

## Harriet Stephenson Business Plan Competition 2-Minute Pitch Outline – Recommended Components

**The “Hook”.** 1-2 sentences that catch the audience’s attention and gets them interested in what else you have to say. Use questions, a quick anecdote, poignant fact, figure, image, etc.

**VERY Brief Executive Summary.** 1-2 short sentences that capture the problem, your solution, and why you’re the one to solve it.

**Market Problem/Opportunity.** Briefly state the general market focus, size, total addressable market, and high level description of target market. Mention the magnitude and urgency of the “pain” (problem) or “gain” (opportunity).

**Market and Target Customer Definition.** Briefly describe your target customer segment(s), their profiles, a simple “use” case (if applicable), and relevant research findings.

**Your Solution.** 1-2 sentences describing your solution and how it addresses your target customers’ problem or opportunity. Include your “secret sauce”/unique value proposition/sustainable competitive advantage, traction (e.g., sales, clients, agreements, patents/IP), and your market validation.

**Current Solutions/Competition.** 1-2 sentences mentioning current competitors, substitutes, alternatives, including status quo, and how your solution is better.

**Go to Market Strategy.** 1-2 sentences on how you will reach your target customer segments.

**Your Team.** VERY briefly/1 sentence on your team’s qualifications, including key advisors, if any.

**Business Model & Financials.** 2-3 sentences on how you will make money and your key financial metrics (profitability, break-even). Paint a picture that inspires folks to invest or contribute AND that’s realistic.

**The Ask.** What you need/want them to do. Include the money needed and what you’ll do with it. Reiterate hook/closing that makes them want to follow up with you!

## Pitching Tips

- Write out your pitch first to make sure you have the key points.
- Do your homework and research.
- Show your audience why there's a problem or opportunity and how your solution best addresses it. Paint a picture, tell a brief story, and bring it alive.
- Talk to as many customers, current and/or future, as possible. Ditto for potential partners. Validate your assumptions and solution.
- Act as if you really will launch this new venture, so it seems "real" and not an academic exercise.
- If you've already launched the venture, show the audience how you will grow it and make it sustainable.
- Practice, practice, practice! Watch as many short pitches as possible – the internet has tons!
- Get excited, express passion, smile. Have fun!
- Pace yourself, slow down, articulate clearly, and loudly enough to be heard.
- Practice in a mirror and/or video recordings, and watch your hands, gestures, facial expressions, and body movements. Get feedback on them from others.
- Present to as many people as you can, including folks who are NOT friends and family. Use your coach!
- Network, network, network. This is a great opportunity for you to meet many business leaders who will want to assist you in growing your business (or your career).
- Gather your team, advisors, mentors, etc., early on (We can assist you.)
- Leverage your coach, colleagues, SU IEC Center, and other resources throughout the process!