Story and Pitch

Finding the Right Messaging for Investors

Step 3 of 6 in Raising Capital Seminar Series

Presented March 20th 2025

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CAPITAL ADVISORS

Helping Technology Entrepreneurs at Two Key Milestones

GROWTH

SALE

1-5M Revenue

- Growth Consulting
- Finance Consulting
- Strategy Consulting
- Intros to Investors

2-10M Revenue

- Intros to Investors
- Series B Raise
- Debt Raise
- Strategic Investment
- Growth Equity Raise

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>5M Revenue

- Managed Sale Process to Strategics and PE
- Secondary Transactions

Meet the Presenter

Been the Entrepreneur	35+ Y	5 Exits
Been the VC	3+ Y	1 Exit
Been the Growth Advisor	15+ Y	10+ x >$10M deals
Been an Angel	20+ Y	3 Exits
Been the Investment Banker	7+ Y	$1B+ 50+ Deals

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Today's Agenda

- From Investor Targets to Investor Messaging
- Storytelling
- Pitch Deck
- Checks and Validation
- Takeaways and Next Steps

From Investor Targets to Investor Messaging

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March 20th 2025

2025 Raising Capital Webinar Series

From First 2 Seminars

- Align Capital Amount and Timeline

- Milestones Rationalize Your Raise

- Right Investors fit Your Stage

- Build Your List of Investors

- Check it Twice

- Finalize Targets

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Early Stage Funding Rounds

	Pre-Seed	Seed	Series A	Series B
Capital Raised	<$250K	$200K-$3M	$5M-$15M	$10M-$30M
Investors	Friends & Family, Angels	Friends & Family, Angels, Accelerator/Studio, Seed VC	Angels, VC, CVC	VC, CVC, PE
Use of Funds	Proof of Concept, Prototype	Product Launch, Validation	Early Growth, Sales and Marketing	Scale Up, Market Expansion

Ways People Usually Approach a Pitch Deck

Understand what is needed

Jump in and try and figure it out

They Usually Take the Blue Pill . . .

Google Search “Pitch Deck Outline” → Google Search “Sample Pitch Decks” → Fill Out Slides → Get Feedback from “Everyone” → Send to Investors

And this is not the pathway that leads to a great pitch deck ....

Biggest Process Mistakes

- Not Knowing What You are Selling
- Not Understanding Your Audience
- Lots of the Wrong Content
- Taking Advice from Wrong People

Before you get in front of an investor …

- Define Your Audience and Their Requirements
- Develop the Right Messaging for Storytelling
- Don’t create any slides until you have clear stories
- Assemble a Pitch Deck that Meets Requirements

Storytelling

Know Your Investor Audiences

Each will differ in requirements, priorities and number of decision makers.

Friends &
Family

Angel

Angel Fund

VC

Corporate VC

Let's Look Close at VC Audience

What they look for:

- The 4 T's:
  - TAM
    - Large, serviceable and obtainable addressable market opportunity
  - Tech
    - Unique and innovative "must have" offering that is not easily replicated
  - Team
    - Strong leadership and world class talent
  - Traction
    - past the market validation stage and actively acquiring customers

Who is involved:

- An interested team member to do initial discovery, usually a generalist
- Larger firms will have specialists and/or analysts
- A sponsoring Partner
- An Investment Committee for Approval

Mindset Matters

Interest

Desire

Fear

Bold

Passion

Clarity

If you meet an investor by chance …

- Don’t immediately try and pull out a pitch deck
- You have less than 90 seconds to get their ongoing interest and attention
- You need to tell a compelling story

The 3 Core Stories You Must Nail on 1st Contact

WHAT

- What is it you have and why it is so compelling . . .

WHY YOU

- Who you are and why you are the right person to lead this . . .

WHY NOW

- is the time to act on this opportunity to seize the day . . .

These are the core foundational stories that your business stands on.

