

University of California
Graduate School of Journalism

Participant Guide:

Pitching Stories for Radio



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PITCH DOC TEMPLATE:

Producer/Reporter:	<i>Your Name</i>
Submitted To:	<i>Media Organization, Show, Etc.</i>

LEDE

Example: *This is a story about the CCHR, a crack team of scientologists who operate under a non-profit that's dedicated to destroying the psychiatry industry. They believe that psychiatrists are the most evil people in the world.*

CHARACTER(S)

Name	Description (Personality, Relationship to other characters, if they're good talkers, etc.)
Name	Description

CONTEXT

- Your interest in the story
- Whether this story has already been covered...if so, how? By whom?

BEATS

Map out the plot of your story. Be sure to include [LINKS 

Available online at: bit.ly/pitchdoc23

Best Practices Checklist:

- ☐ All filler text in template is removed and/or replaced
 - ☐ Lede section is removed if not utilized
 - ☐ Context section is removed if not utilized
 - ☐ Beats of the story are outlined, including the following:
 - ☐ The sound family (archival tape, scene tape, etc.)
 - ☐ The stakes of the story
 - ☐ Key moments, including whether you'll be there to collect tape
 - ☐ The conclusion (proposed, if not yet clear)
 - ☐ The big idea (and whether a character states/shares this view)
 - ☐ Approximately 3-5 minutes of relevant tape has been included
-

Notes:

- The lede section is optional, but may be helpful if you're struggling to get started, or are pitching an unusually long/complicated piece.
- The context section is optional, especially if this information been covered elsewhere in correspondence(s) that you've had with potential partners
- Don't feel as though you need to submit pitches in this format, but do consider using this as a guide.

Available online at: bit.ly/pitchdoc23

Group Work: Sample Pitch A

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Independently read through the pitch. Then, as a group, discuss:

1. What the pitch does well
2. Errors and how you'd fix them
3. Other areas for improvement*

*Use skills you've gained from other classes and other lectures to improve upon things like interviewing, pre-interviewing, structuring, etc.

Group Work: Sample Pitch B

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Group Work: Sample Pitch C

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Group Work: Sample Pitch D

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Solo Work: Drafting Your Own Original Pitch

Context:

Being a great reporter and producer isn't always enough to be successful in the industry. You'll also need to know how to convince people (editors, hosts, shows) that your story is worth investing resources in. So it's time to draft your own *original* pitch for radio.

Guidelines:

Story: Draft an original pitch for radio. The story you are pitching should meet *one* of the following criteria: a story that you're currently working on (Independently or for another class), or a story that you've previously worked on for a print publication.

Format: While you are encouraged to use the best practices checklist and template to steer your work, you may format the final product in the way that makes the most sense to you. However it must be turned in either via email as a shared Google Doc. All audio files must be attached and clearly labeled/referenced, or embedded as links in the doc. (Please don't make me hunt for files!)

Additional Considerations: If you choose to draft a pitch for a show/organization that has specific guidelines for submission, please either link or attach those to your pitch.

Evaluation: Please review the rubric on the next page to understand how your performance will be evaluated. As always, you will have the ability to re-submit your work for a higher grade.

Due: _____

Rubric: Drafting Your Own Original Pitch

Competency	Below Expectations 0-1	Meets Expectations 2-3	Exceeds Expectations 4-5
Providing compelling and relevant tape and sound family	No tape is included in the pitch. No mention of when tape will be collected. Sound family is not described in any detail	Tape is included with the pitch, but is either too long or not long enough to showcase story and/or characters. Tape does not accurately reflect sound family described	Tape matches sound family described...is approximately 3-5 minutes in length...is compelling and demonstrates that character(s) are good talkers...pitch may also state when/if additional tape can be collected
Describing multi-dimensional characters	Characters are described in minimal and/or irrelevant terms...	At least one character is described in terms of personality, how they'll sound on tape	More than one character is described in terms of personality, relationships to others, and how they'll sound on tape
Outlining the beats of the narrative	Sequence or events and how they'll unfold is unclear or incomplete	Overall sequence of events is described, but there is little/ no description of reveals and/or how tape will be incorporated	Sequence of events is described in great detail, with attention paid to reveals, character defining moments, and if/how tape will be incorporated
Establishing the big idea	Big idea/conclusion is unclear...pitch may end on a cliffhanger	Big idea is established, but connection is not made to the conclusion of the story	Big idea is established clearly, it connects to an ending, and reference is made to how characters feel/where they land
You have established your unique interest in this piece	Unclear how you relate to this piece, and whether other reporting exists	You have expressed interest in this story but it is unclear whether your interest is unique from existing reporting	You have a clear and unique interest in this piece; you have established how your coverage will differ from existing coverage
Pitch is appropriate for the recipient	Pitch is not appropriately matched to the show, guidelines have not been adhered to or are loosely adhered to	Guidelines may have been adhered to, but the recipient show is mismatched in terms of theme, coverage, sound family, etc.	Guidelines have been carefully followed, and the pitch is appropriate to the recipient in terms of theme, coverage, sound, etc. Pitcher demonstrates familiarity with the show and stories they cover.

Score: ____ / 30

Notes:

Learner Survey

Confidence in Learning				
I enjoyed this lecture.	Rate how much you agree with this statement. <i>(Circle one.)</i>			
	1 Disagree	2	3	4 5 Agree
I am likely to recommend this lecture to other students in the program.	Rate how much you agree with this statement <i>(Circle one.)</i>			
	1 Disagree	2	3	4 5 Agree

Confidence in Learning				
DESCRIBE How to pitch narrative shortform pieces for radio, using common best practices	How confident are you in your ability to do this? <i>(Circle one.)</i>			
	1 Low	2	3	4 5 High
IDENTIFY Common errors made when pitching narrative shortform pieces for radio	How confident are you in your ability to do this? <i>(Circle one.)</i>			
	1 Low	2	3	4 5 High
DRAFT A practice pitch for radio using a current or past story you've reported for print	How confident are you in your ability to do this? <i>(Circle one.)</i>			
	1 Low	2	3	4 5 High

Value of Information			
Concept	Circle ONE	Circle ONE	Circle ONE
Drafting a practice pitch for radio	How valuable is this concept to you? (Low) 1...2...3...4...5 (High)	How new was this concept to you? (Low) 1...2...3...4...5 (High)	How well was this concept taught ? 1.....Poorly 2.....Inadequately 3.....Well 4.....Really Well

General Comments	