



AFM Pitch Winner, Maddie Shapiro (2018)

AMERICAN FILM MARKET® PITCH CONFERENCE

A GUIDE TO CREATING AN
EFFECTIVE VIDEO PITCH

Table of Contents

Overview	3
Types of Pitches Accepted	3
Submission Schedule	3
Develop Your Video Pitch Script	4
Video Pitch Structures	4
Rehearse and Record Your Video Pitch	5
Submit Your Pitch to AFM	8
Selection Criteria	9
Appendix: Technical Instructions	10
If You Have Technical Difficulties...	10
Create A Google Account	11
Create A Pitch with Your Video Camera	14
Create A Pitch with Your Smartphone	18

Overview

The AFM Pitch Conference is designed to give attendees a chance to watch film script pitches in action and learn how to effectively pitch ideas themselves. Last year, over \$1 billion in deals closed at the American Film Market to finance and purchase independent films from around the world. In the past, a number of film projects have gained traction and went on to sell based on panelists and audience members hearing these pitches for the first time at AFM.

The Pitch Conference is structured in the following way:

- Each selected pitcher has EXACTLY two minutes onstage to pitch their film script idea to a panel of distinguished producers.
- The panelists then take three minutes to provide an honest critique.
- If you are selected to pitch at the 2019 Conference, you will be heard by an audience of over 600 people, mostly industry professionals.

To be considered to pitch onstage at the AFM Pitch Conference on November 9, 2019, you will need to submit a 2-minute video pitch by **October 18, 2019**.

What types of pitches are accepted?

- ✓ Narrative feature film scripts in any genre
- ✓ Long-form television scripts in any genre

Submission Schedule

- **October 18, 2019:** Video Pitch submission deadline
- **October 28, 2019:** Email Notification of selection to pitch onstage
- **November 9, 2019:** AFM Pitch Conference, 9:15 AM- 12:45 PM PST

Develop Your Video Pitch Script

Your 2-minute video must answer three questions:

- What's your name?
- What's the genre and tone of your project?
- What's your project about?

Video Pitch Structures

It's completely up to you to determine the best way to pitch your project. That said, here are a few video pitch structures you can contemplate to help you answer the three questions:

THE CLASSIC PITCH:

"Hi, my name is [NAME]. My project is a [GENRE] in the vein of [TONALLY SIMILAR PROJECT]. It's called [TITLE] and it's about [LOG LINE]. The project continues to follow [MAIN CHARACTER AND SUPPORTING CHARACTER] as they [SECOND ACT ACTIVITY]. Problems occur when [MIDPOINT COMPLICATION OR SECOND ACT LOW POINT]. Now they must [THIRD ACT STRATEGY] or face [CONSEQUENCES]."

THE PIXAR PITCH:

"Hi, my name is [NAME]. I'm a [OCCUPATION] and I live in [LOCATION]. My project is a [GENRE] called [TITLE]. Once upon a time_____. Every day_____. One day_____. Because of that_____. Because of that_____. Until finally_____."

THE BLAKE SNYDER PITCH:

"Hi, I'm [NAME] and I'm from [LOCATION]. On the verge of a [STASIS = DEATH] moment, a flawed hero [BREAKS INTO TWO] with the [B-STORY], but when the [MIDPOINT] happens, he/she must learn the [THEME] before [ALL IS LOST] to defeat the [OBSTACLE/ANTAGONIST]."

As you can see, pitch structures make use of screenplay beats; and as you know, there are various guides to what these beats are. The beats in the “Classic Pitch” above are from screenwriting instructor Pilar Alessandra. For more information about Pilar’s definition of screenplay beats, check out her book: [The Coffee Break Screenwriter](#). The beats in the “Blake Snyder Pitch” above are, as you might guess, from screenwriting instructor Blake Snyder. For more information about how Snyder defines the beats of a screenplay, check out his book [Save The Cat!](#) For additional insight on the “do’s” and “don’ts” of pitching to a room of producers and studio executives, you can also review Author Stephanie Palmer’s [Ten Tips for Pitching Your Film Successfully](#).

Rehearse and Record Your Video Pitch

In order to effectively deliver a pitch on camera, you have to rehearse. There’s something about pitching out loud that helps you notice problem areas, clarify sentence structure, and fix any components of the pitch that might not be working.

Remember...as uncomfortable as you might be watching yourself on video and pitching to an empty room at first, judges can always tell the difference between someone who has practiced their pitch and taken the time to rehearse before submitting their video and/or pitching live onstage. Here are some tips and suggestions related to creating and rehearsing your video pitch:

Step 1: Choose Your Ideal Listener

No matter what subject is, pitching to camera can be challenging. To make it easier, identify a person in your life, who’s not only a member of your project’s target market, but someone you’d feel comfortable delivering your video pitch to. To be clear, this person does not need to be in the actual room when you’re pitching. This is someone you’ll imagine listening to your pitch while you practice. The idea is to replicate the kind of comfortable and conversational style you’d have with a friend. When the camera starts rolling, look into the lens and start speaking to the person you feel most comfortable with.

Step 2: Read Out Loud

Start by reading aloud while you're looking at your actual pitch notes. Read it a few times... and time yourself. You'll start to realize if you're running over two minutes and you'll be able to make sentences shorter or more concise, as needed. You'll also find areas that sound more natural when expressed as sentence fragments, rather than a complete sentences.

Step 3: Write on Notecards

Write out your pitch on notecards - one paragraph on one side of the notecard and on the reverse side, you can write a header for the paragraph or the first few words as a mental marker.

Step 4: Memorize and Revise

Thoroughly memorize your text and keep polishing! Cross out words, underline where you want emphasis, and add any other notes that might help you during the pitch.

Step 5: Rewrite Notecards

Now that you've honed your pitch, rewrite the text on brand new notecards so the copy is clean. The act of writing out your script can be hugely helpful in memorizing it.

Step 6: Pitch to Camera

Deliver your pitch on camera. Remember to visualize the person you chose in Step 1, the person to whom you can pitch most casually and comfortably.

Step 7: Watch Yourself

We know. It's painful. But try to observe where you speak too quickly, where you may need to vary your tone, and where you need to improve on eye contact. Reading word-for-word from notecards is one of the fastest ways to come across as being ill-prepared onstage.

Step 8: Pitch To Camera Ten Times

Pitch to camera ten times in a row. This might sound a little mind-numbing, but after the first five times, you'll get so bored that something magical will start to happen—you'll know your script well enough to improve your performance without having to "do" anything.

Step 9: Record Your Polished Pitch

By this point, you're ready for "Action!"

Record your video pitch and follow the instructions below to submit it for consideration.

PLEASE NOTE: Our Complete Guide to the process of submitting your video pitch for the 2019 AFM Pitch Conference will be sent to you following your purchase of an official Platinum, Executive Plus, or Industry Plus Badge; or following the purchase of an individual ticket to the AFM Pitch Conference on 11/9/2019.