Storytelling 101

- Who is the Hero?
- Who is the Villain?
- Is there a Challenge or Quest?
- How does our Hero triumph?

Stories that Build Clarity

Positioning

- "We are the only X
  that solves Y problem
  in Z unique way."

Value Proposition

- "We help
  <insert customer type> to
  <movement verb> <business driver>
  by <precise metrics amount>."
- Example:
  - We help retailers increase their online sales conversion rates up to 58% and their average order size by 25%.

Stories that Build Trust

Origin Story

- The explanation of how you came to be in this situation to deliver this to the world.

Winning Story

- Why customers choose you over the alternatives.

Outcome Story

- Case examples proving outcomes for customers.

Transformation Storytelling

People need to see/understand the ‘before’ and ‘after.’

Highlights growth or change in a positive, measurable way.

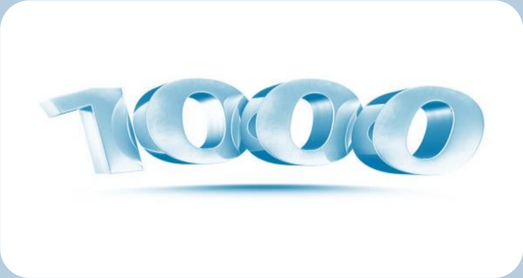
Creates a vision of a better future with this solution.

Successful Storytelling Creates Light-Bulb Moments

- A light-bulb moment is a sudden realisation, enlightenment, or inspiration. Such moments come out of the blue — almost as though someone had flicked a switch — bringing with them a dazzling burst of unexpected clarity where only a split second before there was fuzziness.

Pitch Deck

Did You Know?



Over 1000 pitch decks are created daily, just in Silicon Valley.

Investors now spend an average of fewer than 3 minutes viewing a full pitch deck according to Docusend.

It is commonly said that investors only fund 1% of pitches they receive.

Let’s talk about pitch deck outlines …

At each stage the pitch deck is different

- Pre-Seed is idea centric
- Seed is validation centric
- Series A is traction and growth centric

Depending on your tech and sector focus, the outline may need to be customized (a bit)

- Deep tech requires more depth in certain areas
- Some business have many types of milestones you need to understand

You always want to have 12 slides or less

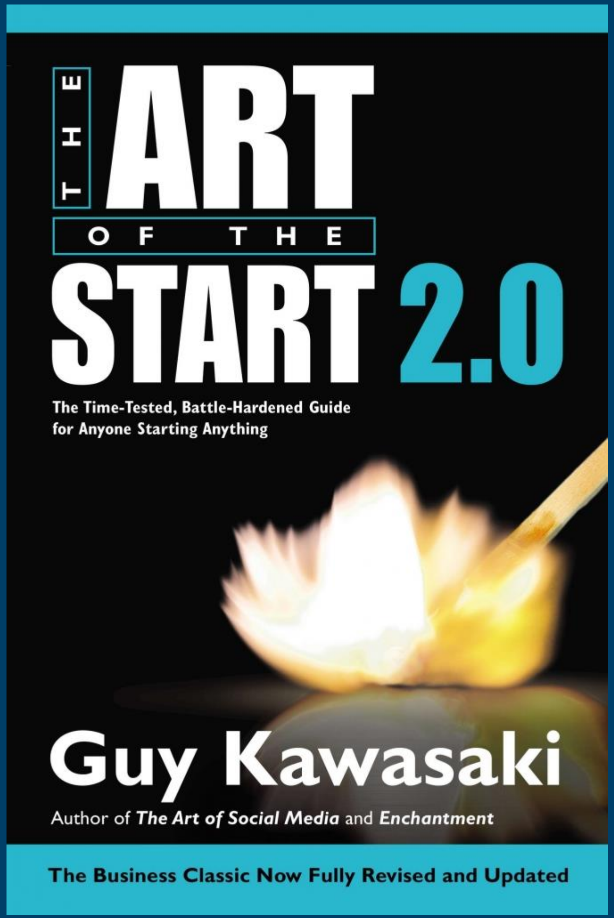
- your core pitch deck is always <12 slides
- You might shorten that to a teaser deck you are sending out
- if that leads to a more detailed presentation you can have 20 slides

