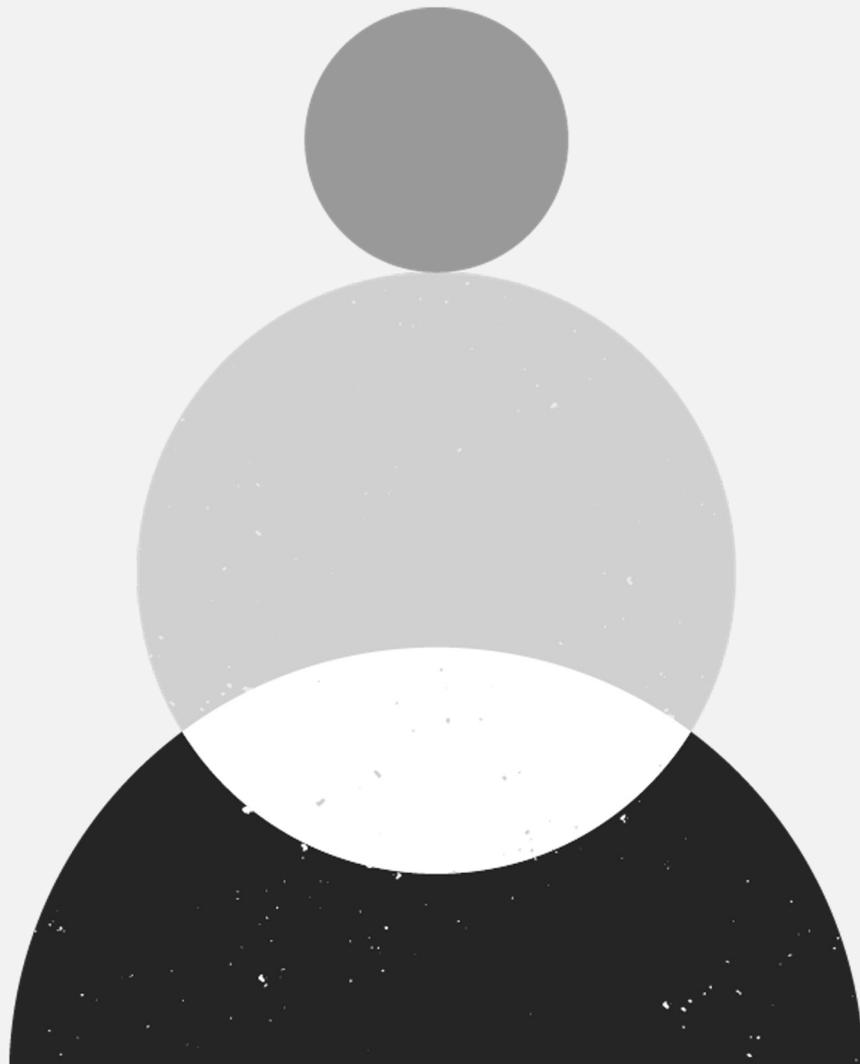


Pitch Deck Design

Pre-Seed & Seed Stages

PITCH WEEK – APRIL 2025





Cru Dorsey

I LOVE BICYCLES

15+ years of design, brand
and marketing experience

Graphic Designer & Creative Director.

I help companies turn big ideas into visual stories.

I have leveraged pitch decks for personal and professional development, opening many doors to new opportunities. Today, I'll show you how pitch decks can help you, too.

Agenda

01 Defining a Pitch Deck

02 Pitch Deck Framework

03 Delivery & Design

04 Resources

05 Q&A

Section 01

Defining a Pitch Deck

What is a Pitch Deck?

- A short slideshow that explains your idea – what it is, who it helps, why it matters, and what you need to make it happen.

IT'S LIKE A MOVIE TRAILER FOR YOUR BUSINESS.

- Think of a pitch deck as a “visual resume for your idea.”
- Need to inspire, explain, and persuade? A pitch deck is your friend.
- Keep it short, clear, and focused on the why it matters.

