

The Pitch

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Then I was to make a pitch, the sort of thing "the founder of a start-up" might do when that someone has "to make a pitch." I had to do it in 3 minutes. When I was told "3 minutes" that became the only idea of what a pitch might be that I had. "Right," I said to myself, "A pitch is something that I must say about another thing in 3 minutes."

Then I was told I had to "make a deck" or "use Power Point." I mentioned that Edward Tufte said that Power Point is why the Challenger exploded and why would I want to do that. The answer came: "It is a rule. Also 3 minutes." I was still not wanting to do that when I heard: "stopwatch."

A pitch is a sequence of things I must say about another thing in 3 minutes or less. But not more. Because stopwatch.

So, I made a sequence of 523 words and I said those words at a comfortable rate, but not too fast, in less than 3 minutes, but not too much less.

Then I made slides. Each slide said "This is what I am saying now" in order to indicate that what I am saying now is different from what I had been saying before.

Then I was standing in front of about 100 people. I read my 523 words. Every so often I changed the slide:

This is what I am saying now.

This is what I am saying now.

This is what I am saying now.

When I was finished, I looked out at 100 people looking back at me. We looked at each other in a silence that got bigger and bigger until it became a space that linked us and I realized they were all thinking that the simplest explanation they had just seen was that I had been sent from a different planet with only very approximate knowledge of how human beings do things, which was too bad as I seemed nice, but they had to kill me anyway, they had seen this movie before.

I had been looking foward to tacos.