The standard outlines miss an important element, a cover page

- Makes a first impression
- If emailed, this content is like the subject line of an email … will they open?
- Often the slide on the screen in zoom or in a board room before you start

Sample Seed Outline from Guy Kawasaki

- Problem
- Your solution
- Business model
- Underlying magic/technology
- Marketing and sales
- Competition
- Team
- Projections and milestones
- Status and timeline
- Summary and call to action



Sample Series A Outline from Sequioa

- Problem
- Solution
- Why Now?
- Market Size
- Competition
- Product
- Business Model
- Team
- Board/Advisors
- Financial
- Fundraising

Before You Fill Out ANY Slides …

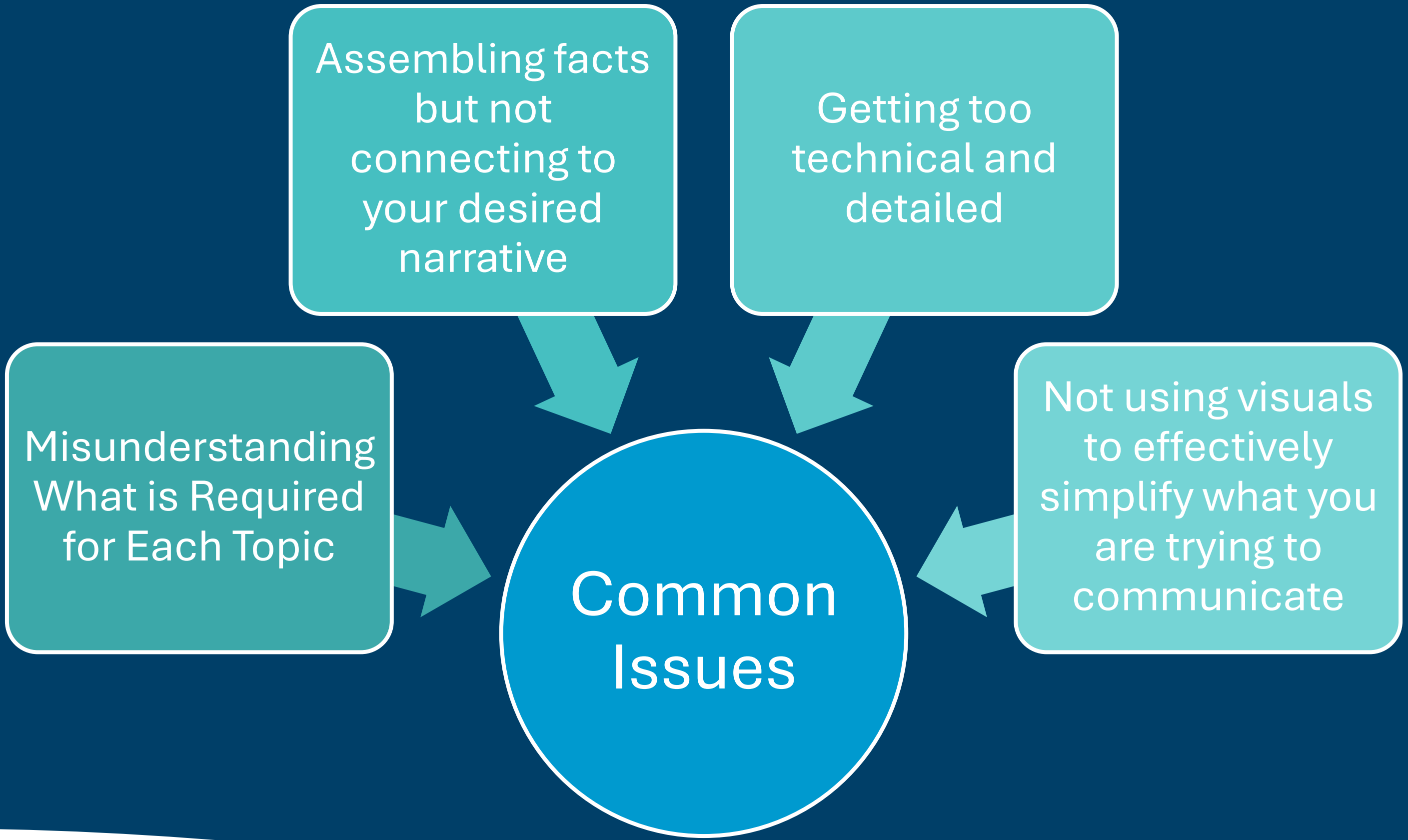
UNDERSTAND

- This is not a customer pitch
- This will be simple enough to scan quickly

DO THESE FIRST

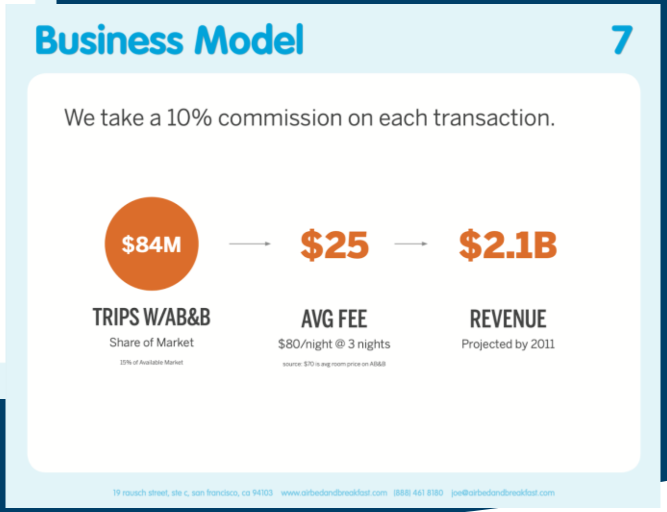
- Write a simple teaser email first to distill the overall essence of your pitch
- Have your core foundational stories documented
- Convert the outline to the key questions your investor will want to know answers to before proceeding further

