



How to Pitch *Anything* in 1Min.



a
Special Report

By

Kaia Alexander

Hi.

I'm Kaia Alexander, and I work in the movie business. I'm also the founder of the Entertainment Business League for womxn. It's possible you may have even seen and enjoyed some of the movies I've made during my career!

I'm what's known as a "multi-hyphenate" meaning I'm a screenwriter/director/producer, but most relevant to this special report is that I was a development executive (dev exec), which means I sat in the buyer's chair.

From 2005-2007, I helped decide what movies to make at our production company Inferno, and I worked on the films THE GOOD NIGHT with Penelope Cruz and Gwyneth Paltrow, PEACEFUL WARRIOR with Nick Nolte, and JUST FRIENDS with Ryan Reynolds and Anna Faris.

I've heard hundreds if not thousands of pitches in my career, some of them so bad I would actually pause the pitch to coach the presenters on how to make it better. There were busy days I heard 6 pitches a day, and there were busy weeks I heard 50 pitches or more.

I learned a lot about pitching, about what to do and what not to do, and this special report is your primer.

It's imperative that your pitch is *memorable*.

Some people inherently pitch well, but most don't, and it's a skillset that every entrepreneur needs to succeed, whether you're a creative like a screenwriter, or a Harvard Business School grad.

Great news is that anyone can learn it!



Kaia's 1 Minute Pitch Technique

You need to be able to pitch anything –whatever project you're selling - in 1 minute. You'll sink or swim in those first 60 seconds. Entire companies and movies get made because of how that minute goes by.

You must master the 1 minute pitch.

Let's talk about my technique and why it works.

Why 1min?

Everyone has 1 minute.

Whether you're in an elevator with Elton John, or an Academy-award winning producer has blocked your car in a parking lot (which is how I pitched and got my first novel *Written in the Ashes* optioned), you're standing in the TSA line, or you have a quick "general" meeting as a writer... you need to –in an instant and under great pressure – nail your pitch in 1 minute.

Speaking of Pressure...

...Sometimes what you're pitching is what I call a "stretch pitch", meaning you're extremely nervous about pitching the person you're talking to. For the sake of this special report, let's assume you're about to make the biggest stretch pitch of your career.

There's an acronym I teach that will help you remember what to do. To wit:

CAT + DOG + HORSE = ANIMAL



Cat/Dog/Horse/Animal. That's it. That's the acronym you'll need to remember. In a heartbeat! When that big movie producer is standing in front of you, or you're raising a seed round from an investor you want to close for \$3,000,000. Think to yourself: "Cat-Dog-Horse-Animal!" And the rest will come to you.

Here's what it means:



CAT: Connect



Cat stands for: *Connect*. You need to make a *connection* with the human being in front of you. Do it quickly, ideally in one short sentence.

Here's an example of how I connected with producer Judd Apatow when we'd never met before at an event in front of 1000 people and the press: "Hi, I'm Kaia, and I was with Garry Shandling in 2006 and 2007." He immediately gave me his full attention and we had a wonderful connection talking about someone we loved, and I thanked him for the wonderful docu-series he made about Garry.

That's an example of a *mutual friend connection*. We do it all the time. We share how we have a friend in common. Mention that immediately to the person you're pitching, especially if you know that the friend is beloved.

You can also *give a genuine compliment*. If you've just met Stephen King and he's the reason you became a writer, tell him so. It's always meaningful – even at the highest levels of fame – to hear how your impact has shaped or inspired another person.

Do you have *something unusual in common*? Perhaps you're both queer, or you attended the same high school, or you share a love of scuba diving with sharks, or your spouses went to university together. Lead with it.

When I met comedian Kevin Nealon the second time, we quickly discovered that he now lives on the street I grew up on. Talk about a cool and memorable connection!

Do your research.

What could you share in one sentence that genuinely *connects* you to the human being in front of you?



DOG: Doorway



Dog stands for: *Doorway*. I call this the *doorway*, meaning, it's *the doorway to your passion*. To gushing about your passion. It's usually 1-3 words.

The mistake I see writers make a lot when they're pitching a script is that they try to fit the entire plot into a pitch. No one cares. And it's even worse if the writer is nervous and can't find how to convey their passion about this script. It's boring.

You know what's never boring? *Passion*. Passionate people pull you in. They make you curious. They're alive. You want to feel alive. You'll lean forward. We all do.

A doorway is the one word or phrase you can summon that brings your passion to the fore.

I wrote a comedy feature called THE ENCHANTMENT OF CARY GRANT. "Cary Grant" is my *doorway*. I'm crazy about Cary Grant! As soon as I say his name I'm through the doorway and into the zone of my passion. It's a joy to share about it. It gets even more fun if the person I'm talking to also loves Cary Grant.

I have a friend who created a yoga and body rehab company. Talking about the benefits of yoga is her doorway. She loves how it helps people! She instantly lights up the room with her passion.

So, what's that doorway for you? – And you may have more than one and that's okay.

By the way, I teach this pitch technique in a 2-hour workshop also, and there I've discovered that people have natural passion for what they care about. And often it's so close to them that they forget to mention it altogether! They might care deeply about their cultural origins, or their home town, or motorcycles, or the ocean, or children. In one instance, a writer had written a movie about civil war re-enactment, and she was Vietnamese and her parents were Civil War re-enactors. She forgot to mention that last part, which she overlooked because it was so deeply woven into her fabric, but it was the very thing that was the most fascinating about why she wrote the film.

