ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Brant Pinvidic is a writer and presentations coach, widely recognized as one of the great creative sales leaders in Hollywood.

The Three-Minute Rule

THE NUTSHELL

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Introduction

Every time you make a pitch, presentation, or proposal to try to influence anyone to do anything, your audience's first impression will be fully formed in less than three minutes.

Chapter 1 - The 3-Minute Rule

Within the first three minutes of any presentation or pitch, the audience will process the basic elements of your offering, start to place value on that offering, and determine their likelihood to continue further with meaningful engagement. That's why it's so important to control that narrative and guide the audience through each facet of a presentation.

Chapter 2 - The Bullets

I started with a completely clean slate. I asked my team to write down every statement that described our proposal on individual Post-it notes and stick them on the wall. We had a least a hundred on the wall. One by one, I began to eliminate the words that weren't necessary to the core concept. Eventually I found myself with just seven Post-it notes. I had cut right to the heart of what was important.

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Chapter 3 - WHAC Your Story

Our bullet points would be then be grouped into one of these four categories depending on which question they |best answered.

1. What is it?

2. How does it work?

3. Are you sure?

4. Can you do it?

Chapter 4 - The Statements of Value

Your Post-it covered wall filled with bullet points represents your *statements of value.* Next, write out these simple phrases. What you might notice is that the thirty bullet points just blossomed into forty or more statements. In those forty or so statements lives the most powerful three-minute version of your pitch.

Chapter 5 - There's More to Your Story

Remember, it's not just about getting it down to three minutes; it's about finding the *best* three minutes. Look at each of your statements and force yourself to explain why you think it's valuable. Now I'm going to show you how to filter this down to the twenty-five statements that are going to make up your three-minute pitch.

Chapter 6 - Information and Engagement

Without question the number one mistake I see is combining *information* with *engagement.* Your goal in your 3-Minute pitch is to *inform,* then *engage.* You will want to build your story and your 3-Minute pitch by deciding what gets said first, second, and not at all. Go through your statement of value and decide what someone would need to know "before" or "after" this statement.

Chapter 7 - Your Core 3 Minutes

It's time to pull some of your value statements out and put them aside. It's not that they aren't valuable or important; they are just statements that can only be at their maximum value after your three minutes. Your goal is to get down to the twenty-five statements that are clearly the most informative.

Chapter 8 - The Hook

Your 3-Minute pitch needs a hook. It's the one thing or element about an idea or story that makes you go, "Ah, that's cool." If the audience understood your offering perfectly and you asked them, "What's the best part?" their answer is probably your hook.

Chapter 9 - The Edge

Once you've got your hook, now we want to find your edge. Your edge is something that cuts through the simplicity of your pitch and reminds your audience that you have something special to offer. The edge is a cool fact or anecdote that makes someone metaphorically sit up and take notice.

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Chapter 10 - Use Your Negatives

No idea, pitch opportunity, or presentation is perfect. What do you hope the audience doesn't find out? Use your weakness as a strength by bringing them into the pitch. Your audience will not like it if you gloss over a negative but will despise you if you try to hide the negative—and they will distrust everything about anything you've said or shown them.

Chapter 11 - Your 3-Minute Pitch

For every movie or TV show that succeeds by breaking the rules, at least one thousand find success by sticking with the pattern. Your story, your 3-Minute pitch, is straight, linear, and clear.

Chapter 12 - Opening, Callback, and Ending

Start by asking yourself what you'd want your audience to be feeling or thinking *before* you start explaining your pitch. You will design an intro that gets your audience to *feel* what **they** want. The callback in a pitch is to repeat your reason for being and verify it. What is the ending of the 3-Minute pitch? You don't need an ending. Just stop talking.

Chapter 13 - Powerpoint-less

Imagine if every time you saw someone's PowerPoint presentation it was only ten slides, with simple bullet points and pictures. Honestly, how much better would the world be if we all followed these guidelines?

Chapter 14 - "Are You Putting on Red Lipstick?"

In today's world, using a multitude of tricks to close a sale rarely works if you don't have your pitch right. If you do it right, you don't need tricks. Always look to your information first, and how you deliver it second.