (5th ed) (pp. 169-218). Free Press.

4. Pitching: Selling an Idea

4.1 Overview

Now that the attitude change is understood, examine what evidence you need to make this change through persuasive communication. What will your audience expect to see, what do you currently have available and what can you source?

4.2 Learning Objectives

- Participants understand how evidence is used to changed attitudes
- Participants understand that the attitude change occurs when the audience receives the right evidence at the right stage in the decision-making process
- Participants understand evidence standards/ presentation required by their industry

4.3 Practical Objectives

- Participants develop video script based on the summary and attitude change map
- Participants organise their collected evidence into the correct stages of their attitude change map

4.4 Lecture Content

4.4.1 Lecture 1: *How to Change Attitudes*

Slide 1: *Changing Attitudes*

The last lecture looked at what attitude change happens at each stage of a pitch.

This lecture will look at what evidence you will need to present and how it can be presented in order to facilitate this attitude change.

Slide 2: *Awareness*

Title, Image, Logline. The audience begins forming their attitudes from their first impression of your pitch. You have those first few seconds to capture their attention and convince them that your pitch is interesting and relevant enough to them to hold their attention for its duration.

You will have a title, cover image and a logline or tagline to with which to make this first impression. In order to make the most of this first impression, your title, image, and logline should introduce the project, and give some indication of the problem and solution, or the background of your idea.

Slide 3: *Interest*

There are two main considerations for driving the interest in your project: 1) is your initial selling point interesting enough to hold audience attention 2) Is your project page interesting and informative enough to drive audience attitude change through to the consideration stage.

- 1) Audience attention is vital to the persuasive strength of your pitch. Your initial selling point, the hook of your pitch, should be the benefit of your project that illustrates the problem, solution, and its relevance to the audience. Again, this is the first impression the audience will get and the stronger and more informative the impression the better.
- 2) The information you present is as important as how you present it. The evidence that will influence your audience from a cognitive/ logical perspective will vary depending on the industry expectations, but the creative method of placing this evidence within a narrative will be persuasive and interesting regardless of industry. Think about overall tone and mood of the project, as well as the story you want to construct.

Slide 4: *Consideration*

Evidence is key to moving your audience from the interest stage to the consideration stage. Here you are showing them why your project will succeed, and perhaps more importantly, why it is relevant to their own motivation.

Photos, figures, predictions, and other additional information will be important to the audience in this stage, as they will be seeking as much extra information as they can find. Your pitch presentation will also play a huge role in allowing you to speak directly to your audience at this stage of your pitch, selling the benefits, evidence, and relevance in a compelling manner.

Slide 5: *Commitment*

Commitment to your project is the end goal of the attitude change process, but also the stage where you have the least opportunity to affect the attitudes, which are mostly formed by this point. Continuing to present a consistent, positive image of your team and project is one of the most important aspects of this stage, as the

focus moves away from introducing new information about your project to communicating and building relationships through interaction with the audience.

4.4.2 Lecture 2: *Source Effects: What makes evidence persuasive?*

Slide 1: *What are Source Effects?*

Audiences do not receive messages in a vacuum. They are aware that the message is coming from somewhere, that the message has a source, and that not all messages come from equally trustworthy sources. Source effects are the factors of message sources that will impact how the audience receives the message.

Therefore, source effects determine the persuasiveness of the source.

Slide 2: *Credibility*

When asking people to invest their time, reputation, and money into your project, you need to provide them with confidence. Confidence that your information is correct, confidence that the project will succeed, confidence that it will be relevant to them and confidence in your ability to oversee the project. Credibility is how you gain this confidence.

Credibility is defined as the attitude of the audience or individual towards a communicator, and is something the communicator must earn through effective communication with the audience.

Credibility has three core characteristics: expertise, trustworthiness, and goodwill. You, the communicator, should have some knowledge or ability your audience doesn't, and in the case of a pitch, you should be so familiar with your knowledge that you are able to present yourself as an expert on your pitch. Your audience is coming to you for information, especially in the later stages of your pitch, to be perceived as a credible source you should be able to provide this information.

