



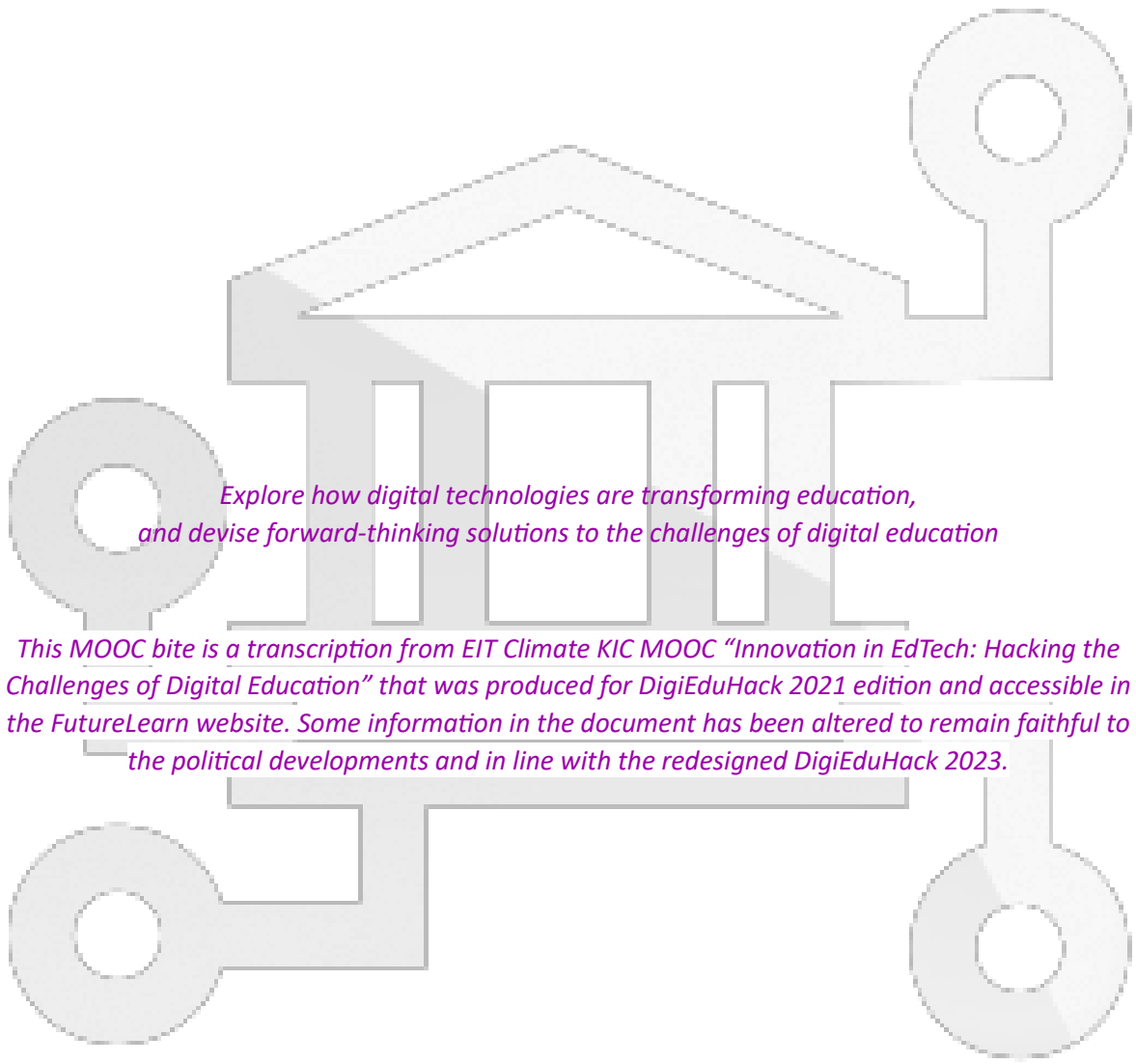
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Communicate your ideas

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*Explore how digital technologies are transforming education,
and devise forward-thinking solutions to the challenges of digital education*

This MOOC bite is a transcription from EIT Climate KIC MOOC “Innovation in EdTech: Hacking the Challenges of Digital Education” that was produced for DigiEduHack 2021 edition and accessible in the FutureLearn website. Some information in the document has been altered to remain faithful to the political developments and in line with the redesigned DigiEduHack 2023.

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One of the most important steps after developing a solution with your team in DigiEduHack, is how to efficiently communicate it. Within this document you will find explanations aiming at helping you prepare to present your solution to the judges at local level. In this document you'll learn about the importance and elements of a good presentation, several tips and tricks about how to convey one's idea in an appealing way, how to organise your pitch, etc.

