



6 Secrets to Laying Golden Eggs in a Credit Crunch

1. The easiest way to get what you want (i.e. a client's money) is to give them what they want - or need. Whose money is it anyway??

It is all about them, their company, their problems, their

fears, their needs, their threats and their wants. Research your audience, personalise your pitch by using relevant case studies and only use admissible and appropriate language and jargon. Only talk about yourself and your company when relating how your qualifications, experience and abilities can **help them get what or where they want.**

- 2. Find out what they want - where they are and where they want to be.** Listen aggressively and ask questions. Pay attention to what they say - ask questions to gain more detail or to check that you have really received what they have broadcast. Take notes, use their names. Summarise your understanding of their situation back to them.

Prescription without diagnosis is pants!

3. **Treat people like people.** People buy from people they like and trust, especially with the declining trust in that corporate logo on your business card!!! Don't rush in and knock people over - assess and respect the speed and mood of your audience. Be in the room, look them in the eye, switch off your Blackberry! Focus on being a human who can help.
Long-term loyalty is built up by real long term commitment - relationships count, especially in a credit crunch. (Pitch productivity success rates are great for managers, rubbish for pitch teams - focus on gaining or retaining happy trusting clients one at a time - the numbers and the ratios will look after themselves.) The risk/reward ratios of the client are what you should be focusing on - your impact on them, their career and their organisation is much more than just the project investment or your fee structure. It is where you as a professional could take them, their organisation or their career. ROI and a trusting relationship are a very strong pair.
4. **Be prepared without PowerPoint** - especially in small pitches over a coffee or at lunch. This is a good rule as it should stop you from depending on, and using, the same presentation for everyone and merely changing the name and logo on slide 1. Simple graphs and big pictures are much better than crammed details in small font. There is a difference between presenting findings of work already commissioned (educating) - which may well warrant 50 + slides - and pitching for business which should be far more concise.
5. **Competence is compelling - prove competence through case studies, not claims.** Memorable stories and case studies add credibility. They help you sell the pie and gravy and make you avoid listing mere ingredients. If your USP is global reach (and

global reach is decisively relevant to them!) talk about how your global reach helped a client - anonymous but specific. Match your competence and its relevance to the client.

- 6. Be positive and prepared for probing questions.** Questions and objections indicate either that more reassurance or proof is required from your side, or that they are thinking of giving you the work but need to understand the mechanics of going forward. Remember, most people will have to defend or justify their decisions to others so make sure you equip them with the answers they need - as long as they are valid, of course. Avoid the embarrassment, professional shame and reputational damage of being a hapless, cringeworthy, incompetent victim like those seen so often on Dragon's Den. You must have identified the MKTAT Questions (Must Know The Answer To) and the relevant answers - especially those relating to process details and duration, price and price justifications, personal knowledge of relevant case studies and what happens next.

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