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

**A great pitch deck sparks
interest and opens doors.**

It's your first step to getting support, feedback, or funding.

Where are Pitch Decks from?

A result of Silicon Valley tech startups, venture capital & limited time

TODAY WE'LL FOCUS ON PRE-SEED & SEED DECKS.

1. Pre-Seed

The earliest stage of funding used to develop an idea into a prototype or MVP, often raised from founders, friends, or angel investors.

2. Seed

Funding to validate the product market fit & begin acquiring early users or customers, typically from angel investors or venture firms.

3. Series A

Investment to scale a proven product or service, build out the team, and establish repeatable business operations.

4. Series B/C

Capital used to accelerate expansion into new markets, grow revenue significantly, and gain competitive advantage.

5. Late Stage

Funding to prepare the company for an IPO or acquisition, focused on maximizing market share and profitability.

6. Exit Stage

The point at which investors and founders realize returns through an IPO, acquisition, or merger, transitioning the company to new ownership or public trading.

Alternative Pitch Deck Uses

While derived to seek funding, pitch decks can be applied in many areas:

1. Class or School Competitions

Present a project, invention, or campaign in a clear, compelling way.

2. Job or Internship Applications

Create a personal pitch deck to stand out—highlight skills, experience, and your value.

3. Event or Program Proposals

Propose a club, event, or local fundraiser to get buy-in from staff, sponsors, or partners.

4. Client/Project Pitches

Freelancers or businesses may use decks to win new work or present concepts to clients.

5. Team Presentations at Work

Present ideas to leadership, get approval for initiatives, or align teams around a plan.

6. Product or Content Launches

Launching an app, podcast, or art show? A deck helps explain what it is, who it's for, and how to support or promote it.

Section 02

Pitch Deck Framework

10 Core Slides of a Pitch Deck

01 **Cover Slide**
Hook

02 **Intro/Elevator Pitch**
Hook

03 **Problem**
Interest

04 **Solution**
Interest

05 **Market & Vision**
Consideration

06 **Business Model**
Consideration

07 **Why Now/Advantage**
Consideration

08 **Team**
Consideration

09 **The Ask**
Consideration

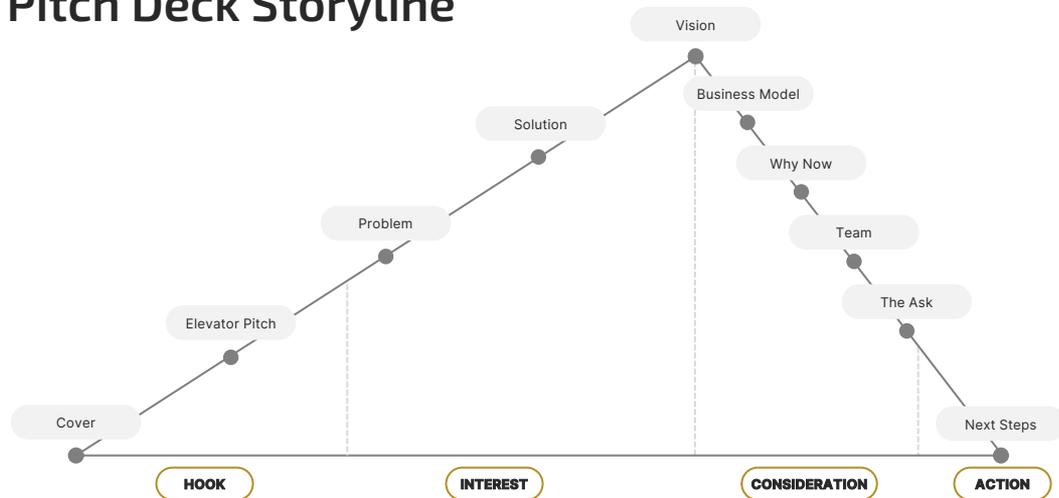
10 **Contact/Next Steps**
Action

4-PART

Storyline Framework

Tell your story in 4 parts that guide your audience from curiosity to action.

