

## Donor Pitch Exercise: The Five-Minute Pitch

Every staff member should have a five-minute pitch prepared, in order to ensure that everybody can take advantage of opportunities to raise funds whenever they arise. You never know when you will come across an opportunity. Different circumstances require different pitches, so we have prepared two possible scenarios to illustrate this. Scenario 1 is a meeting by chance. Scenario 2 is a meeting for which you can prepare. Please practice five-minute pitches based on the two scenarios.

**Note:** Scenario 1 uses an elevator as location but this could easily be in any situation when you happen to meet someone. You can also plan these kinds of short meetings. For example, when you attend a conference you go through the schedule in advance and see if anyone you need to meet will be presenting or will also participate. Then you can prepare to have a short conversation with that person. At conferences, other people will want to do the same thing, so you will need to prepare a concise pitch.

## Scenario 1

You are in an elevator at a conference and Bill Gates walks in. You have five minutes before the doors will open and he gets out.

**Goal:** To get him interested enough to meet with you

You need to let him know :

1. Your work and responsibilities; the issues you work on are urgent and your work is important;
2. A real and strong case to show the impact of your program;
3. A concrete, specific and detailed explanation on what support you could use from him;
4. Outcomes of the program, and why you are capable of implementing this program;
5. Thank him for his time to listen to your pitch.

## Attention

A pitch in a coincidental situation is not a:

- × Complete summary of your work;
- × Chance to show off your professional statistics and data;
- × Chance to show off your knowledge;
- × Repetition of the same conversation with every potential donor;
- × Repetition of the pitch you have done two years ago.

It should:

- ✓ Cover basic facts;
- ✓ Be clear and concise;
- ✓ Tell an appealing story or case;
- ✓ Use your time well;
- ✓ Be tailor-made for the pitch targets;
- ✓ Attract your targets to get to know your program more deeply.

## Scenario 2

The Frick Foundation is an international foundation, supporting grassroots groups campaigning for health rights.<sup>1</sup> The program officer has come to town and a friend has made an introduction for you to meet him. A meeting is set up and you have five minutes to pitch your program. First of all, you need to do some research on the Frick Foundation.

*“The Frick Foundation is a private family foundation that was founded in 1978. In that year, world leaders met in Alma Atta to declare ‘Health for All’ a major development goal. Inspired by this vision, the three Frick brothers (pictured above) founded the Frick Foundation to help make ‘Health for All’ a reality. Since 1978, the Frick Foundation has supported grassroots public health groups in over 30 countries. The foundation started supporting programs in China in 2010 and is interested in expanding its China grant program. The Frick Foundation will accept applications from any Chinese NGO that works on issues of gender and sexuality. Although the foundation was started by three brothers, they are particularly interested in supporting organizations that have women in positions of leadership.”*

You have 20 minutes to prepare and five minutes to present. We suggest you practice with your partner and ask him/her to provide feedback on your performance. If you are practicing as a group, other group members can play the program officers from the foundation. In preparation, you can use the **Template | Pitch Preparation Form** to make sure you fit in all of the most important information you need to cover for each scenario. Write down your thoughts, below.

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<sup>1</sup> The Frick Foundation is fictional and was made up for the purposes of this exercise.

### Notes for a Successful Program Pitch

- ☑ Never just say “We hope you’ll support us” – have something specific in mind. ay instead: “You mention that you have supported X in the past, we are planning to do similar project Y, our project budget is about Z, is this something that might fit your program?”
- ☑ Don’t ask for more than they usually give – ask on the low end of the range for a first grant, so if they usually give grants of \$10,000 to \$100,000, it is best to start with a \$10,000 grant. If they feel their investment was successful, they may give you more the next year.
- ☑ If they say no to your pitch or seem not very excited, then listen to their criticism and comments, consider their perspective, and try a few more project pitches.
- ☑ If nothing you are doing fits what they support, then say so: “It seems like our plans are not a good fit right now, but can we stay in touch as we grow and share other ideas with you as they arise.” Donors really appreciate it if you respect when it is not a good fit and do not try to push them too hard.
- ☑ Never seem desperate, even if you are.