The audience also needs to be able to trust this information. Integrity, honesty, and safety are important characteristics for the communicator, especially when it comes to building relationships with the audience. Goodwill also factors into the relationship building, as the audience is far more likely to trust, and therefore listen to and be persuaded by, a communicator who has their interests in mind, and has considered how their project relates to the goals of their audience.

Slide 3: *Authority vs Expertise*

The ability to convey authority can often have a very persuasive effect.

Authoritative communicators are able to inspire compliance and obedience in their audiences, as the audience seeks to gain approval or avoid punishment. This persuasive force often exists because the communicator holds some position of power, usually social or financial, over their audience. For example, Politicians and corporations often present their persuasive messages using authority as the major persuasive technique.

However, this style of persuasion typically works best when the communicator is in a position of power over the audience and may not be the best approach for a pitch, where the communicator is instead in the position of asking for something from an audience. Rather than relying on a position of power, pitchers should take advantage of their own status as experts of their projects. Expertise can have a similar persuasive effect as authority, but instead of coming from a place of social or financial power, the communicator is able to present themselves as more knowledgeable than their audience, ensuring the audience relies on them for information and answers regarding the project.

Slide 4: *Similarity and Likeability*

Similarity between communicator and audience can facilitate the transmission of persuasive messages. An audience is more likely to relate to a pitcher they feel shares the same values and beliefs, and if these values and beliefs are relevant to the message, this may lend credibility to the pitcher and their project. Drawing attention to the ways you are similar to your audience, shared experiences, shared attitudes, shared values, can help build an emotional connection. However, leaning too far into this persona can harm your persuasiveness, especially if highlighting your similarity with the audience undermines your position as an expert.

Likeability is another important factor to consider when presenting yourself to your audience. Simply coming across as a likeable person can help you be more persuasive by ensuring your message is received with positive feelings, putting your audience in a good mood, and therefore making it more likely they will remember your pitch positively, and making it easier to form relationships with your audience.

4.4.3 Lecture 3: *Presenting evidence: How to vs How not to*

This lecture should include examples of well-presented evidence at each stage of the pitching process, as well as examples of pitches that could be presented better, with examples of these improvements. These examples should come from various industries, would ideally be a mix of green-light and non-greenlight based pitches.

4.5 Workshop Content

Workshop Week 4

Weekly Overview + Daily Itinerary (10min)

Briefly go over the lecture topics for the week, addressing any questions the group may have and directing them to further resources if necessary.

Exercise 1: Pitch Practice (110min)

Teams to present an initial 'first draft' pitch to use as a base for the sounding boards in week 5. Presentations should include the audience need/want, the related problem that the big idea of the campaign is solving, the audience attitude/decision journey and the evidence that teams will be presenting at each stage of this journey.

Exercise 2: Presenting Evidence (45 min)

Teams work on how they are presenting evidence for their pitch. Is everything going to exist in a single slide deck for audiences to view? Are they constructing a website? Filming a short pitch video? What do they have outside of a presentation where they can direct an interested individual to find out more information? (Is anything required by the program itself? If so, include here.)

Closing: (5-10min)

Briefly outline the plan for the next workshop, including any reading/ project work that should be done ahead of time. Next week is sounding boards, where teams will receive one on one sessions with instructors to further develop late-stage pitches.

4.6 Key References

Schauer, F. (2022). *The Proof: Uses of Evidence in Law, Politics, and Everything Else*. Harvard University Press.

5. Pitching: Telling a Story

5.1 Overview

Emotional appeal: how can you connect the logical evidence into a persuasive story that fits the identity of your idea

5.2 Learning Objectives

- Participants are introduced to the concepts of persuasion; pitch identity and personal credibility
- Participants understand how to present evidence in a persuasive way
- Participants understand how to create an emotional story throughout their pitch

5.3 Practical Objectives

- Participants share video pitch and general development progress in one-on-one workshop
- Participants develop a consistent pitch identity
- Participants connect evidence and attitude change stages into an emotional story that fits with the overall personality/identity of the pitch

5.4 Lecture Content

5.4.1 Lecture 1: *Narrative Persuasion: Building Emotional Connections through Storytelling*

Slide 1: *What is Narrative Persuasion?*

Narrative Persuasion is an approach to persuasion that focuses on engaging the audience on a personal, emotional level. Messages communicated to the audience through effective narratives often have the benefits of a higher level of audience interest, greater memory recall, stronger emotional responses, and greater personal relevance, therefore having a stronger impact on attitude change than messages communicated entirely through evidence.

