

CAREER EDUCATION ACTIVITY

Creating Your Professional Pitch

This activity helps youth to be able to clearly and briefly communicate with confidence who they are and why potential employers would want to consider them as candidates for job openings, volunteer experience or internships.

About This Activity

Objectives:

Participants will:

- Prepare a 30 second to 1 minute professional pitch to be used at career fairs, job interviews, chance meetings or phone conversations.
- Identify professional and employability skills.
- Become comfortable giving a professional pitch.

Learning and Life Skills:

- *Interpersonal Skills:* Working in teams
- *Communication Skills:* Speaking and listening

What You Will Need

Materials:

- Paper
- Pens or Pencils
- Newsprint
- Markers
- Michigan 4-H Career Education handout, "The Perfect Business Handshake"

Time:

30-60 minutes

Procedure

Before the Meeting:

As a facilitator, practice your own professional pitch or have one of the older youth prepare one in advance to provide the participants with an example.

During the Meeting:

1. Have each participant create two lists. The first list includes his or her name, education, work experience, language skills, type of employment desired, volunteer experiences, and clubs or organizations he or she is involved in. Consider posting your own or an older youth's on newsprint as an example.
2. The second list includes personal characteristics that will make them successful at work: organizational skills, teamwork, motivation, dedication. Also, have them include why they are interested in a certain position or company. Make sure if they list that they are organized or work well with others that they have examples to back it up.
3. Turn each list into a paragraph describing their skills and abilities – this will be their pitch. Remind participants to write the paragraph to sound natural when spoken. The goal of the pitch is to answer the question, "Can you tell me about yourself?"
4. An additional goal of the pitch is to make the participants stand out to employers and to have employers remember them over everyone else. A proper business handshake will help them achieve this. Teach participants "The Perfect Business Handshake" to include at the beginning and end of their pitch. Have participants practice the handshake with each other. Allow them to switch partners multiple times. However, in the real world each participant will only get one opportunity to make a good first impression.
5. Next have participants get into groups of two. The participants will then partner up and practice their business handshakes and professional pitch with one another.

Try This, Too:

Have students create a 20 second sales pitch for a product in groups of four, answering the questions — "Why would you want to buy this product?" and "What does it have to offer?"

After the sales pitches are presented, relate selling a product back to their professional pitch as a way of selling themselves to an employer. This is also an excellent way to give the lesson more of an entrepreneurial twist.

Talking It Over:

In small groups, or as a whole group, have a discussion around the following questions:

- What are possible situations where your pitch may be used?
- What stood out about the other person?
- Did the pitch flow and sound natural?
- Did they show professional and employability skills?
- Did you become more comfortable giving your pitch after practicing a few times?
- What changes did you make to your pitch after delivering it?

For More Information

To explore other Michigan 4-H Youth Development career development information, visit <http://4h.msue.msu.edu>. Click on the “Programs” tab then select “Careers.”