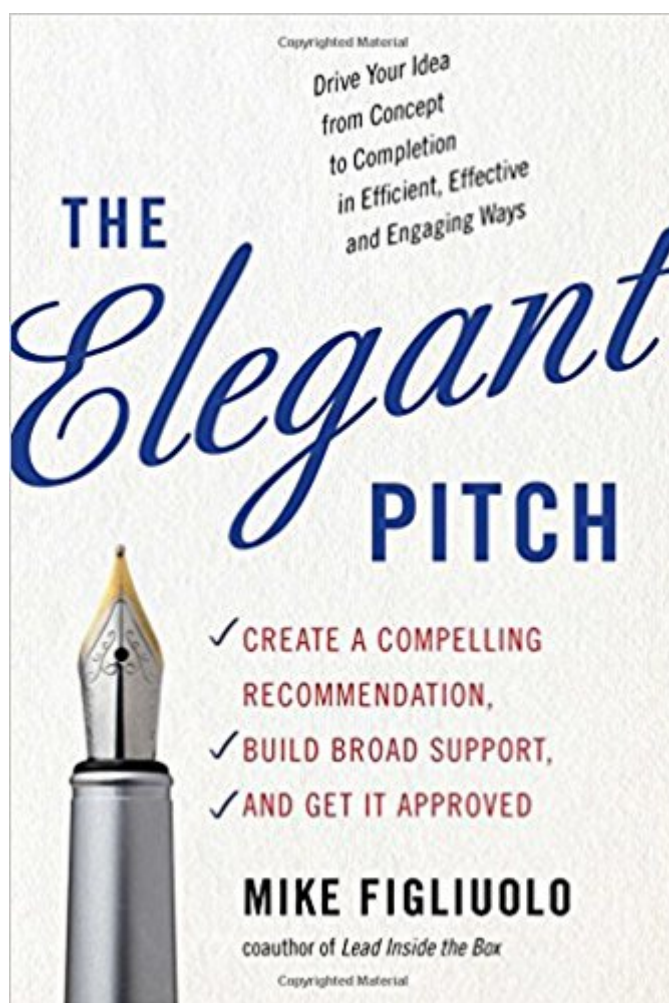


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# The Elegant Pitch: Create A Compelling Recommendation, Build Broad Support, And Get It Approved



## Synopsis

“We’re sorry but your recommendation wasn’t approved.” We’ve all heard those words; it’s a sentence that swallows your hopes and crushes your confidence. Getting ideas or projects approved and securing the resources needed to implement them is one of the greatest challenges business leaders face. With multiple stakeholders, constrained budgets, and competing agendas, it’s difficult to cut through the clutter and garner the required support. The Elegant Pitch provides a simple, proven process to go from idea to approval more quickly and effectively than ever before. This is the same method used by elite strategy consulting firms such as McKinsey & Co. and Bain Consulting. But you don’t have to be a high-priced consultant to master a process that promises: Clearer and more compelling recommendations and ideas. Shorter and crisper communications. Greater efficiency. Shorter and fewer meetings. More efficient decision-making processes. A higher likelihood of getting your recommendations approved. Do less work, hold fewer and shorter meetings, and get ideas approved on the first pass? Sign me up! By using the methods in The Elegant Pitch, you can get to “yes” more quickly and drive the results that set you apart from the crowd.

## Book Information

Paperback: 240 pages

Publisher: Career Press; 1 edition (August 22, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1632650452

ISBN-13: 978-1632650450

Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 0.7 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 30 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #673,298 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #147 in Books > Reference > Etiquette > Conversation #68242 in Books > Business & Money

## Customer Reviews

"The Elegant Pitch is the cure for death by PowerPoint and analysis paralysis. It shows you how to think through your message and build support for your idea before you do a single calculation in a spreadsheet. If you follow the process laid out in this book, you’ll avoid countless hours of wasted analysis and build presentations that people actually understand and support."- Eric Grossat, Vice President, Global Marketing HCV, AbbVie