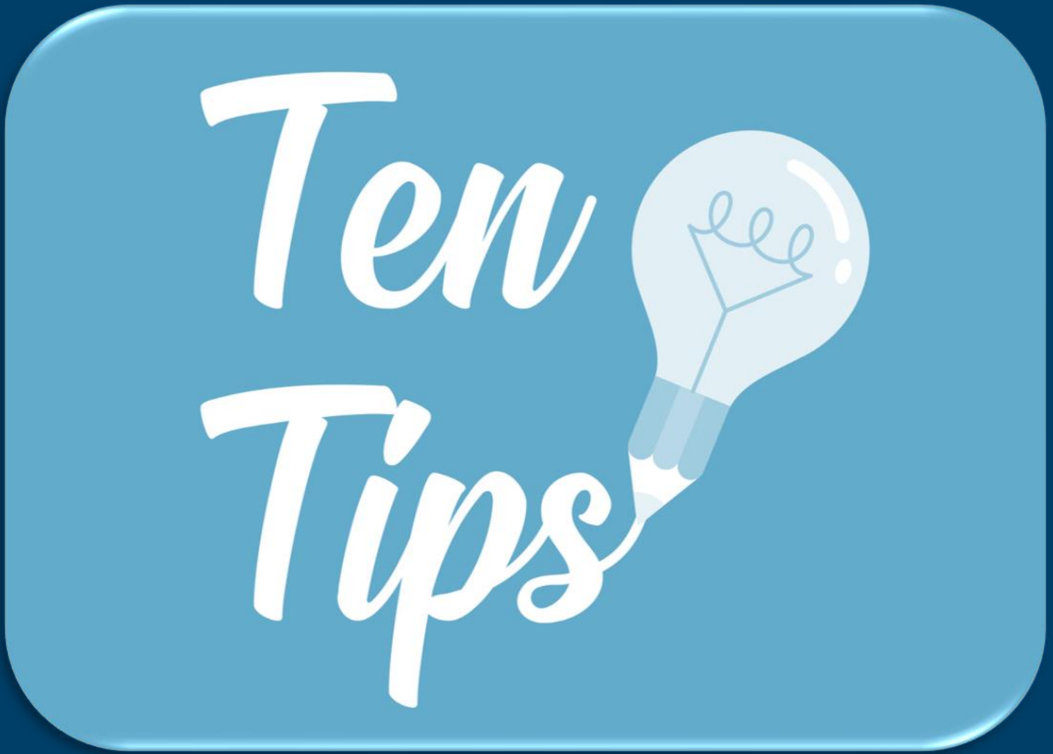
Common Issues Using These Outlines



Best Example of a Clear and Concise Pitch

- AirBnB Pitch Deck from 2009
- See https://www.founderoo.co/resources/the-famous-airbnb-pitch-deck





Ten Tips for Better Pitch Decks

Tip #1 – Start at End, with the Ask

At End of your Deck, Make Sure You Have a Clear "ASK"

FORMULA

- Raising X to achieve Y in Z.

EXAMPLES

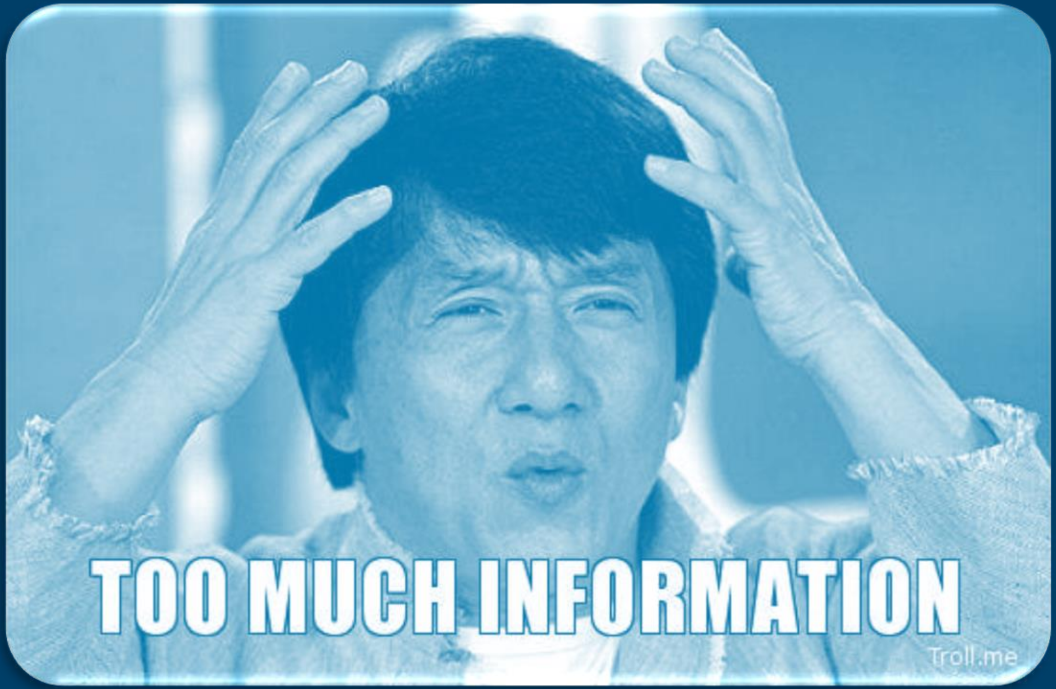
- Raising $300K to achieve market validation and complete IP protection in the next 12 months.
- Raising $1M to launch product and acquire 10 customers to achieve $100K MRR within the next 18 months.

