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# Freetown Pitch Night How to Guide



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**Freetown** Pitch  
Night

## What is Pitch Night?

Pitch Night provides budding entrepreneurs in Sierra Leone the opportunity to pitch their post revenue business. At pitch night, entrepreneurs provide a holistic view of their business to a vibrant Sierra Leonean entrepreneur community –allowing them to market their business, solicit feedback, advice and potential partnerships.

### Pitch Night Purpose

- Increase desirability and confidence in pursuing entrepreneurship.
- Provide pitch practice to entrepreneur.
- Role-model pitching and entrepreneurship to others.
- Provides stability to entrepreneurship activities.
- Provides linkages to markets, investors, partners, customers, suppliers, business support services, and capacity developers.

## Sample Pitch Night Format:

<u>Time</u>	<u>Activity</u>
6:30- 7:00	<b>Welcome /Check in/Registration</b> Snacks and networking
7:10- 7:20	<b>Call to attention/opening remarks/ silent prayer</b> Review of event purpose & thank you to partners
7:20- 7:30	<b>Introduction to Event Theme (Can be done with main partner of the event)</b>
7:30- 7:45	<b>1st Entrepreneur</b> 5-7 minute presentation 5-7 minute of questions
7:45- 8:00	<b>2nd Entrepreneur</b> 5-7 minute presentation 5-7 minute of questions
8:00- 8:15	<b>3rd Entrepreneur</b> 5-7 minute presentation 5-7 minute of questions
8:15- 8:30	<b>4th Entrepreneur</b> 5-7 minute presentation 5-7 minute of questions
8:30- 8:35	<b>Quick words from sponsors/partners</b>
8:35- 8:55	<b>Keynote Speaker</b>
8:55- 9:00	<b>Upcoming event reminders</b>
9:00-	<b>Closing remarks Vote of Thanks (5 minutes)</b>
10:00	<b>Open Bar and Networking</b>

## Pitcher Prep Timeline

It is recommended that topics/themes/sectors be planned ahead for every quarter, which makes it easy to plan around and source pitchers. Pitchers should be identified a month prior to the event. At least 3

prep sessions should be held to get them pitch ready. It is also recommended to have the last session as a dress rehearsal, inviting a panel of critics for constructive feedback. This review can happen a day or two before event.

## Pitch Best Practices

Pitch Night structures are flexible to the entrepreneur, but a suggested structure could be:

### Introduction

1. Introduce yourself and your business.
2. How long have you been in operations?

### How does your business work?

1. What does your business do?
2. Why did you venture into this industry? What is the problem you are trying to address?
3. Why is this your passion?
4. Who is your key customers and why do you believe they want/need your product?
5. Do you have proof of success? Sales and or revenue figures would be useful to illustrate your point?

### Vision

1. Describe your vision for the short term
  - I. How do you plan on achieving this vision?
2. Describe your vision for the long term market
  - I. How and why will your business remain relevant?
  - II. How do you plan on achieving this vision?

### Challenges/ opportunities

1. What could make your business fail – be honest this reassures the audience you have thought about this and are actively working towards preventing this.

### “Ask”

1. What “asks”/help are you looking forward – this can be financial needs, distribution needs, technical needs and other needs of any other sort.
2. How will you use this resource and why?

**Time:** 5-7 minutes pitch – ensure the audience is engaged and captivated throughout the pitch.

**PowerPoint:** A useful way to showcase your business and have good buzzwords to help guide your pitch!

## Suggested Roles & Responsibilities

- Steering Committee – Ensures event happens each month; Finds execution partner for event; Coordinates with event manager; Seeks regular sponsorship; Advertises event.
- Execution Partners – Sources and preps pitchers; Help with slides and presentations on pitch night; Assist during question and answer session; Advertises event.
- Event Manager – Manages event processes on event day; ensuring venue is setup, catering is delivered, and drinks are delivered and iced.
- Pitch Panel – Conducts final review of prepared pitchers to give go-ahead to main event
- Tier 1 Event Sponsor – Pays for event manager and/or venue.
- Tier 2 Event Sponsor – Pays for other items (food/drinks/sound).

## Facility Prep Timeline

Location, power, food, drink, chairs, tables, coolers, bottle openers, sound system, projector, projector screen, extra lighting if necessary, etc.

### One month before:

- Source venue (if it requires a sponsor to pay for it, this should be done earlier to enable you get a range of prices to presented). Have a venue booked and all amenities with rental confirmed.

### Two weeks before:

- Have projector, projector screen secured
- Tables and chairs booked if needed

### A few days before event:

- Do lighting and sound check if possible
- Reconfirm items provided by venue
- Reconfirm all other bookings
- Day of event
- Venue clean up and set up
- Pick all items outsourced – projector, projector screen
- Confirm sound and lighting works well
- Confirm projector works with laptop to be used (all connections are available)
- Bring in all drinks and get ice
- Pick up food, or monitor time for delivery by caterer

## FAQ

- How do we advertise Pitch night? – Social Media, emails, word of mouth. Other methods can be tried – radio announcements, flyers, TV adverts etc
- Who are the target audience for Pitch Night? – Investors, Bankers, Marketing Institutions, Developmental Organizations, friends and everyone who is interested in the growth of Sierra Leonean businesses.
- Are there ideal locations for Pitch Night? – there is no set venue for Pitch Night, but your target groups should be taken into consideration when selecting a venue.
- How do we prepare pitchers for pitch night? - For a quality pitch night, pace and interest to the audience are most important. Pitchers meet with the event team three times before the event to practice their pitch. All pitches must be below five minutes, clearly outline a problem and value proposition, where the business is heading, and what help they need from members of the audience.