

Ten Tips For Pitching Your Film Successfully, by Stephanie Palmer

Are you ready to walk “into the room” and pitch to a decision-maker such as an agent, financier, producer, distributor or studio executive?

Here are the top ten pitching tips to help you in a high-stakes situation. There are 5 Do's and 5 Don'ts:

- 1. Do prepare for the five stages of the meeting.** If you do not know what the five stages are, you can acquaint yourself [here](#).
- 2. Do not talk about who has been attached, was considering, or has been interested in the project.** This is equivalent to saying, “Here is a list of people who have already passed.”
- 3. Do not “get down to business.”** Instead, take the time to make small-talk and get to know the decision-maker first. Remember, business is personal.
- 4. Do not “wing” your pitch.** Consider preparation techniques such as writing your pitch out by hand, pitching on video and then watching your performance, and taking a practice meeting with a friend.
- 5. Do lead with genre.** Specifically, the first few words of your pitch should be something like, “This project is a (GENRE)....”

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- 6. Do not refer to more than three characters by name.** If other characters need to be mentioned, do so by how they relate to the main characters, e.g., Karin’s best friend, Ryan’s evil twin.
- 7. Do prepare for likely questions.** Prepare answers for the most common questions in advance such as, “How did you come up with this idea?” and “What project is this most like?” You can find out more about how to answer these questions [here](#).
- 8. Do not argue the point.** If you get a note you don’t like from a decision-maker in an initial meeting, don’t argue. Instead, just say, “Thanks, let me think about that.”
- 9. Do write down the names of the decision-makers you meet.** That way, you won’t suffer the fate of, “I had a great meeting, but I can’t remember his or her name....”

10. Do adapt to patterns of feedback. Consider all of the notes you are receiving, look for patterns, and discover ways to improve your pitch, your project, or both.

Stephanie Palmer, author of *“Good in a Room: How To Sell Yourself And Your Ideas And Win Over Any Audience”*. Article provided by American Film Market.

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