Creating a persuasive narrative for your pitch allows your team to explain and justify past actions, examine your current state, and explore future possibilities all while building relationships with your audience, and more importantly, building a relationship between your audience and your project. Narrative persuasion allows you to tell your audience a story about why they, personally, should care about your project.

Slide 2: *Emotional Connection*

Storytelling is a huge part of being human. As children we learn to pay attention to, process and learn from stories. Narrative Persuasion draws on the ability stories have to capture the attention of audience, to emotionally connect with them and to deliver a message for them to process.

How you emotionally connect to your audience depends on what emotions you are trying to evoke from them. The emotional journey of your pitch should relate to both the audience, and to your central idea. Furthermore, this emotional journey should in fact be a journey. Your audience should experience more than one emotion, and the transitions should affect their attitude change. One effective emotional journey used in narrative pitching is to introduce your audience to a negative emotion, an emotion they wish to avoid and to fix, and then lead your audience into a more powerful positive emotion, providing them with an uplifting experience and leaving them feeling more positively towards you than before. This can be done through the simple narrative structure of introducing the audience to a highly personalised problem, and walking them through a positive, exciting solution in which their role is clearly defined.

Slide 3: *Using Evidence to Construct a Story*

Narrative persuasion gives you the freedom to pitch your idea outside of the structure of a typical report. Instead of going through the paces of a standard presentation, narrative persuasion allows you to start with the most convincing piece of evidence, or the hook, and tell the rest of the story from there. Your hook might be a particularly novel research insight, a breakthrough into a new market, a benefit that solves a long-standing problem, a unique selling point that places you ahead of competitors, or anything else that would immediately grab the attention of your audience and give them a reason to care about your pitch.

From the hook, your narrative can go multiple places, depending on what best fits your hook and the emotional journey you are attempting to bring your audience on. Each stage of the narrative should continue to highlight the areas of your pitch that will be most interesting to the audience but should remain cohesive and relevant to the narrative that started with the hook. This narrative should be designed to grab

attention and continue to build the interest of the audience, so that they are still emotionally invested when it comes to the final ask.

Slide 4: *What type of Story are you Telling?*

The final aspect of building an effective narrative pitch is tying everything together and developing and maintaining an appropriate tone for your story. You should ensure that the emotional journey you intend to take your audience on compliments the narrative that moves the audience through the evidence from hook to final ask, and that the tone of the pitch is consistent throughout. Think carefully about your use of metaphor, anecdotes, imagery and language, and the mood and emotional response it is likely to create.

Remember, while crafting your story, that the end goal is to persuade your audience to take a specific action. It is easy to get caught up in the story, however, your narrative is only useful to your pitch if it is able to drive behaviour. In order to do this, your ask should be the resolution behind the narrative. The hook captures your audience's attention, the emotional journey encourages them to invest in the pitch, and the ask provides the opportunity to act on this investment.

Slide 5: *How to Pitch through Storytelling*

Include good examples of narrative pitches and discuss what makes them effective.

5.4.2 Lecture 2: *Finishing Touches: Perfecting the Pitch*

Slide 1: *From Good to Great: Polishing your Pitch*

Once you have finished assembling your pitch, practicing, and refining your presentation will help take it from good to great. Practicing your pitch before the presentation is not only an important process for finding any weaknesses in the pitch but will also improve your own confidence and familiarity with the material. Presentation skills, including the ability to appear knowledgeable and well-rehearsed, as being well-versed enough in your own project to answer audience questions, can make or break a presentation, and are often one of the deciding factors that sets you apart from your competition.