Tip #2 - Don’t Forget to Tell a Story

- You can fill in each slide with relevant facts and still not tell a compelling story

Tip #3 - Keep it Simple

- Most pitch decks are too detailed and too difficult to process all the information
- Too much text and too many slides will not be effective with investors



Tip #4 Pain must be Compelling

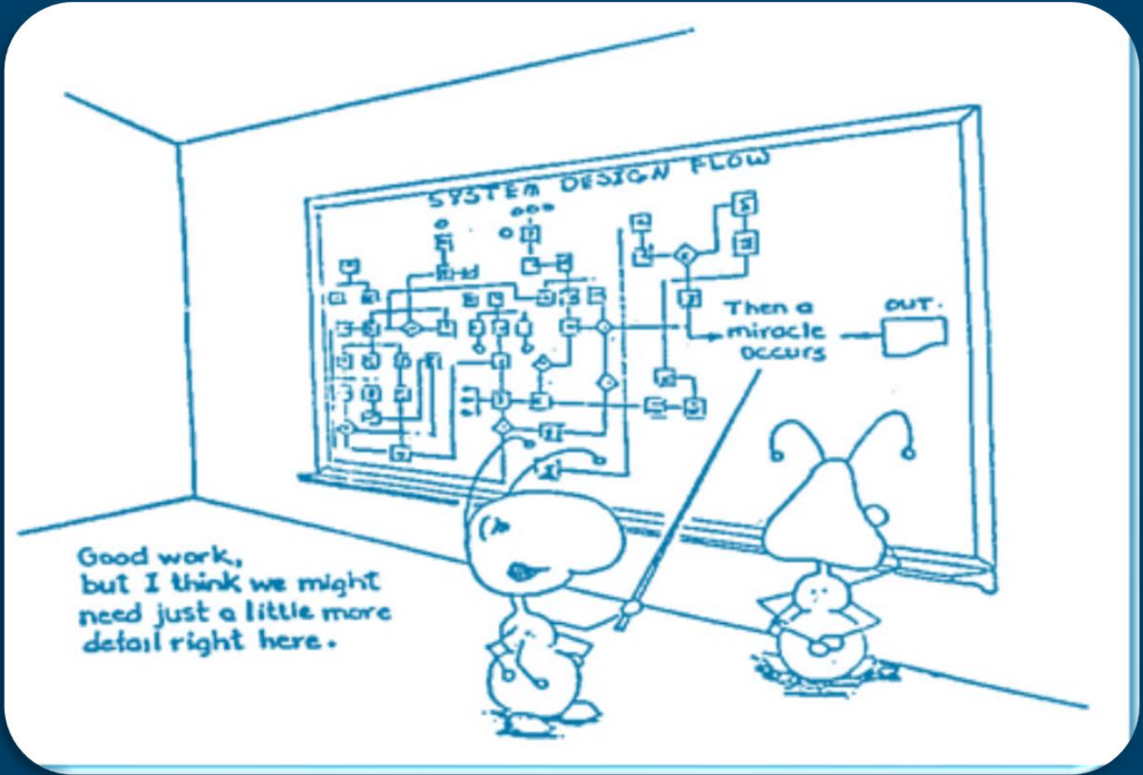
- Compelling pain drives adoption
- You must describe an intractable problem not solvable by conventional means

Tip #5 - Solution must be Unique and Preferred

- Solution must be a Unique Approach that is difficult to replicate
- Thjere must be a reason that customer will prefer your solution over alternatives

