

SPEED LEAD TIPS

Prepare!

- Figure out what is unique about your artists or project.
- Make it exciting—don't be afraid to show your passion, but don't overdo it. Be true to yourself.
- If ever there was a less-is-more situation, this is it. Keep it simple. You've got two minutes. Sell the key idea(s) and leave them wanting more.
- Write down your pitch! Read it out loud. Re-write it. Read it to a friend. Re-write it again. Time it. Re-write one more time if it's running long.

Be Professional

Dress appropriately. Neatness counts when making first impressions. Leave the gum, snacks, and coffee behind. Confidence is important; you want to exude self-assurance, not arrogance.

...this could be the start of a beautiful friendship...

Don't forget to ask for the presenters' business cards. If none are available, jot down the name and organization (you can always pick up the contact information from the Participant List). Then make your mother proud—when you get back home follow-up with a brief thank-you note (not an email). It's a courtesy that refreshes the presenter's memory of you and the pitch. Keep the contact information for future reference.

Relax

Presenters are people too - they do not hold the fate of your career in their hands and most of the time they don't bite. If you approach the pitch the way you would any other business conversation, then you'll be fine; take a couple of calming breaths before you go in, smile, and be yourself. Remember, presenters *want* to like you and are aching to find out that there's an artist they don't know about but should. Tell them why you or your artist is one of them.

Choose the Right Words

Do not sit there and read your brochure out loud – you need to be able to talk about what's cool about you/your artist without notes. Also, edit your pitch for over-used adjectives. As one presenter delegate points out, "telling me that your unknown artist is "world class" doesn't necessarily make me believe that's true." Find genuine, authentic ways to communicate to the presenters you're addressing. Make them want to come to your exhibit on their own.

One Step at a Time

Remember that every conference and every pitch is a learning experience. Like anything, the more practice you have with pitches and presentations, the easier it gets. Most importantly, don't let an off encounter or a less-than perfect pitch get to you.

End the Right Way

When the bell ends your session, finish your thought and wrap things up. The next agent is ready to go and presenters will want a moment to write notes. Conclude your pitch with thanks. After the session, immediately jot down your own notes, including highlights, questions, or reactions. Get everything down on paper while it's still fresh in your mind.

