Creating Your Pitch

**Pitch:** A verbal or written sale or “spiel” matching your specific qualifications and interests to the specific job, company and industry that will differentiate you. The goal is to obtain an interview (and get a company to read your resume) and stand out among others.

**Venues:** elevators, tailgates, social settings (i.e., cocktail parties), career fairs, corporate presentations/receptions, interviews, cover letters, thank you letters,

**Preparation:**
1.) Research the industry, company, organization or department, as well as the function and position.
2.) Identify your top skills with the skills they are looking for and a matching story.
3.) Practice!

**Answering these questions is good preparation for creating your pitch.**
- Please tell me about yourself.
- Your resume doesn’t tell me everything about you, so tell me more…
- What would your supervisor or co-workers say about you?
- When (what situation) did your co-workers or department turn to you for help with a problem?
- What are your future short and long term professional career goals?
- Tell me what you know about our company and why you want to work for us; why this position?
- How did you decide to go into (applicable function)?
- What is the one thing I will remember you by or what differentiates you from other candidates?

**Actual Pitch Structure:**
1.) Naming Game (conversational waiting, dialog, ebb & flow)
2.) Student Status (depending on context)
3.) Position Seeking…show interests, passion
4.) Sales Pitch = MATCHING
5.) Closing the Deal: Asking for interview
6.) Have 1-2 questions for them

**Do’s & Don’ts:**
- Do speak slowly.
- Do make excellent eye contact.
- Do gesture appropriately.
- Do shake hands at the beginning and the end of the sale.
- Do ask for a business card (but be prepared that they might not give it to you).
- Do give them your business card (if you have one).
- Do wear your MSU MBA name badge.
- Do work through the room/companies based on your preferences and prioritized list.
- Do provide something they’ll remember you by (a special connection, experience, skill)
- Do take brief notes after talking to each recruiter/company.
- Don’t get distracted by chaotic surroundings.
- Don’t waste too much time on small talk.
- Don’t be redundant, due to nerves.
- Don’t provide a cover letter—too much paperwork for recruiters.
- Don’t wander around with food in hand (or fragments in teeth!).
- BE YOURSELF!
Samples of Opening Paragraphs for Cover Letters:

A.)
I am passionate about marketing, creative in solving problems and exceptional at critical analysis. Most importantly, I am thrilled about an opportunity to obtain a Brand Management position at Whirlpool and want - very much - to interview for the Associate Brand Manager position. Currently I am a second year MBA student at Michigan State University, with concentrations in Marketing and Change Management.

B.)
Attending the corporate presentation and talking to alumni gave me insights into the challenging assignments people at A.T. Kearney work on. So, I am extremely eager to interview on October 10, for the sourcing associate position when you come to Michigan State University, where I am a second year MBA student. I am confident that my sourcing and consulting experience will enable me to deliver results and derive benefits for your clients.

C.)
When I came to Michigan State University to earn an MBA with a concentration in Supply Chain Management, I came with the goal of working for a global chemical company like FMC. During my work here, I have actively sought to learn as much as I can about supply chain operations and overall corporate strategies for chemical/petrochemical companies. The extent to which I am impressed and excited about what I discovered has been underscored by conversations with employees at several chemical companies. So, you can understand my enthusiasm at learning you are looking for a Global Commodity Manager and my ardent desire to interview for this position as I near graduation.

D.)
I am a second-year MBA student in The Eli Broad Graduate School of Management at Michigan State University. With concentrations in Finance and Corporate Accounting, I will graduate in May 2002. Naturally, I was very excited to learn of an opening in your Cargo Division as an Analyst (ref. # CGMBA) and would like to be pre-selected for an interview for this position during your campus visit on October 15. Since working for a major player in the airline industry has long been a dream of mine, I hope you will agree that I can offer Northwest Airlines precisely the unique mix of adaptability, knowledge and skills you seek in an analyst.

E.)
I am a second-year MBA student in The Eli Broad Graduate School of Management at Michigan State University, graduating in May 2002. I am extraordinarily interested in your recent job posting at my career services office for an Analyst position with your Cargo Division (CGMBA). Because of my personality, skills, professional experience and graduate majors in Finance and Business Information Systems, I can offer Northwest Airlines that unique package of qualifications necessary to perform admirably in this position. Not only do I have extensive knowledge of and experience in applying the latest financial and economic analysis methodologies, I have developed the oral and written communication skills which help me succeed in a culturally diverse, fast-paced and ever-changing work environment.

F.)
I am excited to learn of an opening in your Cargo Division as an Analyst (ref. # CGMBA) and would like to be pre-selected for an interview during your visit to the Michigan State University campus on October 15. I am a second-year MBA student in The Eli Broad Graduate School of Management at Michigan State University, majoring in Finance and Accounting, and I will graduate in May 2002. Since working for a major player in the airline industry has long been a dream of mine, I hope you will agree that I can offer Northwest Airlines the unique mix of adaptability, knowledge and skills you seek in an analyst.

G.)
Example of short, email version:

I would like to be put on the January 23rd interview schedule at Michigan State’s Broad School for your MBA Finance Internship at Intel Corporation. In my position at Ford Motor Company, I managed the implementation of a financial module of an ERP system. I oversaw the project’s $2 million budget, which required substantial interaction with multiple functional units and in-depth analyses of financial reporting metrics.
Thank You Letter Sample:

3001 Staten Avenue  
East Lansing, MI  48910  
(517) 394-1784  
e-mail: bainz@msu.edu

October 17, 2001

Mr. Sam Gray  
Northwest Airlines  
Cargo Human Resources  
St. Paul, MN  55111

Dear Mr. Gray:

Thank you for interviewing me on October 15 for the Analyst position currently available with your Cargo Division (ref. # CGMBA). The information you provided and your enthusiasm for your organization convinced me that Northwest Airlines is the employer for whom I want to work.

I was very pleased to have you point out that the skills I acquired as a CPA at Ernst & Young can be immediately applied to the Analyst position. Similarly, my proven track record for producing accurate financial forecasts and reducing budgetary expenditures with HIJ Computing will indeed help Northwest improve profitability. With regard to your question about my extra-curricular activities, I neglected to mention that I am in my third year as a volunteer helping senior citizens prepare their tax returns, an activity I find extremely rewarding.

I look forward to hearing back from you by the deadline you stated, October 19th. If you would like additional information, please contact me at (517) 394-1784 or via e-mail at bainz@msu.edu. I will contact your office on October 31 to see how your selection process is proceeding and the status of my candidacy.

Sincerely,

Zoey A. Bain