

WOMAN: Welcome back. In this session, we're focusing on what makes a good video pitch. To enter either of the competitions, as you know, you need to complete the Business Model Canvas and submit a video pitch. Now being on video can be quite daunting, but Robert Wilson is here to explain to us how easy it is, and also what makes a good video pitch. And we've just seen one, Rob, haven't we, from one of last year's entries.

ROBERT WILSON: Yes, and that's a good example of a video pitch that's amazing. The student wasn't quite ready to be in front of the camera face-to-face, and that's completely fine. But I would say the majority of students did speak to the camera in their pitch.

WOMAN: OK, brilliant. So it can be either, or. What are the judges expecting from the pictures? I mean, that looked really snazzy.

ROBERT WILSON: It did, and we're not expecting something that high of a production value. But if you're that talented, go for it.

WOMAN: Yeah

ROBERT WILSON: But the judges are looking for three main things. We're looking for an introduction to the idea, the benefits and the rewards of the business, and then, where you are with your idea, so the stage that you're at and the development of it.

WOMAN: So the one thing about this video pitch is that you've obviously got to use the media to convey what you're doing. So here we've seen something done with somebody not in front of the camera. As you said, most people do speak to the camera to be able to convey that. But actually, the point is not about the production values of the video or the quality of that, it's about the communication and the message that's within that, but also, to some extent, the confidence that that entrepreneur or business owner has about their ideas and how to present those. So there are quite a few things going on, subtle things to bear in mind as well in terms of how you convey your message.

ROBERT WILSON: Sure. You need to be able to clearly communicate what you're talking about, and convince the judges how your idea creates value for your customers. That's what we're talking about when we talk about benefits and rewards.

WOMAN: OK, brilliant. Now you spoke about things, and I'd like to-- three things that I'd like to focus on in a little bit more detail. So the first one was about an introduction to the idea. What are the judges looking for in terms of how people communicate their idea?

ROBERT WILSON: We're looking for you to hook us in, initially. Maybe ask a really thought-provoking question that gets us thinking about a potential solution, and then by the time we've thought of that solution, you're already presenting us with it. So something really eye-catching from the get go, or thought-provoking.

WOMAN: And I guess it needs to be a very succinct communication about the idea as well, doesn't it?

ROBERT WILSON: Sure. You've only got two minutes overall for the whole video, so getting your point across very quickly in a way that doesn't make us lose interest is important.

WOMAN: And that would require a lot of clarity about what your strategy or idea is.

ROBERT WILSON: That's right. And a lot of planning for your video. Making a video pitch can be thought of as making-- planning and assignment or a TMA. You need to have your plan and your practise. It's fun to read from cue cards, but don't read from a page. Keep your voice animated. I like to tell people, you're making a video pitch. Think about the pitch of your voice. That will help you come across as confident if you're varying your pitch and your tone.

WOMAN: Yeah, absolutely. That's really important, isn't it? Now the other thing you talked about was benefits and rewards. How might people convey that?

ROBERT WILSON: This is what we're talking about when we say value proposition. It isn't know that Carolyn just spoke about the value proposition as one of the most important parts of your business idea. We want to know how you are creating value for your customers, whether you've come up with a new product or you're selling a service. What are the benefits to your consumer? How are they being rewarded by engaging with your business?

WOMAN: OK. And then, how do students explain where they are at with their idea?

ROBERT WILSON: This is very important as well. The world of entrepreneurship has many different stages, and we're not prescriptive, or hold to certain definitions. But answering this question can help you decide if you're entering the new business challenge or the innovation award.

WOMAN: Right.

ROBERT WILSON: If you're at a point where your business is already registered, you're already trading, you're selling something, then you're definitely entering the new business challenge, because your business is more developed. If you've got everything planned out and you're ready to go, you're not live yet, still, go for the new business challenge, because that's a good incentive to help you get things off the ground. On the other hand, if you're still doing your market research, you're still prototyping your product, if you're still asking friends and family what they think about your idea, or maybe potentially changing that in a pivot, then you're probably more likely going for the innovation award, because your idea's not fully developed yet.

WOMAN: And you mentioned before, being passionate about your idea is really important as well. How do you communicate that passion?