Slide 2: *Your Pitching Persona*

In the previous topic we talked about source effects and how presenting yourself in certain ways can impact your persuasiveness as a pitcher. Whilst people naturally tend to approach persuasion in the way that naturally fits with their personality, this may not always be the most consistent approach with the story you are trying to tell. Developing a persona involves thinking carefully about these source effects and selecting those which will enhance your persuasive message. However, this persona should not feel unnatural or fake, as this is one of the fastest ways to lose your credibility and emotional connection with your audience. Practicing this persona is important, so that you are able to implement these persuasive techniques naturally and effectively as part of your pitching performance.

Slide 3: *Consistency is Key*

All elements of your pitch should be recognisable to your audience, and consistency in tone, voice, imagery, and branding are all important aspects of this. Attention to detail at this level will help enhance credibility, making your pitch seem more professional and well-prepared. Developing a consistent pitch identity is also a key element in building relationships with your audience, as consistency may act as a heuristic tool for remembering your pitch. The audience will find it much easier to remember and recall information about your pitch if that information consistently feels like part of the same story

Slide 4: *Leave Them Wanting More*

Remember that the goal of your presentation is create interest and drive consideration- you will not have the opportunity to inform your audience of every aspect of your project. They will not see all of your evidence, or previous work or even current progress in the initial presentation. Overloading the audience with too much information can interfere with the decision-making process, as the individual becomes overloaded with information that they are unable to process, and simply avoids the decision.

Rather than trying to include all your persuasive evidence, your presentation should include the minimum amount necessary to tell the narrative outlined in the

previous lecture. However, the rest of your evidence is still important, and can be included in a leave-behind document for the key individuals in the audience. This leave-behind document can be as creative as your presentation but is able to cover much more information because the pitch presentation has already done the work to get the audience interested in the project; typically, they will turn to the leave behind document as they enter the later stages of the decision-making process and are actively seeking more information.

Slide 5: *What to Leave Behind*

Include examples of leave behind documents, including discussions about structure and content and how these expectations may be different across industries.

5.5 Workshop Content

Workshop Week 5

Sounding Boards

One on one sessions with instructors to identify strengths and weaknesses with the pitch. Focusing on tying the existing evidence, big idea and audience needs into a cohesive narrative that resonates emotionally with both the problem and solution the team is presenting, and with the team and audience personality/identity.

Developmental Workshops

A series of hour/hour and a half long workshops focused on developing the skills the class feels less confident in. Voluntary participation for students, depending on what skills they seek to improve. Consider public speaking, improv, storytelling, basic slide/web design, writing, etc

5.6 Key References

Fletcher, A. (2021). The Lost Technology. In *Wonderworks: Literary Invention and the Science of Stories*. Swift Press.

Lakhani, D. (2005). Chapter 5. Storytelling. In *Persuasion: the art of getting what you want* (pp.46-64). Wiley.

Kamps. (2020). Chapter 17: The Take Home Deck. In *Pitch perfect: raising capital for your startup* (pp. 79-81). APRESS. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4842-6065-4>

6. Seal the Deal: Stakeholder Commitment

6.1 Overview

Final stage of a pitch: commitment. Like every other aspect of a pitch, commitment comes in stages, and initial commitment may be anything from partial funding to industry support, project feedback, or simply the promise of further meetings.

6.2 Learning Objectives

- Participants understand why commitments are made, changed or revoked
- Participants understand how to engage with stakeholders, both on an individual level and as a group

6.3 Practical Objectives

- Participants finalise all aspects of presentation
- Participants present their pitch to classmates and engage in feedback

6.4 Lecture Content

6.4.1 Lecture 1: *From Audience to Stakeholders: how to develop and keep audience commitment*

Slide 1: *Audience vs Stakeholder: becoming part of the project*

Throughout the past lectures we have referred to the crowd receiving your communication as the audience. This is because, up until this point, they have been acting as receivers concerned with their own understanding of the message and attitude change. However, at the commitment stage, we are asking these individuals to transition away from the more passive role of audience to the active role of stakeholder.

As the name implies, a stakeholder is an individual who has a stake in your project. It is important to distinguish stakeholders from audience members, as they will play a more active role in your project, and therefore represent a more valuable segment of the overall audience.

