

Why Practice Your Business Pitch?

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A "business pitch" is a presentation by entrepreneurs or small business owners to an audience they need to persuade.

Most often a business pitch is to one or more investors considering supporting your company. But it can also be a pitch to your leadership team on a social media campaign you'd like to launch, or a pitch to a banker to loan you money, or one of a countless number of similar situations.

When you pitch, you're prepared to persuade.

Nothing prepares you to persuade better than practice.

"Practice does not make perfect. Only perfect practice makes perfect."

Vince Lombardi, World Champion
Football Coach

It's easy to understand the points you want to make, but harder to make them to an audience with power and persuasion. That's why practice is essential.

A critical business skill is learning how to persuade and motivate others. That's a skill you'll get to practice and master by earning the Statewide Micro-Enterprise Credential.

What is practice? Practice is "the repeated performance of an activity to acquire or maintain proficiency." That means doing something over and over again - with the proper approach - will help you master a critical skill.

Practice can happen almost anywhere, at almost any time.

Talking to yourself while driving or riding the bus? Talking out loud in the shower or bath? Talking to your pet? These are all perfectly acceptable and appropriate ways to practice. They are opportunities to "hear yourself" - to experiment with different ways of expressing your key points, and hearing which approach you like best.

Not Perfect Practice - *Deliberate Practice*

"Thing is, that phrase 'perfect practice' too often seems to give people the wrong impression. How so? . . . I'd argue that 'perfect' practice is just another name for **deliberate practice**. Mistakes aren't the problem. The problem is not taking the time to articulate the *specifics* of the mistake, the *cause* of the mistake, and the potential *solutions*, so you can avoid making that same mistake over and over."

Noa Kagayama, Ph.D.
Bulletproof Musician blogger

The key is: *make the practice count!* The characteristics of effective practice are:

- 1) **Repetition** - practice means doing something over and over and over again. Practice requires the time necessary to repeat the skill you're trying to master many times.
- 2) **Reflection** - you have to watch and/or listen to yourself when you're practicing, in order to determine what you're doing well, and where you need to make changes. As Dr. Kagayama above suggests, **deliberate practice is the best** - where you take the time to reflect on what you're doing and arrive at the best way to proceed.
- 3) **Revision** - based on your practice, you should revise and improve whatever you're attempting to do.

You've developed lots of materials during the course of earning the Statewide Micro-Enterprise Credential that you can use as business pitch materials. The three slide presentations you've developed would be perfect. So would the three slide presentation developed by a classmate. It's *great* practice to learn how to present unfamiliar material.

To earn the Statewide Micro-Enterprise Credential you're required to make a business pitch to an unfamiliar workplace adult. Take the time now to practice your business pitch skills.