Pitch Deck Storyline



01 Hook

02 Interest

03 Consideration

04 Action

Cover Slide

This is your deck's first impression. It sets the tone and should grab attention.

WHAT TO INCLUDE

- Project name, tagline or one-liner, visual/graphic and date & version # (optional).

PROMPTS

- What's the name of your project? What short phrase will spark curiosity?

TIPS

- Use a clean layout with a striking image or design that fits your branding.

02 - HOOK

Elevator Pitch/Intro

Summarize your idea clearly and quickly—this sets the stage for everything else.

WHAT TO INCLUDE

- One sentence that combines what your idea is, who it's for, and why it matters.

PROMPTS

- What problem do you solve, for whom, and how are you different?

TIPS

- Make it memorable. Think of it like your opening scene or trailer voiceover.

Problem

Clearly show the pain points or challenges your audience is facing.

WHAT TO INCLUDE

- A relatable story or statement that highlights a real-world issue.

PROMPTS

- What's frustrating or costly about the current situation?

TIPS

- Use relatable language. Focus on why this problem deserves to be solved.

Solution

Show how your idea, product or service fixes the problem.

WHAT TO INCLUDE

- Brief product or service explanation, and what makes it effective.

PROMPTS

- How does your idea solve the problem in a unique way?

TIPS

- Keep it simple. Focus on benefits over features.

05 - CONSIDERATION

Market & Vision

Demonstrate who your idea is for and how big the opportunity is.

WHAT TO INCLUDE

- Target audience, market size, and long-term vision.

PROMPTS

- Who are your users? How many of them are there?
What's your big picture?

TIPS

- Use data if you have it. Paint an optimistic future.

06 - CONSIDERATION

Business Model

Explain how your project will make money or be sustainable.

WHAT TO INCLUDE

- Revenue streams, pricing plans, or monetization methods.

PROMPTS

- How will you earn money or sustain operations?

TIPS

- Clarity over complexity. Show how this could grow.

07 - CONSIDERATION

Why Now/ Advantage

Justify the timing of your idea—why now is the right time.

WHAT TO INCLUDE

- Trends, timing, or market gaps that make this moment ideal.

PROMPTS

- Why is this opportunity urgent or timely?
- Do you have traction? Clients? Revenue?

TIPS

- Show awareness of the current world and how it plays to your strengths.

08 - CONSIDERATION

Team

Introduce your team and explain why you're the right people to build this.

WHAT TO INCLUDE

- Photos, roles, and 1–2 line bios or skill sets.

PROMPTS

- What unique talents or experiences does your team bring?

TIPS

- Keep it short and strong. Highlight chemistry or credibility.

The Ask

Make a clear request for support—what you need and why.

WHAT TO INCLUDE

- What exactly are you asking for, and how will it help?
- Funding, mentorship, resources, or connections.

EXAMPLES

- Provide Support or Resources
 - “We’re looking for a mentor to help us refine our idea.”
- Make a Contribution
 - “We’re seeking \$500 to build our prototype.”
- Collaborate / Join the Team
 - “We’re looking for students with design skills to help us build.”

TIPS

- Be specific. Show how their help can make a real difference.

10 - ACTION

Contact/ Next Steps

Make it easy for someone to follow up or get involved or reach out.

WHAT TO INCLUDE

- Contact names, email, social handles, and website (if available).

PROMPTS

- What do you want your audience to do next? They listened, now what should they do?

TIPS

- Keep it clear and professional. Offer a call to action like 'Let's connect!'

Section 03

Delivery & Design

General Tips



Be Straight Forward

Focus on 1 big idea per slide, don't overwhelm your audience with too many points of information. Provide context, keep it concise and to the point.



Story over Stats

Build context with a situation not a statistic. You want to connect emotionally (Story) and support logically (Stats). DO NOT READ YOUR PITCH WORD FOR WORD



Shareable Document

You want to be able to leave behind your deck for easy viewing. PDF's are the industry standard for exporting and sharing decks externally.