1. Get Ready to Pitch

Learning to pitch is essential for people in various fields because it allows them to effectively communicate their ideas, gain support, and achieve their goals. Here are a few reasons why people should learn to pitch:

1. **Persuasive Communication:** Pitching involves conveying your message in a concise, compelling, and persuasive manner. By mastering the art of pitching, you can engage and captivate your audience, whether it's potential investors, clients, colleagues, or stakeholders.
2. **Opportunity Creation:** Pitching creates opportunities. Whether you're pitching a business idea, a project, or yourself for a job, a well-crafted pitch increases your chances of securing resources, partnerships, funding, or career advancements. It helps you stand out from the competition and seize valuable opportunities.
3. **Clarity and Focus:** Crafting a pitch requires you to distill your ideas into their core essence. This process helps you clarify your thinking, identify key points, and focus on the most impactful aspects of your message. By honing your pitch, you gain a deeper understanding of your own ideas and increase your confidence in presenting them.
4. **Networking and Relationship Building:** Pitching is a powerful tool for networking and building relationships. It allows you to articulate your value proposition, establish connections, and leave a lasting impression on potential collaborators, mentors, or clients. Effective pitching can lead to valuable connections and long-term partnerships.
5. **Personal Development:** Learning to pitch is not just about conveying information—it's also about developing your communication and presentation skills. By refining your pitch, you enhance your ability to articulate ideas, think on your feet, and adapt to different audiences. These skills are invaluable in various personal and professional situations.



Overall, learning to pitch equips individuals with the ability to articulate their ideas clearly, engage others effectively, and seize opportunities. Whether you're an entrepreneur, a professional, or an aspiring leader, mastering the art of pitching can significantly enhance your success and impact in today's competitive world.

In this document, we help you prepare to pitch your idea to the judging panel at DigiEduHack 2023.

What are the features of a great pitch?

One of the crucial activities in any hack is being able to pitch your idea to others. In this activity, we will get you started on how to prepare a pitch of your own.

To begin with, we've chosen a couple of short pitches and presentations that we hope you'll find inspiring. Watch one or both of these video clips and imagine you're in the audience. What do the presenters do well?

Clip 1

Matt Cutts: Try something new for 30 days (3:24): <https://youtu.be/JnfBXjWm7hc>

Clip 2

Sharon Wright on Dragons' Den: Slaying the Dragons (Just watch first +/- 3 minutes pitch - rest is (optional) Q&A session): <https://youtu.be/yvMIFokuRm8>

Think about and make notes about:

- How they start their pitch
- The way they tell their story
- The kind of language and words they choose
- Their body language and speech
- How prepared they are
- The passion and belief of the speakers.

What is a good pitch?



Putting together a great pitch is a skill; you have to know your business or offer really well, as well as knowing yourself. You then need to tailor your pitch to suit the needs of the audience you are pitching to. It needs to be informative, engaging and generate interest.

On the previous step, we shared two video clips and asked what you thought made the presentations effective. Here is what we thought.

Clip 1

Matt uses humour to engage the audience from the start. He says why it's a good approach by outlining benefits and giving examples.

His pace is steady and his body language relaxed. The gestures he uses (face and hands) are expressive.

Clip 2

Sharon's delivery is calm and she has clearly planned and practised.

The pitch highlights the advantages of using a demonstration during a presentation and shows how to use many persuasive techniques.

Her approach to the dragons is professional and she answers their questions calmly using facts and figures to back up her ideas.

Qualities to look for

- Here are some of the qualities you should look for in a great pitch:
- It gets you excited/hooked and...
- The pitch has a clear focus and purpose
- The speaker sticks to the central message of the pitch
- The pitch is appropriate for the audience
- The speaker delivers the pitch in an engaging way.

You'll learn more about these qualities of great pitches as you progress through this document.

To help you prepare your pitch for the hack, download the workbook below. To practice this activity we would like you to work on a pitch about yourself and what you would bring to your DigiEduHack team, for example, skills and experience.

Downloads

[Pitch Planning workbook pdf](#)

The purpose of your pitch

A pitch is a special type of presentation.

“A form of words used when trying to persuade someone to buy or accept something”

To be successful you should always start by asking yourself the question:

“What is the purpose of this pitch?”

One of the first activities is to start to make a list of all of your objectives for your pitch. What are you hoping to achieve with your pitch? It may be one or more of the common objectives shown below.

To sell your idea

How? Appeal to emotions as well as intelligence. Use persuasive language. Tell them ‘what’s in it for them’.