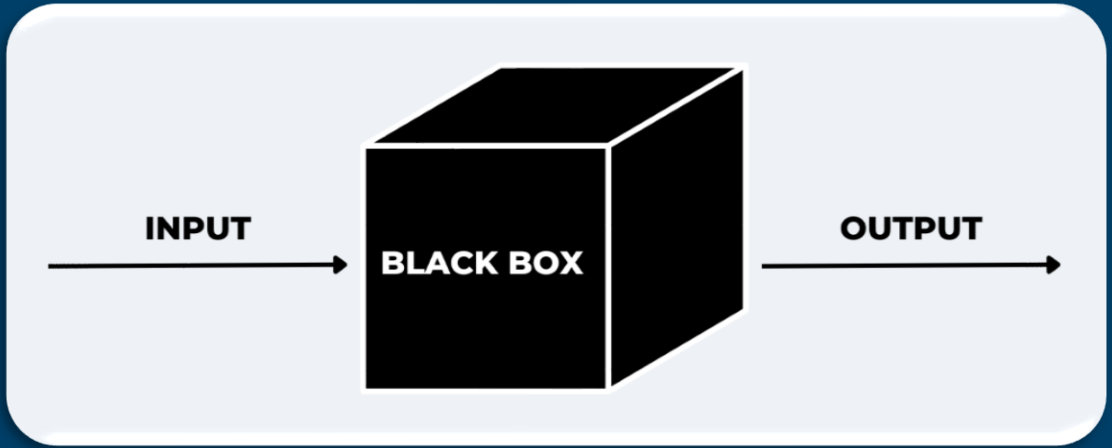
Tip #6 - Make Sure the Logic is Sequenced Clearly

- Every great company has a logical path that is necessary to understand what it does and how that is special
- Investors are expert in detecting logic gaps
- Make it easy for the investor to absorb this logic, sometimes through analogy or metaphor



Tip #7 - Sometimes the Magic is Left in a Black Box

- Too Tech-Centric is not good, especially when your investor may not be that technical
- You can explain how you solve the customer's problem without opening up the Black Box
- Your Patents and Trade Secrets need not be revealed



Tip #8 - Never Say Your Have No Competition

- There are always alternatives/substitutes
- Competition validates an opportunity
- Competition enables you to articulate your unique approach

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Tip #9 - Provide Proof

- In the earliest stages, this may only be logic of your unique approach and the evidence of early demand
- At seed and beyond, you need to show proof of Demand, of Value, of Traction

Tip #10 - Sometimes SHOW instead of TELL

- Often a picture or diagram can simplify and explain where words might not
- Often there is a value chain or process steps that must be understood to appreciate the opportunity and your stories

Checks and Validation

Finalize Your Story and Pitch

Your stories should grab attention and make it easy to understand.

A good pitch has a compelling narrative while being clear and logical.