ROBERT WILSON: Well, if you-- this sounds kind of cliché, but if you are really passionate about your idea, it will come across in your voice. We expect you to know what you're talking about, and speak in an animated fashion, as I've said. And like I said earlier, thinking about the pitch of your voice when you're talking to the camera is also important.

WOMAN: Brilliant, excellent. Now, we asked people at home three positive things that they would associate with the video pitch, and also three things that are negative that you associate with video pitch. Let's focus on the positives first, and see what people at home said, and then you can feed back on their ideas. Let's see what you said at home. So, informative, smile, be quick, positive words, clarity, catchy, and down to earth. Some great ideas there, Rob. What do you think?

ROBERT WILSON: I really like down to earth.

WOMAN: Yeah.

ROBERT WILSON: We're thinking about potentially working with someone for a number of months, from the time they submit the video pitch to the time they're coming on to the OU Accelerate programme, and they need to be relatable and to inspire confidence in the judges. They need to be down to earth. Clear and concise and consistent, these are all words that the judges are thinking of when they're looking at the Business Model Canvas as well as a video pitch. Those are important, too.

WOMAN: OK, and on the negative things that people said, I won't share this for now, but they was saying things like, it's things that are too long, too wordy, boring, or have that sound, I guess

bad image quality as well could be another thing. So basically, things that haven't been well thought-through or articulated clearly. Would you agree?

ROBERT WILSON: That's right. I would agree. That's not to shoot in a noisy environment, at a cafe or in your car while you're driving down the road. That's dangerous, not to mention noisy. If you're thinking about clarity and consistency, we need to be able to tell which part of the pitch you're at throughout. So, are you introducing your idea? Are you explaining the benefits and the rewards? And then, finally, telling us which stage you're at with the idea.

WOMAN: OK, but Adam Sfee says that his ideas are too complex, and he doesn't feel that two minutes would be enough to do the ideas justice. So what are your thoughts on that, Rob?

ROBERT WILSON: I'd say, break it down to two minutes. Limit yourself, because we've seen the winners from last year limit themselves to two minutes and explain their complex business ideas. You've got more space to write about your idea in the Business Model Canvas and supporting notes.

WOMAN: Absolutely. I guess it's one of those things. If you think about it, big things can come in small packages. I mean, international news bulletins, blockbuster trailers, all of those things can be done very, very shortly, conveying a huge amount of information in a very short space of time, and as you say, can be supplemented by something a bit later. So it's about communicating the clarity, even if there are varied strengths to the business or it's complex. What you're really looking for is that focus, and the ability to articulate very clearly what your idea is, what niche it fulfills, and why you're so passionate about and where you're at with this. That that's the most important thing, isn't it?

ROBERT WILSON: Exactly.

WOMAN: OK, great. So, people have got those ideas and they might be thinking through them. How would they go about recording or not, as the case may be, themselves on camera?

ROBERT WILSON: Most people these days have a smartphone.

WOMAN: OK.

ROBERT WILSON: Perfectly fine to just ask a family member to hold your smartphone up and film. If you've got a slightly fancier camera, it's perfectly fine to do that. When it comes to editing, don't spend too much time doing that. If you can get it all in one take, then great, but it's also fine to kind of chop and change little segments together. When it comes to uploading in the competition

website, there's a certain file size that you have to reach. If you have issues with that, just email me and I can kind of help you out with that.

WOMAN: You've been very-- and you'll take a look at people's Business Model Canvas, which is great. OK, so we've got some do's and don'ts to end with. You've spoken about the importance of eye contact.

ROBERT WILSON: Yes. It can be frustrating if someone's looking behind you to a cue card or something. Maintain eye contact with the camera, because you're effectively speaking directly to the judges, because we'll all be watching your video pitch and thinking about whether or not we want to invite you to campus.

WOMAN: OK. Another piece of advice you said is, is do be creative. Sure. With that video that we saw just before, those animations are amazing, and I know that that particular entrepreneur spent a lot of time on his video pitch. And ultimately, it was one of the main reasons we brought him to campus to present to the judges.

WOMAN: Another thing you said is keep it simple.

ROBERT WILSON: Sure. Maybe that video was not the most simple thing, but he did clearly communicate his idea in a way that hooked our interest from the get-go. And the other thing you've advised is show a product or demo if you can.