Get understanding

How? Make your ideas meaningful to your audience. Use language and examples they’ll understand.

Gain credibility

How? Be confident and well prepared. Support your ideas with evidence

Build a support network

How? Be approachable and build rapport



Get investment

How? Tell them the pain/problem in terms of the value your ideas brings. Think like an investor... be clear on the next step you need, for example a follow-up meeting to discuss in more detail.

For the DigiEduHack you will be pitching your idea in just few minutes, so you will probably use the **Elevator Pitch**.

The Elevator Pitch

- An elevator pitch is a brief, persuasive speech that you use to spark interest in you, your product or your business.
- A good elevator pitch should be interesting, memorable and succinct. It should last no longer than an elevator ride of +/- 2 minutes, hence the name.
- This type of pitch may be used by entrepreneurs as the executive or investor is heading up to the board room, or anytime you have a brief window of opportunity to plant or announce your idea.
- In an elevator pitch, you must be articulate and attention-grabbing in a very restricted time, so as to capture the listeners' attention and leave them thinking about your words as they leave the space – or even better: invite you into a meeting room for a longer pitch!
- Elevator pitches can be face-to-face but may also be over a video link, your phone, or form part of a presentation. And even recorded.

Watch this video for some inspiration

<https://youtu.be/VCVRgpSPSVQ>

Note: There are lots of tips for filming using your mobile phone on YouTube.

Know your audience

One of the first steps in preparing any presentation or pitch is to think about your audience.

Why do you think this is so important?

- To prepare for questions at the end
- Know how many hand-outs you need
- To communicate in a way they understand
- To personally invite them

How much do you know about your audience?

To be effective, communicate to your audience in the way they would like to be communicated to.

This chart shows some of the things you should take into consideration about your audience.



1	WHO	Check you know who will be listening to your pitch
2	EXPERTISE	Think about what their existing expertise is. What are the similarities or differences to your own expertise?
3	LANGUAGE	Where do your audience come from? Is English likely to be their first or second language?
4	GOALS	What are their needs, aspirations or targets?
5	EXPECTATIONS	What do they need and expect from you and your pitch?
6	VALUES	What ideas and standards are important to them?

Now, decide how you can use what you've learnt to communicate with your audience (to engage them and build rapport).

Your zen statement



Once you understand your audience, you can focus on your message: What are the key messages you want to communicate to them?

Key messages are the main points you want your audience to hear and remember. They create meaning and they headline the issues you want to discuss.

Imagine you interviewed your audience straight after your pitch and asked them to describe what they remember. Ideally, you

want them to repeat your key message - that might be the product, the idea, the story or the takeaway from your pitch.

It's the one thing you want them to remember.

Your Zen statement

Create a 'zen statement' that crystallises in one memorable sentence what change you, your idea/project or business are making in the world.

1. Use the Planning template to write some ideas about what your key message is.
2. Now reduce this to (original) Twitter length - find the one message that is most important and then write it in 140 characters or fewer.
3. Check for any jargon or technical terms (see the next screen for more on this).

2. Structuring your pitch

Now it's your turn to structure your own pitch.

Use the planning template to note down the main ideas, points and examples you want to include in your pitch.

- You may find it useful to put these into a mind map.
- Decide how you will organise your main points into a meaningful order.
- Arrange your main points into this order on your Planning template.
- Next, think about your next pitch – the audience, how much time you have and your purpose – and prioritise which pieces of information you will include in your pitch.
- Decide how you will organise these main points into a meaningful order, drawing on the options you explored on the previous screen.



(Tip: you can re-order the post-it notes to show the 'story' and take a photo to refer to when you come to write your script.)

Helping your audience follow the story...

Now you have a structure, take a moment to view these additional tips about words and phrases you can use to link your ideas together before you start scripting it; especially if English isn't your first language.

For example, when you want to:

- Order and sequence ideas
- Add another point to back up your idea
- Contrast ideas
- Start a new idea.

Make it meaningful to your audience!

To make sure people remember your message, you need to:



- Grab their attention
- Tell them what you're going to tell them
- Tell them
- Then tell them what you've told them
- And finish with a final take-away message or call to action.

Think about how you could use a question or short story to open your pitch. How comfortable do you feel about this?

Plan to start and finish strongly

People remember starts and endings, so once you've decided on the main content of your pitch, take some time to think of how you can open and finish your pitch strongly.

Activity

- Complete the section in your Planning template for how you might open and end your pitch.
- Script out exactly what you will say and check that this has the impact you're hoping for.

Speaking their language

Great pitches speak to the audience in a language they understand. This usually refers to the words and script you use – but sometimes you're also expected to speak in 'another language'.