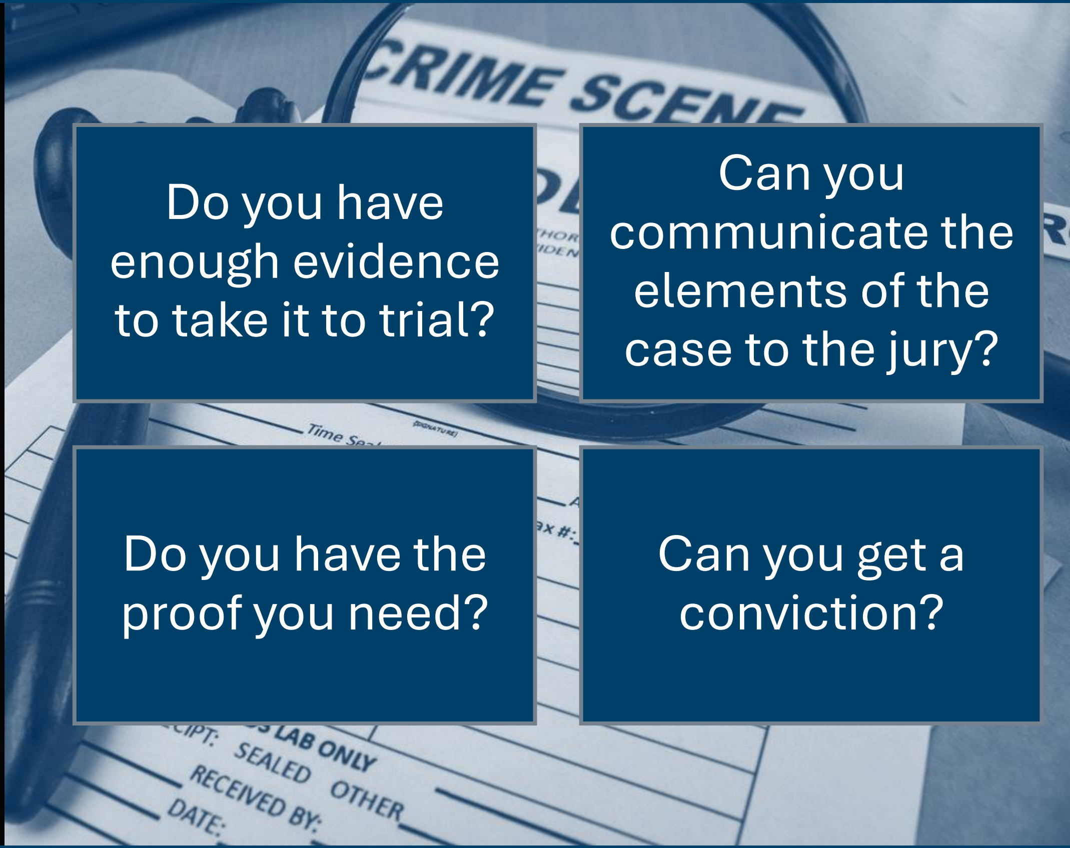
You want to simplify complex concepts and help your audience visualize a future where your solution wins.

Have You Met the Core Objectives of Your Target Audience?

Top 4 Factors

The Team	The Tech (a.k.a. Product)
The Total Addressable Market (a.k.a. Market)	The Traction (a.k.a. Growth)

Apply the “Law and Order” Test to Your Pitch



Do you have enough evidence to take it to trial?

Can you communicate the elements of the case to the jury?

Do you have the proof you need?

Can you get a conviction?

Apply the Time Test to Your Pitch

Can it pass the initial hurdles?

- 1 second – They can read the cover slide to get highlights.
- 3 seconds – They can flip through first three slidesto decide if this is interesting.
- 30 seconds – They might jump to end to see if the numbers are interesting too.

If these are interested in learning more:

- Can they scan the whole deck in 3 minutes?
- Can you present in less than 15 minutes?

Practice Story and Pitch with Correct Audience

Practice makes perfect for your stories and your full pitch.

You should practice with a “friendly audience” that is also a good match for your target investor. This way the feedback is valid and useful.

An audience that is not a professional investor is useful for simplifying your messages, but will often not be useful for refining what an investor needs.

Key Takeaways

Key Takeaways

- Clarify Your Storytelling to Grab Attention and Build Trust

- Build a Pitch Deck that Connects Your Story to the Information the Investor Needs

- Validate and refine that pitch deck

Next Steps

2025 Raising Capital Seminar Series

Next Steps with Presenter

- You Will Receive Follow Up in 48 Hours:
  - Recording and Deck Made Available
  - Resources to Download
  - Reminders of Next Webinar in Series
- Schedule Coaching and Mentoring

Next Steps for Your Raising Capital Journey

- Refine Your Story/Stories
- Create 1st Contact Stories
- Create a Teaser
- Create Pitch Deck

Coaching and Mentoring

SFU VentureLabs®

IN PERSON MEETING

https://calendly.com/geoffrey-hansen/sfu-venturelabs-office-hours

ONLINE ZOOM CALL

https://calendly.com/geoffrey-hansen/garibaldi_academy

Q & A

Please Enter Questions in the Q&A Tab in the Webinar Tool

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