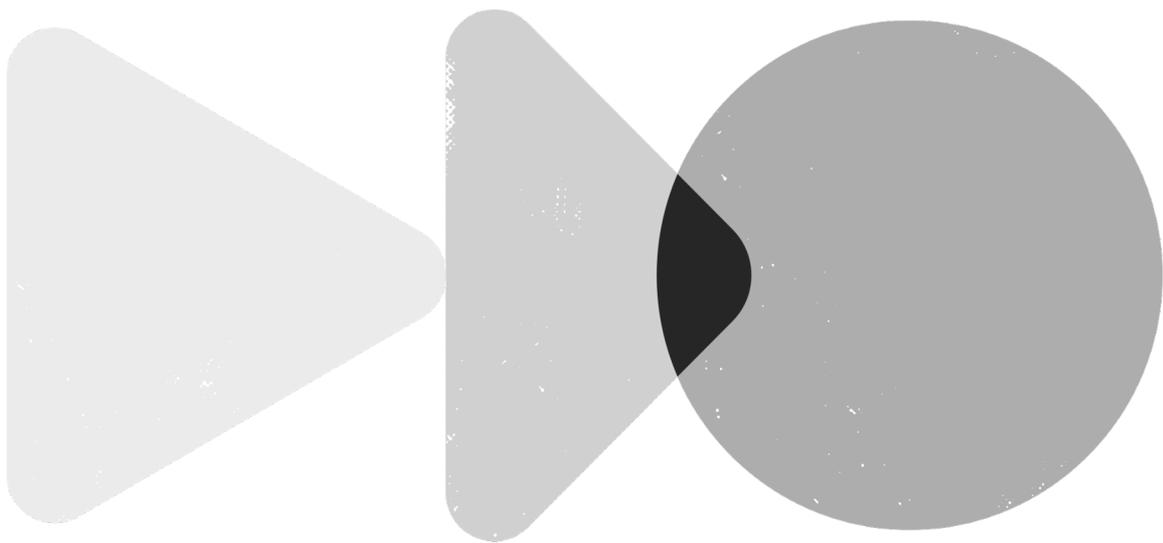


Keep Deck Updated

You may have new discoveries and need to change the deck or your delivery. Make new versions of your deck and keep an archive to reference back to.

Delivery Tips

Follow these 3 steps to successfully present your pitch with confidence



01

Practice out loud

Rehearse the pitch, how you'll speak to the slides, over and over again. Build a cadence. Bonus if you do it in front of people.

02

Look up and smile

Energy wins attention, stay live, this is your stage and the audience wants a performance. Your body language says a lot.

03

Tell a story, not a script

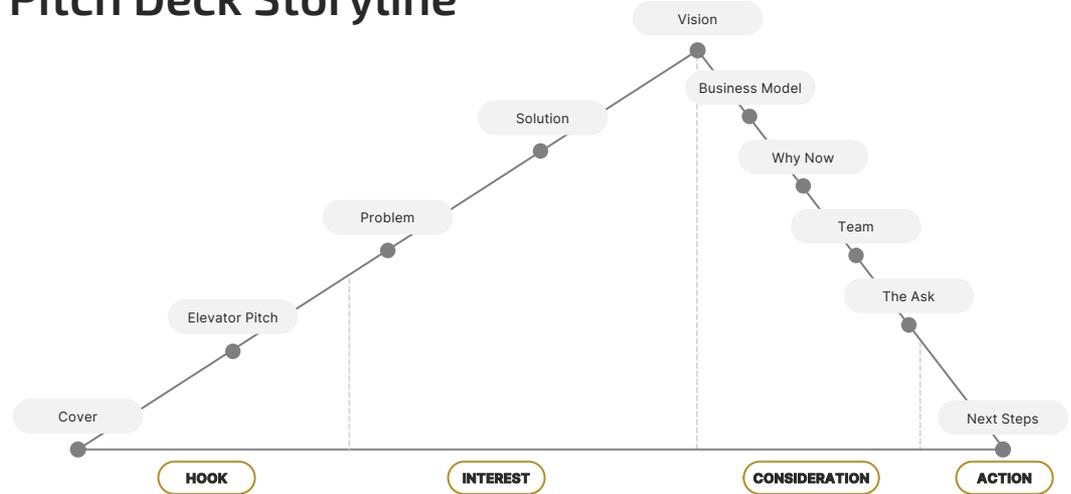
Lead with a hook, introduce the landscape, build context & interest in the topic you're sharing with your audience.

