

3 THINGS PRODUCERS LOOK FOR IN A PITCH

Tell people that you produce Broadway shows, and you're going to get a lot of people pitching you ideas.

Some of my peers may hate to hear an idea for a new jukebox musical from the guy they're sitting next to on a red-eye from LA to NYC, but I love it.

First, you never know where the next great idea is going to come from. And if you don't have your eyes and ears open to everything, you could miss it.

Second, if someone is passionate about the theater the least we can do is listen.

So, alas/alack, I've heard a lot of pitches. (And, of course, I've pitched a lot myself . . . especially when I'm raising money for a show, or trying to get a regional theater to take a shot on one of my shows.)

There are now three things I look for when I'm hearing a pitch . . . and when I say pitch, I really mean that one sentence description of what your show is, or what it will be.

Obviously, pitch meetings can dance around the subject and the show for hours, but every Writer or Producer should have a one sentence pitch of their show they can deliver in an elevator if we both got on at the lobby, and I was getting off at two!

Hollywood would call one of these sentences a log line (e.g. Speed = Die Hard on a bus), but since Hollywood has such a more commercial bent to what they do, I don't want to lump us into their log. That's why I call our one-sentence pitch a . . . well, I haven't actually come up with the catchy phrase for it yet! Maybe you can help!

But I do for sure know the three elements I want for each and every pitch that I listen to or create myself . . . and they are:

1 TELL A STORY

If there has been one consistent take away from every focus group I've ever done, it's that our audiences won't buy a ticket until they know (and are taken by) the story. They want to know the journey your characters are on, and the journey they are going to go on themselves before they'll engage. And Producers and Investors are the same. Every One Sentence Pitch (working title) has to give your audience a synopsis of not just what your show is about . . . but what happens. (We need action, not just art.)

2 TELL THE TONE

The OSP (One Sentence Pitch) has got to be constructed in a way that it tells the listener/reader the tone of your show. Is it a wacky comedy? Use wacky comedy in your pitch. Is it a drama? Make it dramatic. You want your audience to get a feel for what they're going to experience when they see/read your show from this one sentence. It'll help manage expectations and hopefully, create excitement. groups, on golf courses, and especially at alumni events. So figure out what you're passionate about, and get in a group of other folks just like you.

3 TELL IT SUCCINCTLY

Remember when I said I was getting off at floor two? And remember when I said this was an OSP? This isn't a FSP (Five Sentence Pitch) and it isn't even a ROOSP (Figure that out? Go ahead, I'll give you a sec . . . a Run-On One Sentence Pitch). This is the hardest part of creating an OSP but it's the most important part. Give me a taste, a short and sweet sample that makes me WANT more. You know how when you're walking by Auntie Anne's pretzel store they'll have someone outside giving away little bites . . . and how it always gets you to go in the store? Do THAT with your OSP.

With a short, story filled OSP told in the tone of your show, you're much more likely to sell it to whoever your audience is.

I look forward to sitting next to you on a red-eye to hear yours.