ROBERT WILSON: Yes, if possible. If you're talking about this radical new invention, like your magnetic bowl here, that was brilliant to just watch you demonstrate it hanging off the side of the car. Similarly, if a student has a product to show us, do so in the video.

WOMAN: Brilliant, so demonstrate what you can. And also, one final piece of advice that I know will be very appealing to some people is shooting your video in landscape rather than portrait. Why is that?

ROBERT WILSON: Landscape just is more pleasing to the eye on a computer screen, which we'll be watching these on. Now video that you'll watch after this was shot in portrait, and the student did go on to win, so it's not the end of the world. But for the ease of the judges viewing your videos, please shoot in landscape.

WOMAN: And it's one of those things that people in the know, it will make a big difference to, so that's really solid advice. OK, you've mentioned before not filming in noisy and dark areas, but

another piece of advice you give is, don't think you need to do it all in one take.

ROBERT WILSON: Yes. And I've said, you can either do it all in one take, or chop and change, whatever works for you, that's perfectly fine.

WOMAN: Yeah, OK, great. And also, keeping attention is really important. So you've advised people not to get too technical. I guess if that's not their area, don't do it. You can just talk, can't you?

ROBERT WILSON: That's right. A good example would be another winner from last year who applied an amazing scientific solution to drying clothes. Now in his video pitch, he didn't get weighed down in the science of it. He just presented the results, which drew our attention, and ultimately, got us to invite him to campus.

WOMAN: OK. Now you've mentioned before about not reading from a script or from cards behind the camera or looking somewhere else. How might people, then, remember what they're going to say if they're not going to read from a script?

ROBERT WILSON: If they're not going to read from a script, then preparation and practise is the most important thing. Whenever I do a presentation to an audience, I go through it at least five times in front of the mirror, or in front of my wife, in front of my office. Preparation and practise can really help in a pinch.

WOMAN: Brilliant, OK. And then, another sound piece of advice you give is don't have distractions in the background.

ROBERT WILSON: That's right. I've seen video pitches where people are sitting in their cars and traffic is going by, and it was difficult to concentrate on, because I'm wondering, is he going to crash? Try to have a calm environment. If you can have a cool background like this, or a quiet white wall would be fine.

WOMAN: Yeah, brilliant, excellent. So some really good advice there, Rob. Thank you so much for coming along and talking about the video pitch, a really important part of the process. We're going to show another one now. Would you like to introduce Claudio Martinez's video?

ROBERT WILSON: Yes, so Claudio was our winner of the New Business Challenge last year, and his business applies a learning management system to aviation engineering training.

WOMAN: Brilliant. Well, let's take a look at that video, and then we're going to hear from last year's

winner, Annette Prince. Join me in a few minutes for that session.

CLAUDIO

MARTURANO:

Hi there. My name is Claudio Marturano. I'm currently a student at the OU, doing my MBA in technological management. My business is called Nubis Aviation LTD. It's essentially a training organisation specifically for maintenance personnel within the aviation industry. You see, currently all maintenance personnel have to carry out regulatory training every two years. In order to do this, they're taking off shifts for up to five days every two years to carry out this training. This causes a huge financial and resource burden due to manpower shortages, never mind the cost of the training itself.

In order to rectify this, my partners and I have developed a unique and effective learning management system to carry out a continuous learning programme, whereby the entire two-year syllabus is taken apart and split up into 15 to 30-minute blocks which can be done every day, or every week in order to establish this over a two-year period. We've already had this approved by the government, and in order to establish ourselves into the industry, we've got contractual basis with up to five recruitment agencies at the moment, hopefully more, whereby we'll be the sole training provider.

This means that already upon launch-- which hopefully will be next month-- we're going to have over 5,000 contract engineers and access to over 100 maintenance organisations. Our hope is to be the flagship provider for our continuous learning programme, which will help change how training is done in the aviation industry. After this, and hopefully in the future, we're going to use this in order to establish an approved training organisation in order to actually make licenced engineers.

I'm running out of time, and I don't want to ramble, so I want to just thank you for your time, and hope for you you'll consider our idea for the New Business Challenge. Goodnight.