DELIVERY TIPS

Storyline Framework

Tell your story in 4 simple parts that guide your audience from curiosity to action.

Pitch Deck Storyline



01 Hook

02 Interest

03 Consideration

04 Action

01

Hook

Grab attention and set the stage for the audience.

COVER

- What visual and tagline will grab the audience's attention?

BIG IDEA/ELEVATOR PITCH

- What's your big idea in one sentence?
- What makes your idea exciting and different?

EXAMPLE

- “Imagine a world where [problem] didn't exist. We're building [idea] to make that happen.”

02

Interest

Make them care by showing the pain points and your clever solution.

PROBLEM

→ What's broken, frustrating, or costly for people?

SOLUTION

→ How does your idea fix it?

EXAMPLE

→ Right now, people struggle with [problem]. Our solution, [idea], makes it easier by [benefit].

03

Consideration

Back up your idea with logic and a plan to execute.

MARKET & VISION

- Who is this for and how big is the opportunity?

BUSINESS MODEL/WHY NOW/TEAM

- How will it grow or make money?
- Why is now the time? What's your advantage?
- Who is involved & what significant skills do they have?

THE ASK

- What support do you need to make it real? (Funding, support, mentorship, etc.)

EXAMPLE

- "There are [X people] who need this. Here's how we reach them, grow, and sustain it. All we need is [support] to make it happen."

Action

End with a clear next step or invitation. Tell the audience exactly what you want them to do. It should feel like a clear, confident invitation.

CONTACT

- Include: Names, emails, website, social media, or ways to follow your progress.

NEXTS STEPS

- How should someone get involved or follow up?

EXAMPLES

- Follow-Up / Stay in Touch
 - “Here’s our email if you’d like to chat.”
- Attend or Participate
 - “Join us at our launch event on [date].”
- Spread the Word
 - “Share this deck or idea with someone who should see it.”

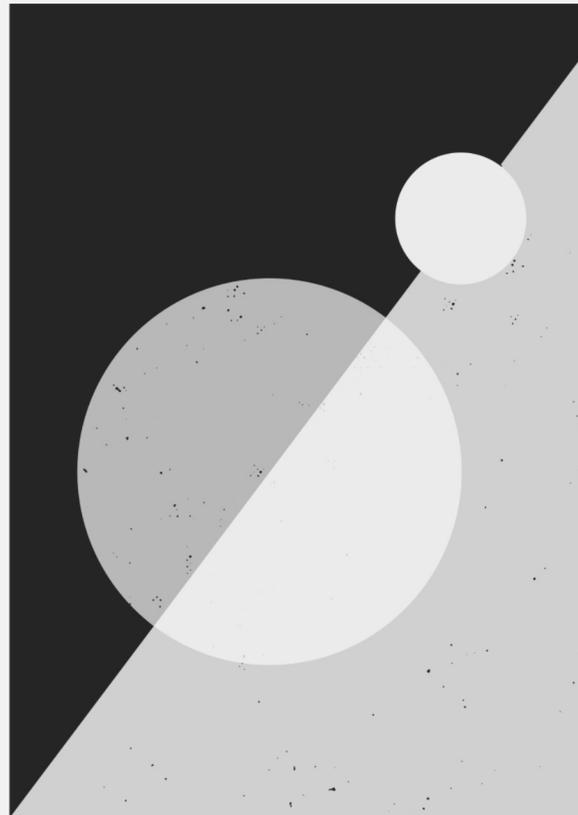
Design Tips

01 Avoid clutter, less is more, allow space & order

02 Avoid paragraphs — headlines, subtext, bullets

03 Streamline visuals: fonts, icons, images, colors

04 Use hierarchy for text, visuals and color



Visual Hierarchy

The principle of arranging elements to show their order of importance.