Slide 2: *Commitment: Why do individuals become stakeholders?*

Audience members become stakeholders at the final stage: commitment, when they take some kind of positive action related to your project. At this stage, persuasive communication has been successful at driving this audience member

though all previous stages of attitude change, so that this positive attitude toward your project is now reflected in positive behaviour supporting your project.

Slide 3: Driving the final decision

While earlier stages of the decision-making process involve information gathering and analysis, the final decision to commit is driven by personal relevance. If your audience member has an interest in your project, and has found more information through the consideration stage, their final question is likely to be “What’s in it for me?” or “Why should I care?”.

Understanding your audience and having the ability to form an emotional narrative around your project allows you to answer these questions and draw them in on a much more personal level, driving them towards this commitment stage.

Knowing your audience and understanding how to form this personal connection with them will also help in later stages of your pitch, as you begin to expose your project to investors. Rather than pitching to a wide audience, as you have experienced with this program, it is likely you will begin to experience more one-on-one or smaller group meetings, where forming a quick, strong connection can help you stand out from your competition.

Slide 4: No takebacks: managing long-term commitment

Forming personal connections between your stakeholders and the project is a key factor in retaining the support of said stakeholders. According to the innovation decision making process, the individual continues to seek information, to confirm and reinforce their decision even after the decision has been made. Word of mouth and social networks are extremely important here, as your stakeholders are likely to value each other’s opinion of your project as much as their own. The most important step you can take to manage this is to build strong relationships with your stakeholders, making sure your interactions are timely, relevant, and positive.

6.5 Workshop Content

Workshop Week 6

Weekly Overview + Daily Itinerary (10-20 min)

Briefly go over the lecture topics for the week, addressing any questions the group may have and directing them to further resources if necessary.

Exercise 1: The Pitch

After taking on feedback from previous weeks workshops and sounding boards, teams present a 'final' version of their pitch. This should be a practice run of the pitch they will run for the competition/ end event and should include any slides, props, or demonstrations they intend to include on the day. Final chance for feedback, verbal only, being mindful of the scope of changes that can be made at this stage.

Exercise 2: Group Feedback

Use the time left in the workshop for teams to review and give feedback on each other's materials, pitches and evidence, e.g. websites, videos, prototypes, photos, and other forms of evidence. Treated as a last chance for peer feedback within the program, and a chance to explore what everyone has been working on.

Closing: (5-10min)

Briefly outline the plan for the next workshop, including any reading/ project work that should be done ahead of time.

6.6 Key References

Rogers, E. M. (2003). Chapter 8: Diffusion Networks. In *Diffusion of Innovations* (5th ed) (pp. 300-364). Free Press.

7. Where to Now: Maintaining Momentum and Relationships

7.1 Overview

7.2 Learning Objectives

- Participants understand what is expected of them after the competition is completed
- Participants understand how to maintain the support and networks gained through this course
- Participants understand how to leverage momentum gained through the campaign into next steps

7.3 Practical Objectives

- Participants give and receive feedback on the development of their idea, their experience, and the course
- Participants outline their next steps in the development of their project and how they will achieve them
- Participants outline how they will maintain their relationships outside of the program

7.4 Lecture Content

7.4.1 Lecture 1: *What lies Ahead?*

Slide 1: *Where did we Start?*

Brief review of the course, highlighting key topics and workshops. Encourage students to go back to their earliest titles, loglines and pitches, and reflect on the changes made over the course of the program.

Slide 2: *What Have we Gained?*

Encourage students to reflect on what they have gained through the program, including:

- Developing the narrative, selling points and ‘big idea’ of their project
- Developing pitching/presenting skills applicable to this and future projects
- Developing a digital pitching resource/record/archive for their project
- Creating a video pitch resource for their project
- Building a network of peers willing to support each other’s projects
- Building relationships with a network of experts willing to offer reputational support, and potentially other resources

- Awareness, exposure, and some measure of commitment to their projects from both experts and potentially the hosts of the platform

Slide 3: *Who do we Know?*

Further explore the networks built during the competition. Encourage students to consider who among their peers and the expert audience they will be keeping in touch with. Highlight any important contacts from the hosting body, or any interested individuals with whom further contact should be pursued.