Before you finish this planning stage, think about the language, examples and facts or figures you plan to use in your pitch.

Will they be easy for your audience to understand?

For example: The original iPod had a 5 gigabyte hard drive. But when Steve Jobs introduced it, he didn't talk in gigabytes. He told the audience that it holds 'a thousand songs'.

Take a look at the TED video, in the links below, for some tips on how to make your ideas accessible to others.

See also

[Melissa Marshall: Talk nerdy to me](#)

Melissa Marshall brings a message to all scientists (from non-scientists): We're fascinated by what you're doing. So tell us about it -- in a way we can understand. In just 4 minutes, she shares powerful tips on presenting complex scientific ideas to a general audience.

Capturing your audience

Your audience will hear many pitches. How can you get them interested in yours from the start?

Watch the first 10-20 seconds of this student PhD pitch and listen to how they try and grab the audience's attention.

Jamie Gallagher: 3MT Competition (3:00): <https://youtu.be/oGmLu1cOrpo>

What do you think of their methods?

They speak 'personally' to the listener and aims to spark their interest in the topic. Other ways to do this include: giving the WIIFM (What's in it for me) or giving the impression you're going to share a 'big secret' with them.

How could you use a short story to open your pitch?

Find your words

Now you know the structure, you're able to 'script' the words for your pitch. Write down what you plan to say so that you can learn and practise it.

This means you'll be able to talk to your audience rather than reading something to them or trying to make it up on the spot.

Write your script!

For this activity, we'd like you to write a draft script for your pitch. You should have already planned the story, its structure and how you will communicate to your audience. Now, this is your chance to put this preparation into action!

Write down what you plan to say so that you can learn and practise it - this means you'll be able to talk to your audience, rather than reading something to them or trying to make it up on the spot.

Structure it clearly into the three sections – open / body / close.

Choose your words carefully to develop your story:

- Keep your purpose and audience in mind
- Include stories, examples, analogies and metaphors to explain difficult or new concepts
- Stick to the point - be ruthless and cut out unnecessary detail
- Use the passion you have for your subject
- Keep it as simple as possible: less is often more!

Why write a script?

Writing a script will enable you to prepare and practise for the 'big event', and will ensure that you don't miss important points out by forgetting or overrunning on the day.



Rehearsing with a script will help you to embed what you want to say and how you want to say it - a sure way of taking away nerves.

Successful scripts are usually drafted and re-drafted and so use the community and peer reviews to help identify any aspects of your script that are not clear is a very good opportunity!



How many words?

The average person speaks at somewhere between 125 and 150 words per minute. It's always better to speak more slowly than quickly.

So if you're speaking for 3 minutes aim for +/- 350-400 words, and then check your timing again when you practise.

Analogies and metaphors

Analogies and metaphors are used constantly to help us make sense of the world we live in. They help to communicate new ideas and teach new concepts by linking the new topic to something familiar.

Analogy

"A comparison of two things based on their being alike in some way"

Example: The crust of the Earth is like a cake with four layers. The layers of the cake represent the crust, the mantle, the outer core and the inner core of the Earth.



Metaphor

"A word or phrase for one thing that is used to refer to another thing in order to show or suggest that they are similar"

Example: "He was drowning in school work" is a metaphor in which having to deal with a lot of school work is being compared to drowning in an ocean of water.

Definitions

merrian-webster.com

See also

[The Power of Words](#)

3. The power of a story

A good pitch is structured so that the ideas flow together in a meaningful and engaging way for your audience. Storytelling is a powerful way of doing this. Who doesn't like a good story?



Turning your project into a story also helps you to include the 'why' and 'how' elements into your pitch:

- Why it's important and/or useful
- How it's going to help solve this problem

This makes a much more impactful pitch than just focusing on 'what' you will do.

Organising your main points

There are usually three key elements you should include in your pitch:

- An introduction (opening)
- The main points that tell your story (middle)
- A conclusion or call to action (end).

It is often best to plan the opening and ending after you've organised your main points.

How you structure your story in the 'middle' is up to you. There are different ways you can do this, so find one that works best for you and your story.

Describe the problem and solution - PAIN and GAIN

PAIN AND GAIN

Problem/Solution or Solution/Problem: A useful way to tell your story is to outline the PAIN, the problem your idea (or your PhD/business) will tackle, and then look at how you will provide a solution.

OR

You could start by painting a picture of the solution first and how you came up with it, and then what problems and issues it will help to solve, the GAIN.



This approach is often used in sales and investment pitches.

Tell a chronological story



Another way is to tell the story of your project chronologically - through time.