What is Visual Hierarchy?
And why does it matter.
Visual hierarchy is the principle of arranging elements to show their order of importance.

LOW HIERARCHY – no scale or contrast runs together as one sentence

What is Visual Hierarchy?

AND WHY DOES IT MATTER.

Visual hierarchy is the principle of arranging elements to show their order of importance.

STRONG HIERARCHY – scale & contrast defines the order of importance

Cohesion Holds Attention

Streamlining visuals enables your audience to easily retain the contents.

Safety - AI Best Practices

Operator Defined AI Sandbox
to constrain the system and provide the boundary for the AI to optimize within.



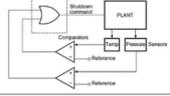
Safety Checks & Mechanisms
to ensure AI control is always safe and stable.



Mode Transitioning
to maintain system stability by ensuring the local controls and AI setpoint implementation are properly orchestrated.



Rules & Heuristics
stay in place, because the underlying control strategy is the solid foundation for AI to build on.



SAFETY

AI best practices

Operator Defined AI Sandbox
to constrain the system and provide the boundary for the AI to optimize within.



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LOW HIERARCHY – Cluttered layout, no order, no color contrast, inconsistent visuals

STRONG HIERARCHY – Organized layout, visual hierarchy, streamlined visuals

A good rule of thumb is that your most important elements should be the most prominent.

Explore Layout

Alternate slides with different layouts to highlight different contents

RL in process heating and cooling

	Breakout Agent	Process Heating and Cooling Agent
Goal	Maximize score	Minimize Energy (kW)
Available actions	Move paddle	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Number of Chillers- Chillers Chilled Water Setpoint- Number of Cooling Towers- Condenser Water Setpoints- Number of Chilled Water Pumps- Chilled Water Pumps VFD Speeds- Number of Condenser Water Pumps- Condenser Water Pumps VFD Speeds
Constraints	Speed of paddle	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Differential Pressure: ≥ 16 pounds- Supply Chilled Water Temperature: 44 - 46 deg F- Chillers: 12 hour start/stop


phaidra



RL in process heating and cooling

When people say "AI" in business today, they're almost always talking about Machine Learning (ML).

	Breakout Agent	Process Heating and Cooling Agent
Goal	Maximize score	Minimize Energy (kW)
Available actions	Move paddle	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of Chillers• Chillers Chilled Water Setpoint• Number of Cooling Towers• Condenser Water Setpoints• Number of Chilled Water Pumps• Chilled Water Pumps VFD Speeds• Number of Condenser Water Pumps• Condenser Water Pumps VFD Speeds
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LOW HIERARCHY – Cluttered layout, no order, no color contrast, inconsistent visuals

STRONG HIERARCHY – Organized layout, visual hierarchy, streamlined visuals

9 Key Takeaways

For creating a pitch deck

1. A visual resume for your idea

It helps people understand what you're doing, why it matters, and how they can support it.

4. Simple & Straight Forward

Don't make your audience have to figure it out, be clear, use common language and concepts.

7. Storyline Framework

Structure your pitch like a story:
Hook → Interest → Consideration
→ Action.

2. What is your use case/stage?

Not just for raising money—use them in school, interviews, projects, proposals, and more.

5. Shareable & Up to Date

Save your pitch as a PDF so others can read and pass it along with ease.

8. Apply Visual Hierarchy

Show what's most important using size, contrast, layout, and placement.

3. 10 Core Slide Framework

Keep it simple and structured with the 10 core slides.

6. Practice Out Loud

The more you speak it out loud, the stronger and smoother your delivery becomes.

9. Design Supports Messaging

Strong visuals won't save a weak story—but when the message is clear, design makes it shine.

Section 04

Resources

Scan QR
Code for
Resources



Section 05

Q&A

Thank you for your time

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