Slide 4: *Where can we Go?*

What are the next steps for your project? How will you maintain momentum? Each situation will be unique, but for every project it is important to take advantage of and keep building upon the momentum you have already gained over the course of the program.

Highlight upcoming opportunities and encourage students to make a short-term plan for their next steps to maintain and grow their project's momentum.

7.4.2 Lecture 2: *Staying in Touch*

Slide 1: *Maintaining Relationships*

Over the course of this program you have built a number of strong, supportive relationships; with peers, experts and potentially with investors interested in your project. Each of these relationships has its own benefits and obligations, and a large factor of maintaining the momentum of your project is how you treat these relationships now that the program is finished.

Slide 2: *Responsibilities and Obligations*

Classmates: although you technically have no obligation to your classmates now that the course is over, here you have developed a strong bond as peers, who are familiar both with each other's projects, and with the process of pitching you will all continue to pursue. Continue to take advantage of this network by updating and supporting each other through your own journeys

Expert Audience: a number of the experts in the audience have shown commitment to your project, through their follows and votes. This interaction represents a reputational stake in your work, which can be a powerful piece of evidence going forward. Maintain and grow these relationships by continuing to update those who have shown their support, and be aware of any opportunities or connections these relationships may offer.

Investors: If you have been able to develop relationships with investors, the responsibilities and obligations towards them will be far more intensive than what is laid out for the previous two groups, and will likely be determined privately between you and the investing party. However, clear communication is key, and understanding their expectations around communication, and planning to meet these expectations, will help to develop and maintain a strong relationship.

Slide 3: *Updates: When, What and Why*

Updating your network is an important part of maintaining your relationships. Your pitch on the greenlight platform will continue to exist as an archive, and is a convenient way to keep in touch. To ensure updates are effective, you should consider when you are updating your audience, what the update is, and why they would need to know.

When: when are updates necessary? Are you working on a set schedule, i.e. are you updating stakeholders weekly/monthly? Or are you updating the audience when certain milestones are reached? When you communicate with your network will likely be determined by their involvement in the project, but it is good practice to be clear about when they should expect updates, and try to stick to this schedule.

What: what are you telling your network? How in-depth are your updates? Again, this will likely depend on their involvement and the importance of the update, but is the communication summed up in an update post, email, newsletter etc.? Or will you be reaching out to stakeholders personally?

Why: why are you telling them? Is this update just a progress report? Has something major changed with the project? Has a new milestone been met or goal achieved?

Slide 4: *The Next Ask*

Maintaining strong relationships and communication within your network will benefit your project down the line. You may, and likely will, find yourself returning to your network with further asks for your project. It is important to treat this ask not as a new pitch entirely, but as a new stage in the same pitch. You already have an interested audience, aware of and committed to your project. The new ask should be treated as a new consideration/commitment stage: the audience needs new information to consider and come to a decision about the new ask, with the benefit of already being invested in your project.

Slide 5: *Building a Community*

Greenlight intends to build a lasting community of experts, creators, and investors, outside the scope of individual competitions. Your projects will be archived on the site, with the ability to update them for your audience. We encourage you to keep in touch with the community you have build here and, stay in touch as it continues to grow.

7.5 Workshop Content

Workshop Week 7

This is the final workshop of the course, intended to take place after the competition/pitch presentations as a way for students to debrief, reflect and get feedback on their presentations.

Exercise 1: Pitch Reflections and Feedback

Relatively unstructured whole class discussion surrounding pitch presentations. Give each team the chance to reflect on their presentation and allow for peer feedback opportunities

Exercise 2: Where to Now

Each team discusses their next steps; what their plan moving forward is, what goals they have accomplished and what new goals they are setting and how they intend to maintain their stakeholder relationships.

Exercise 3: Course Feedback

Students are given questionnaires to provide feedback on their experience of the course. These should include whether they felt the material was useful, whether the course helped them meet their goals, whether the structure and delivery of the course suited their needs, what they would like to see improved and if they would recommend the course, why/why not.