Whatever has you so excited, you just need a doorway that's a word or phrase that opens a door to your excitement and passion.

Your doorway is the *reason* you love what you're talking about. Then talk about it!

You can even say, "Let me tell you about ____." Then away you go!



HORSE: Hook



Horse stands for: *Hook*. Passion isn't enough to land a pitch, but it's the first imperative. Next, you need to *hook* your listener. Tell them why they should care.

This might be why your project is relevant, or why the timing is so perfect.

The hook might be why you're the writer for the job: you worked for the CIA for 20 years, so you're the one they should staff for that TV writer's room for the new espionage show.

It might be the fact that no one has done this before, and you're the first. It might be that tons of people care about this topic right now and you have the perfect angle for the audience, or your company solves a certain problem.

The hook is the reason the buyer or investor should care *right now*.

It's also okay to say something like, "I get that this may not be for you, but here's why I'm hoping it is____." You give them a little permission to wiggle off the hook, and then you hook them.

Oh, one great hook is: *there's competition*. That someone else wants it, and this is their chance to get in first.

Frankly, people don't always trust that they know what's good, because investing in anything or anyone is a risk. But many people trust that if there's a rush on something- that there's competition and other people want it- that it's probably good. (And if there's competition for your thing, put a ticking clock on it, meaning you'd like an answer in 24hrs or x days.)

You must hook the person you're talking to, or they won't prioritize your project over others in their queue. A great hook gets you to the front of the priority line. That's where you want to be. Without a great hook, you can get swept along for months, waiting to hear back. Or worse, you're ghosted because they forget to get back to you.

It happens all the time the more deal flow the person has whose attention or money you want. They're busy and in demand. That's why you need a hook.



ANIMAL: Ask



Animal stands for: *Ask*. The second you hook someone you must immediately pivot to your ask. What do you want? What's an easy next step for them to say "Yes" to? Don't just assume they know what you want. If you don't ask, they can't read your mind.

My favorite phrase for the ask is "Would you be willing to_____?"

...Read it by Thursday and get back to me then?

...Introduce me to your partner this week?

...Invest the first million?

...Give me an answer by Friday?

...Have your assistant put me on your schedule next week?

...Take a meeting with me?

Would you be willing to read my novel and give me a review on Amazon?
Great! I really appreciate that.



* **BONUS TIP!** *

If the person you're pitching passes (meaning they say "no"), but they're complimentary of you or your project, ask them if they know anyone else you should talk to, and if they'd be willing to make that warm introduction for you. It's often easier on the person passing if they can do something for you since they like you, versus nothing at all.

People only do things for people they like. So if they don't like you yet, they'll think they like you because they helped you. We don't help people we don't like. That means your relationship will be considered higher value to them. I've met many wonderful partners because someone rejected one of my pitches and I used this question. It's very powerful.

Remember:



You might be at a party and realize you're seated next to someone that you want to pitch. All you need to do is remember is the acronym!

If you think to yourself "Cat+Dog+Horse=Animal" you'll remember this translates to "Connect - Doorway - Hook - Ask" you'll have the immediate key to unlock the perfect pitch technique in just 1 minute, and the person you're talking to might not even realize you're pitching because they enjoy it so much!



Your Next Step

So, what should you do next after reading this special report?

I offer workshops, live training and virtual 1-1 coaching sessions to support you and your career in the entertainment industry. You can always visit www.EntertainmentBusinessLeague.com to see what course or program may be right for you.

Entertainment Business School 12 Week Live Virtual Program

The entertainment business is opaque and difficult to navigate. At EBS, we hear this story a lot: Brilliant creatives (writer/director/actors) devote their lives to it, and then hit setbacks and career blocks that they have no guidance for. No university teaches the entertainment business. This information is hard won. What you don't know can and *does* hurt your career. You need to understand negotiation, deals, networking, pitching, reputation management, publicity, the guilds, if you need a company, and a whole lot more. Kaia is the lead trainer on this EBL flagship program, and you can see more at: www.EntertainmentBusinessSchool.com

Entertainment Business Mastery 6-Week E-Course

We created this course as a primer to the Entertainment Business School. We get it: you have a busy schedule, work, kids, family, other commitments – but you still need the information. You don't want to compromise your dreams, and you're ready for a career breakthrough that delivers results. In this asynchronous, evergreen program you get to access the most important entertainment business elements, without the live coaching. We created the Mastery to be easy on your wallet, and your schedule.

www.EntertainmentBusinessLeague.com/Mastery

Private Executive & Creative Career Coaching 1-1 Sessions with Kaia

If a class of 30+ is not for you, and you want private personalized instruction, we recommend 1-1 career coaching. *Entertainment executives and producers* are under serious pressure and decision timelines. *Creatives-writers/directors/actors* often have pivotal, crucial career crossroads, and it's important to get support, and not to lone wolf it. The stakes are high, and work-life balance suffers- you need to crush it in those moments. Kaia offers 1-1 coaching packages for executives, creatives, producers, film productions, and executive retreats. Take your career to the next level- coaching packages are available for a discounted rate. [Email Kaia to Find Out More](#)

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