



ENTRANT TOOLKIT - THE BASICS

ELEVATOR PITCH

As a social entrepreneur, you know the importance of being able to describe your organization - defining what is unique about your work & detailing what you deliver to your audience - in a concise and compelling way. Here are some tips to keep in mind when refining your two-minute pitch:

1. Review the short description that you provided in your entry's "Project Overview." Does it tell your story in a compelling and distinctive way?
2. Edit the information into five sentences. Here's a suggested format:
 - a. WHY you are implementing this idea (i.e. what issue, challenge, need are you addressing?)
 - b. WHO benefits from your innovation
 - c. HOW you are different from other organizations that seek to solve the same problems
 - d. WHERE you are working (i.e. location, description of place)
 - e. WHAT you hope to accomplish with your innovation, inspire people with your long-term goals and vision

WRITING ABOUT YOUR INNOVATION IN MORE DETAIL (Blogs, Funding Proposals, Website, etc.)

1. Make it personal and attention-grabbing by focusing on how you are making a real difference for a particular audience or resource
2. Tell the story from your personal perspective. Write in first person rather than third person
3. Make it conversational. Don't use jargon or language that the general public won't understand
4. Focus on the aspects of your innovation that are truly unique and different. Describe what sets you apart from other programs and how this is a good model to replicate around your community, the country, or the world
5. Include photos, video, and other media if available
6. Include your contact information

SOCIAL MEDIA 101 (PLUS TEMPLATES)

Don't be intimidated. Harnessing tools like twitter, facebook, blogs, etc... can actually be a lot of fun and it presents amazing opportunities to connect directly and engage with your audience(s).

Ultimately, using social media successfully is about finding the approach and tone that's right for you and your organization. What works for one person might not work another but as long as what you do is in the right spirit and with an eye to what your audience wants (not just what you want), you'll be fine.

For a small organization that doesn't have a PR agency or a web developer, these (often free) social media tools can enable you to build a robust web and social media presence even if you're at the not-so-web-savvy end of spectrum. Just be patient, experiment, and have fun!

Twitter

<http://twitter.com/>

Twitter allows you to share brief updates and links (140 character maximum) with your followers. Followers are anyone who's interested in you, your organization, or your perspective. You can also use twitter to follow the profiles of other organizations or individuals you think are interesting. One way to build communities and reinforce relationships is to "retweet" posts that you like or that you think are relevant to your audience. The people you retweet will appreciate the mention and your audience will see you as a valuable resource.

If you'd like to learn more, Google is your friend. There are thousands of videos, articles, and op-eds available. And nothing beats just playing around with the technology yourself!

Here are some sample tweets you could use when talking about the competition:

1. Just entered @Changemakers competition and would love your feedback. Check it out and leave a comment: [link to your entry]
2. Check out our ideas for getting kids involved with farming. Share your ideas/suggestions/experiences at [link to your entry]

Facebook

<http://www.facebook.com/>

Facebook takes a little longer to set up than twitter but it's important to make yourself available to your audience. Facebook is still a leading source of web traffic for many organizations and setting up a "page" is well worth the effort.

Once you've filled in the basics (picture, info, a few status updates), you can start rolling it out to friends and colleagues, encouraging them to "like" your page and asking them to reach out to their networks. As with all your different social media channels, it's important to let people know the value of signing up. For example, you could hold a competition for the first four weeks where you select new followers at random for a prize. And you should think about the content you'd like to

highlight on the page. What will resonate with your audience? How can you provide value for their commitment?

Now that you have a page and a group of followers, you can connect with them in a range of ways. You can use your status update like you'd use twitter (see above) and you can also send updates like you might send an email (see below). You want to be respectful of your followers' space so it's important to strike a balance between your needs and the expectations of your audience.

Email

Email is a great way to keep your audience up-to-date with your events, deadlines, or anything else that has a clear call-to-action or is time sensitive.

Here's sample text for mentioning the competition in one of your emails:

1. We entered a competition hosted by Green Mountain Coffee and Ashoka's Changemakers for innovative ideas to improve communities in the Northeast and we'd love to get your feedback. Ask us a question or post a story about how our programs have impacted you and we'll respond directly on the site. [link]

Website/Blog

You probably already have a website but if you'd like to create a more informal place to write updates, and are able to commit to posting at least two or three times per week (for starters), you can consider setting up a blog. There are a number of free blog hosting services such as <http://www.wordpress.com>, <http://www.blogger.com>, and <http://www.tumblr.com/> that are very user friendly. How you integrate the blog with your site is a matter of personal preference but many organizations just include a link to the blog in the top navigation. One of the benefits of having a blog is that you can post ideas, updates, or information that don't have a natural place to live on the website but that you'd like to share with your audience. Additionally, people can "subscribe" to your blog through aggregators like Google Reader which enables them to stay involved with your work without having to visit your site.

Flickr

<http://www.flickr.com/>

Flickr is one of several popular photo hosting sites. One of the benefits of using a site like Flickr is that not only can you post pictures and make contacts on the site, it's very easy to embed your photos on other sites. This comes in handy when populating content on your blog or facebook (for example), and sidesteps any issues you may have in hosting and categorizing a large number of images on your own site.

YouTube/Vimeo

<http://www.youtube.com/>
<http://vimeo.com/>

Creating and uploading videos is a great way to share your work with new audiences and reengage with your current audience. Of course, there's a time/money/skills investment that you will need to make but this can be an opportunity to build relationships with local vendors and bring on talented interns. Setting up an account on YouTube or Vimeo is pretty straightforward and once the videos are uploaded, it's easy to embed them on other sites (such as your blog or on facebook) and share them with your networks.

CHECKLIST

In addition to this checklist, here are a few things to keep in mind: Keep your posts short and sweet, include a call-to-action, re-use and re-edit your work for the Changemakers entry, and adjust the tone for the medium/audience.

- ✓ Create an elevator pitch
- ✓ Post on your website/blog
- ✓ Include a mention in your email newsletter
- ✓ Mention on twitter
- ✓ Post on facebook
- ✓ Post on any other social media sites you use
- ✓ Encourage your employees and colleagues to spread the word to their networks
- ✓ Create and distribute a press release to local papers and relevant blogs
- ✓ Upload images to flickr; Upload videos to YouTube or vimeo
- ✓ Make comments on other Revelation to Action entries and ask for feedback on yours
- ✓ Create an online press kit that includes:
 1. 5 story ideas from the field (no longer than 2 sentences each)
 2. A profile of your innovator along with a photo
 3. A list and description of current projects, where you work, and your key beneficiaries/customers
 4. Five quotes, references, or testimonies from clients, constituents, partners, investors, or local stakeholders that have positively benefited from your innovation
 5. List any other awards or accolades you've received
 6. Additional Photos and videos

FINAL THOUGHTS

We hope you found this toolkit helpful but if you have any additional questions, please don't hesitate to send me an email at connect@changemakers.com .

Good luck!