



Guide to Building a Winning 5-Minute Pitch

A pitch is an invitation to solve a problem together. When introducing your Village to someone, your goal is to inform, inspire, and get them to take action.

The Pitch Blueprint (Time Allocation)

Time	Goal	Focus
0:00 - 0:30	The Hook	Grab attention with a specific, emotional story.
0:30 - 1:30	The Problem & Our Solution	Clearly define the unmet need and introduce your organization as the direct answer.
1:30 - 3:00	The Impact Story	Prove your value with a brief, human-centered success story and one key metric.

3:00 - 4:00	The Tailored Ask	Explicitly state what you need from this specific audience (e.g., signing up to be a member, coming to an event, donations).
4:00 - 5:00	The Call to Action & Close	Provide a clear next step and end with a strong, memorable statement.

1. Start with an Immediate, Emotional Hook (0:00 - 0:30)

Don't start with your mission statement. Start with **the person you serve**.

- **Best Practice:** Open with an **anecdote** about one member's experience. For example, instead of saying, "We provide transportation," say, "**Last Tuesday, 87-year-old Ms. Helen was able to visit her doctor for the first time in six months because a volunteer drove her.**"
- **Identify the Problem:** Immediately follow up by defining the larger issue your organization solves (e.g., social isolation, lack of accessibility, food insecurity).

2. Define the Solution Simply (0:30 - 1:30)

After defining the problem, introduce your organization as the essential solution.

- **Avoid Jargon:** Your pitch should be clear and simple. Avoid acronyms and industry terms. Use active, powerful verbs.
- **The Bridge:** Connect the problem directly to your services. For example, "The problem is isolation. **[Village Name] is the antidote.** We are a member-based organization providing both vital services and engaging social opportunities."
- **Know Your Audience:** Tailor the pitch to who you're talking to. For example, for potential service members, emphasize the concrete tasks volunteers will do.

3. Provide Evidence (1:30 - 3:00)

Your audience needs proof. Impact is about transformation, not just activity.

- **Use the 'Show, Don't Just Tell' Rule:** Instead of saying, "We have many members," say, "**We currently support 400 seniors.**" (Quantify your success.)
- **The One Key Metric:** Memorize one statistic that perfectly illustrates your impact and use it as a powerful summary point. **Example:** "In our Village survey, 60% of Village members report reduced loneliness" or "66% of seniors over the age of 80 live alone."

4. Create a Tailored Call to Action (CTA) (4:00 - 5:00)

A strong pitch doesn't just ask for "support." It asks for a **specific, measurable next step.**

Goal	Weak CTA	Strong, Specific CTA
Engagement	"Come see what we do."	"We invite you to our Member Coffee Hour on [Date]. Here's a postcard with details."
Recruitment	"Please help us find volunteers."	"We need three new volunteers to drive on Tuesdays. Can you share our urgent request on your neighborhood listserv?"

Donation	"We need more money."	"Introduce me to the head of the community giving at your company next week."
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5. Essential Preparation and Follow-Up

Your pitch starts before you open your mouth and doesn't end until the action is completed.

Pre-Pitch Preparation

- **Practice for Time:** Time yourself until you can deliver the entire pitch naturally in **4 minutes and 30 seconds**. This leaves time for pauses, personality, and questions.
- **Use a Prop (Optional):** Carry something tangible, like your event postcard invite or the one-pager of member stories, to leave behind.
- **Know Your 'Why':** Be ready to share, in one sentence, why *you* personally volunteer or work for the organization. Passion is persuasive.

Post-Pitch Follow-Up

- **Immediate Action:** Always hand out something with your contact information.
- **Email Follow-Up (Within 24 Hours):** Send an email that thanks the recipient, briefly restates the primary ask, and provides the necessary link or contact information to complete the action (e.g., the link to RSVP for the event). **Don't wait for them to act—enable them.**

SAMPLE PITCH

5-Minute Pitch: "Finding Your People"

1. The Hook: Real-Life Impact (0:00 – 0:45)

"Thanks for taking a few minutes to chat. I really want to share why I got involved with the [Village Name] myself.

"I think about my neighbor, Eleanor, who's 89. After her husband passed, she was struggling. It wasn't about her physical health—it was about that crushing feeling of being alone. She was healthy but just... isolated. You hear stories about that all the time."

"When she finally came to a Village coffee hour, she was quiet. But the next week, she was back. Now, three years later, she runs the book club! She's using our volunteer drivers for her errands, but honestly, the biggest change is the energy she has. She's not just getting by; she's found her people here."

2. The Simple Solution (0:45 – 1:45)

"That's really the core of what the 'Village' is about. We all want to stay in our homes as long as possible, but managing everything can get overwhelming. Who do you call when the light fixture buzzes? Or when you need a ride to a specialist?

"We solve that by providing two things: a ready-made social life and a vetted personal support system.

"Think of us as a reliable extension of your own family, but right here in the neighborhood. When you join, you instantly access pre-screened, trustworthy help for all those annoying little tasks—rides, light tech support, minor household help—and you get a calendar full of things you *want* to do with people you *like*."

3. The Value and The Proof (1:45 – 3:30)

"A lot of people ask, 'What am I really paying for?' And my answer is always, 'Peace of mind and connection.'

"Trying to vet a handyman or find a reliable, safe driver on your own is time-consuming and often stressful. We've done all that work for you. Our members received over 2,000 volunteer hours of direct service just last year. That's a huge benefit.

"But let me be honest: The biggest value isn't the service hours. It's what the members tell us: 'This is where I feel like I belong.' You're joining a community of peers who understand the realities of this stage of life, and that shared experience is truly what helps."

4. The Invitation (3:30 – 4:45)

"We think you, with all your experience, would be a fantastic addition to our group, and we genuinely believe we can make your life easier and richer.

"We don't want you to sign up blind, though. We'd love for you to get a real feel for the community. We're hosting a [event]—it's just a casual coffee hour where you can meet the staff and, more importantly, talk to people who have been members for years.

"Will you let me know if I can save you a seat at the Welcome Event on [Date/Time/Location]? It's a great way to see what we do without any pressure to join."

5. Clear Next Step (4:45 – 5:00)

"I've jotted down all the event and RSVP info for you on this postcard. I'll also follow up with a quick email tomorrow with a link to that event registration, just in case. Can I get your email?"

"I truly hope to see you there."

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