"The methods contained in Mike

Figliuolo's book *The Elegant Pitch* will save you and your team hours of waste. It successfully translates the skills taught by elite consulting firms into a straightforward approach with invaluable tools for improving anyone's communications and influence skills. No management team should operate without it."- Mike Elia, CEO, Gerber Technology"I've put several of my teams through Mike's Structured Thought & Communications course because the process he teaches is a critical executive communication skill. Now he's put that process into a book that will be an excellent resource for my entire organization. *The Elegant Pitch* should be required reading for every executive out there."- Cecilia Frew, Senior Vice President, VISA"Mike Figliuolo has delivered a practical approach that leaders at any level can use to hone their persuasive communication skills and get buy in for ideas. The ability to exude 'executive presence' often determines whether or not your career advances. So many people receive ambiguous feedback that they have to improve their 'executive presence' but are left to figure out for themselves what that means. A core aspect of true executive presence is the ability to share your thoughts in a simple, persuasive way. *The Elegant Pitch* provides a proven method for demonstrating this elusive skill. We've used these concepts to groom our high potential leaders at Cardinal Health and received great feedback on the techniques. Mike's Structured Thought & Communications training improved their confidence, strengthened their executive presence, and enabled them to deliver a strong message with impact. I highly recommend this book."- Lisa George, formerly Vice President, Global Talent Management, Cardinal Health; now Vice President, International Talent, Walmart"One of the most important skills needed in the workplace today is the ability to tell a story to gain support for your idea. But this is a skill that few seem to have or are able to hone. Mike Figliuolo has created another "must read" for the business world with his latest book, *The Elegant Pitch*! The book provides you with the mechanics of the perfect pitch and offers creative techniques for delivering it. And as always, Mike writes with wit and humor. This is that one book that you will read, re-read, and recommend to others. I know what book my department book club will be reading next!"- Andrea Procaccino, Chief Learning Officer, NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital"If you need to frame up situations, challenges, and decision paths or you're looking for support, budget, and headcount for your ideas, you'll want to read this book twice. The first pass will be an entertaining read where you "see" yourself in the stories Mike tells. In the second read you'll see how his approach can get you the support you're seeking for your ideas. Here's to mastery of the *Elegant Pitch*. Well done Mike."- Suzie Reider, Managing Director, Brand Solutions, YouTube/Google"Mike Figliuolo has created another 'must read' for the business world with his latest book, *The Elegant Pitch*.

Based on his Structured Thought and Communications course, Mike provides a practical roadmap and tools to improve your persuasive communications and increase your influencing capabilities. If you want to get to better decisions faster, have fewer and more productive meetings, and drive greater alignment, read this book and apply the methods it contains."- Mark Naidicz, Vice President, Human Resources, AbbVie

•The Elegant Pitch is the cure for death by PowerPoint and analysis paralysis. It shows you how to think through your message and build support for your idea before you do a single calculation in a spreadsheet. If you follow the process laid out in this book, you'll avoid countless hours of wasted analysis and build presentations that people actually understand and support.

•Eric Grossat, vice president, Global Marketing HCV, AbbVie

•I've put several of my teams through Figliuolo's Structured Thought & Communications course because the process he teaches is a critical executive communication skill. Now we've put that process into a book that will be an excellent resource for my entire organization. The Elegant Pitch should be required reading for every executive out there.

•Cecilia Frew, senior vice president, VISA

•The methods contained in Figliuolo's book The Elegant Pitch will save you and your team hours of waste. It successfully translates the skills taught by elite consulting firms into a straightforward approach with invaluable tools for improving anyone's communications and influence skills. No management team should operate without it.

