



Tips for Making a Pitch at an Event

At a community dinner or other public event or as part of a house party, the pitch for donations is often the most important part of the event. The following tips will help prepare you for that crucial moment.

- ★ *Choose your moment.* Time the pitch so that the most people will be there when it is made and so it occurs at the point of highest energy in the program.
- ★ *Keep it short and simple.* Your pitch will be more powerful if it is strong, from the heart, and to the point.
- ★ *Dramatize.* Remind people what's at stake.
- ★ *Be creative about the ask.* See below for ideas.
- ★ *Lead by example.* Have “plants” who will pull out their checkbooks and declare the gift that they will make (if part of the program) or place their contributions in the collection basket as people come around.
- ★ *Make it easy.* Hand out an envelope, donation card or slip, and a pen to every person.
- ★ *Collect the money.* Have a team of people politely but actively collect checks shortly after the pitch. Those collecting should hold baskets as they approach people, not just leave the basket on a table or even just pass it around. They should make sure that everyone is approached, looked in the eye, and thanked. Have someone with a basket stand at the door to catch every person as they leave.

Ideas for Doing a Pitch

Visioning exercise. “Close your eyes and picture...” Paint a vision of hope for the possibility of change in our community. Use humor – ask your audience to envision the project’s work, then envision raising their hand, reaching into their pocket or purse to get their checkbook. Ask them to envision writing their lucky number down, then adding lots of zeroes to it.

Double what you came here to give. “If you came here thinking you would give \$20, consider giving \$40. If you came here to give \$50, consider \$100.”

Challenge people to meet the goal. State the fundraising goal for the party and ask people to help you meet it. “Tonight we’re trying to raise \$1,000. How much can you give toward that goal?” Report back on how much you have raised and ask if people will pitch in more if you need just a little more to reach the goal. Celebrate when you reach the goal.

Lead with a gift. The person doing the pitch can lead with their own gift: “I am going to start off the night with a gift of (so many dollars).”

Have people announce their gifts. Ask people to stand up or raise their hands if they can give \$200, \$100, \$50, \$25.

Ask people to stretch. Ask people to contribute what is significant for them: “This issue is important, and that is why you are all here with us. I would like to ask you to think about why you care about this cause, and then make the biggest contribution you can, one that is truly significant for you.”