Pitching

Haseeb Qureshi
Here’s how I’ll break it down:

1. Before the meeting
2. Preparing your deck and materials
3. The actual pitch
4. Pulling a round together
Before the Meeting

• Ideally, don’t have a fundraising conversation be our first interaction!

• Always get a warm intro

  • Crypto investors rarely take cold meetings

  • The industry is full of noise, bad actors, bullshit artists

  • Some social proof goes a long way to getting past a filter
This is what my cold email inbox looks like.

It’s going to be hard for me to find you in here.
Before the Meeting

• If you must go cold…
  • Twitter or some other form of engagement works better than cold email
  • Give enough personalization so I know it’s not a mass email

• Canvas all the funds that could be a fit for your startup

• Have an idea of what your prospective investor is into
  • If you’re a gaming company, seek out gaming investors
Before the Meeting

• Practice pitching on your friends/advisors
  • Get honest feedback from them (most people won’t give you this)
• Pitch on video / self-Zoom, critique yourself (wait a day!)
Deck and Materials

• Tell a story in your deck. In seed, narrative is everything.
• Keep it short. Shorter than you think.
  • Keep slides simple and uncluttered.
  • No math on your slides unless it’s extremely simple.
• Craft your deck as though your audience is stupid and easily distracted.
  • This means each slide can stand on its own.
Deck and Materials

• Don’t spend half the deck explaining how cool crypto is or how crypto is going to change the world.

• There are five key things I want to know in your pitch:

1. Who you are
2. What you do
3. Why your startup will work
4. Why it’ll change everything
5. What you want from me
Deck and Materials

• Things you don’t need:

  • A monetization plan or token model
    • It’s nice to see you’ve thought about this, but don’t need a concrete answer yet

  • A valuation
    • You need to know how much you’re raising, but the market usually determines the valuation

  • A TAM
Deck and Materials

• Use Docsend

• Use Docsend

• Use Docsend

• If you have a cool demo, include it. If your demo looks terrible, don’t.

• Use your judgment!
The 7 Slide YCombinator Template

1. Intro
2. Problem
3. Product / customer
4. Opportunity (TAM)
5. Traction
6. Team
Pitching

• Please, don’t just read through your deck!
  
  • I want to get to know you, understand how you think.
  
  • I’m backing you more than I’m backing your pitch deck.
  
  • Your deck is a visual aid for our conversation, not a script to read.
  
  • Feel free to skip slides, run through it quickly, or just ignore the deck if it’s not useful for this conversation.
  
• The point of a pitch is to persuade the investor, not to complete a pitch.
Pitching

• Don’t try to impress me with technical jargon.
  • This is common in emerging technology—being obtuse and overcomplicated to dazzle investors.

• If you use charts or diagrams, make them simple.
  • They should be comprehensible at a glance.

• Make your pitch as lucid and clear as possible.
  • Teach me, don’t just try to impress me.

• Sell your vision!
Pitching

• Be mindful of time.

• Sound excited!

• Ask me questions. I’m qualifying you, so you should qualify me too.
  • Curiosity and choosiness about investors is a sign of strength and confidence.

• Get to know me. Plumb what I think about the world.
  • The best deals get done between people who like each other.
How 2 talk gud

• Speak slowly. Slower than you think. Enunciate.
• Make eye contact!
• If you’re going to make jokes, do it with confidence.
• Kill your “likes” and “ums.”
• Be concise. Use simple words.
• Give direct answers. No evasion ever.
• Speak with descending tonality.
Pulling your round together

• Look busy and in high demand. Signaling is half the game.

• Build the impression of scarcity.

• Be choosey with who you let invest.

  • A lack of choosiness projects a lack of demand or lack of experience—neither are good signals.

• If you promise someone something, your word should be ironclad.

• That said, unless you explicitly make a promise or sign a term sheet, everything is preliminary.
Pulling your round together

• Reach out to investors you’re less excited about first to get some pitching reps in.
  
  • Then go after the dream team.
  
  • Contact slower-moving investors first (bigger, older firms)
  
• Be timely in your communication, even if it’s just to say “I can’t give you a response right now, but will be able to in X days.”
  
• Pursue a strong lead.
  
  • Strong leads are pretty much always better than “party rounds”
Pulling your round together

• Know how much you need to raise and what you’ll spend it on.

• Valuation is a *tool* to get the capital and partners you want.

• First-time founders rarely understand this, but serial entrepreneurs almost always do.

• Once terms are in sight, introduce deadlines and get things moving.

• Otherwise investors will assume they can wait.

• Investors are lazy. It’s up to you, not them, to get things closed quickly.
Example slide deck & pitch

(By Haseeb, GPT-3, and Stable Diffusion)
DataCoin

Your data, your choice.
Today, large companies control and abuse their user’s data. DataCoin gives that power back to users.
How DataCoin Works

• Users will be able to monetize their data and control their privacy. DataCoin is the token used to access their data.

• The token will be used to reward users for sharing their data.

• The more data a user shares, the more tokens they will earn.

• We’ll also have a marketplace where users can buy and sell data.
The Opportunity

• There are over 3 billion internet users who generate data that can be monetized.

• The global data market is expected to grow from $1.7 billion in 2016 to $3.0 billion by 2021.

• DataCoin will enable users to monetize their data in a way that is convenient, safe, and secure.
Traction

• DataCoin has been featured in TechCrunch, Mashable, and VentureBeat.

• DataCoin has a strong web3 community on Discord, Twitter.
Team

CEO: Sasha Koprivnikar

Serial entrepreneur with experience in web3 technologies and data science. He has a degree in computer science from Stanford University and has worked as a software engineer at Google and Facebook.

CTO: Anastasia Kravchuk

Anastasia is a data scientist with experience in web3 technologies and data mining. She has a degree in data science from Stanford University and has worked as a data scientist at Google and Facebook.
Our Ask

• We're raising $1 million from VCs.

• The money will be used to build the platform, hire talent, and market the platform.
Why we’ll win

• We're solving a real problem that affects billions of people.

• We have a strong team with the experience and expertise to build a successful platform.

• We have a clear path to monetization.

• We have a strong advisory board.

• We're based in Silicon Valley.
OK! Now you should be a pitching machine, thanks to GPT-3. 👍

Questions?