This might focus on your own experience, or using a case study of a real person or event that introduces the need for the work you're doing.

Use the Rule of Three

Another approach is to focus on three main points you want your audience to remember about your key message. Steve Jobs was a master of this approach - watch any of his presentations to see this in action.

Typically, you introduce the three main points to give the 'big picture' to the audience, and then elaborate on each one with more detail and examples to build the fuller story.

Use the PIXAR film formula

No-one tells a story like Hollywood, so using the Pixar formula (think Finding Nemo) can be a good starting point if you feel creative.

This entails using the following six sentence starters and adapting them to tell the story of your project:

- Once upon a time...(setting the scene)
- Every day...(describing the current situation)
- One day...(something happens/could happen)
- Because of this...(what does this lead to)
- Because of that...(what does that lead to)
- Until finally... (what is the climax/result).

If you'd like to know more about how presenters and entrepreneurs can turn their pitch into a story, take a look at blog in the links shown below.

See also

[Forget Pitching. Tell A Story. Here's How!](#)

This article explores the single biggest problem that entrepreneurs have when it comes to pitching. Not knowing how to tell a good story. Read on for a great story, a great pitch and some stellar tips to skyrocket your pitching skills.

[The Power of Words](#)

4. Share your story



Now you have created your script, it's time to add some fine tuning to it.

Here is a self-assessment activity to help you refine it further.

- Finish drafting your script
- Use the criteria to score yourself 0 - 5 (5 is high)
- Talk to friends/colleagues and run them through what you're planning to say to get their feedback.
- Refine your script!

Completeness	The script is complete. It is of a reasonable length and includes a clear start, middle and end.
Flow	The script tells a story and key points are well defined and linked in a logical manner.
Scientific content	The scientific content, ideas, methodology and background knowledge are presented in a robust way.
Language	The words chosen and arguments presented will engage and be easy to understand by non-experts.
Impact	The overall script addresses issues and business context. And the key message or call to action will be clear to an audience.

Deliver with impact

To engage with your audience, words alone are often not enough. Your voice and body language are just as important.

Non-verbal communication

Our non-verbals are important. When we say one thing and our body language or non-verbals say something else, people tend to believe the non-verbals.

Eye contact	Making eye contact with the audience shows that you are talking to them. This will help to keep them engaged. Tip: Practice looking at an audience by slowly scanning around, just moving your head (think of a lighthouse).
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Facial Expression	Your facial expression tells a lot about how you feel: confident, nervous, happy, confused...Tip: Try practising your pitch in the mirror to make sure you're giving the impression you want to
Gestures	Using your hands and arms is a great way for you to express your ideas - especially when you are not using visual aids during a pitch or presentation. Tip: Imagine you are sitting down and explaining something to someone. You will most certainly use your hands. Try to do the same as you practise your pitch. Pick some keywords you'd like to illustrate or emphasise using your hands.
Posture	Standing in an upright, comfortable position can help you look and feel more confident. Tip: Try standing with your feet slightly apart. Then point your toes slightly outwards and feel how your shoulders go back and your head rises. This is a good posture to adopt just before your start your pitch.
Movement	You don't have to stand on one spot all through your pitch. Adding a few movements can help keep you and the audience alert as they will follow you with their eyes. Tip: Pick a couple of points in your story when you could walk towards the audience, or to each side.

Avoiding distracting habits – such as reading from the script (learn it!), playing with a pen or saying “Err” all the time.

Share your pitch



Before you give your final pitch, you should have a dress rehearsal. This gives you the opportunity to make mistakes and correct them before the final pitch.

In a hack, there is only a short period of time prepare and practice your pitch. And if you're in a team, decide who you want to take part, early on.

Practise your pitch all the way through, if possible, in front of some friends or family as

your audience. For the hack practice in front of the other team members.

Create a video clip of your practice session that you can share with someone you've got to know in the group to give you some feedback on your practice pitch, so that you can address any problems.

If you're asked to watch someone else's video, give positive and constructive feedback.

How to answer questions

Questions from the audience during a pitch or presentation can make you feel quite anxious. But if you prepare well, then you can answer even the most unexpected of questions.

Plan in advance:

Do - try and think about the sorts of questions that might be asked and think about how you would answer them.

On the day:

Do - use **STAR** to help answer questions correctly:

Stop. Think. Ask (if you need to check you understand the question). **Reply.**

- Do – try and think about the sorts of questions that might be asked and think about how you would answer them.
- Do – say if you don't know an answer. That's OK.
- Do – show respect to the person asking the question.
- Never – pretend to know an answer when you clearly don't!