•Mike Elia, CEO, Gerber Technology

Mike Figliuolo, is the founder and managing director of thoughtLEADERS, LLC, a professional services firm specializing in leadership development and training. He's helped thousands of leaders at the world's most recognized companies learn to communicate more clearly, concisely, and convincingly. Mike has taught these approaches across industries, including pharmaceuticals, financial services, consumer goods, professional services, high tech, and healthcare. He is the author of One Piece of Paper: The Simple Approach to Powerful, Personal Leadership (Jossey-Bass) and Lead Inside the Box: How Smart Leaders Guide Their Teams to Exceptional Results (Career Press), and a nationally recognized speaker, trainer, and blogger. Mike is an honor graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point and served in the U.S. Army as an armor officer. Before founding his own company, he was a consultant at McKinsey & Co. and an executive at Capital One and Scotts Miracle-Gro.

Do you have to present ideas where there's a lot on the line for you or your business? If so you should pick up a copy of The Elegant Pitch. In most things in life it pays to have a process that you can use as a guide for continuous improvement. Whether you're an athlete, businessperson,

salesperson, teacher or you're in just about any other profession, if you're successful you probably have a process you follow and refine as needed. In this book Mike lays out a clear, easy to follow process for people who need to get a yes. Mike draws from his military background, experience as a consultant, time in corporate America, and most recently as a highly successful business owner to give you insights you'd have to pay a consultant thousands of dollars for. If you're serious about moving initiatives and ideas forward a great start would be picking up a copy of *The Elegant Pitch*.

*The Elegant Pitch* is more than just a book about communicating ideas. It goes beyond the presentation and stresses what you can do to bring your idea to life and garner understanding and buy-in effectively during the moment of the pitch. Mike's approach will help you develop the internal processes necessary to appropriately frame the question at hand and gather pertinent information related to the audience and your concepts. Then, leveraging this groundwork, present in a clear, understandable way that enables your audience to grasp, evaluate and engage efficiently. *The Elegant Pitch* will help you to simplify your thoughts, analysis, and words in such a way that only what matters is communicated. The approach is elegant and your outcome when using Mike's framework will be as well. This book is a relatively quick read. You'll want to read it multiple times as you adopt the Structured Thought Process approach and refine your pitching preparation and skills. The book should be required reading for anyone who aspires to success in business.- Rick Coplin

As a twenty year veteran of enterprise software sales, this book provides a powerful framework for simplifying complex decisions. By applying these techniques, I'm sure we will make it easier for our customers to say, "Yes!"

Most of us have sat through an over-long presentation at some time. Either someone droning on at a conference, itemizing details to the nth degree when you haven't even grasped their central premise. Or a colleague making a pitch to your team that leaves you with more questions than answers. If these kinds of offenders had a copy of Mike Figliuolo's excellent new book, we'd all be a lot better off. A clear and compelling writer, Figliuolo outlines a nine-step process for crafting communications that will have heads nodding and everyone in the room grateful to be getting out of the meeting early. This is a quick and easy read that I devoured in an evening. The three messages I loved most in this book, not least because they validate my own approach, are: 1. Spend more time figuring out the right question to answer, before rushing into writing mode. 2. Make sure you're

addressing the "why," not just the what. (Nix all those facts and figures in reports--stick them in the appendix, where the numbers and fine detail wonks can find them. Mostly, the rest of us don't care.)<sup>3</sup> Take a more scientific approach to your central hypothesis and try and prove yourself wrong. (This is counterintuitive, as Figliuolo points out, yet we all need to become more aware of our tendency toward confirmation bias.) What I especially appreciated, too, was how Figliuolo adds fresh nuggets to material we may have seen before. For example, how many times have we heard it stressed that to gain agreement or buy-in, we need to focus on what the audience cares about, not just what we want to give them? However, Figliuolo drills down even further with his "button" concept: "that metric or objective that makes your stakeholder sit up and take notice." He urges us to be sure we know which button to hit or, for more than one stakeholder, in what order. In short, Figliuolo offers a single, practical process for ensuring that approval for your ideas and recommendations becomes a snap. This is the third of the author's books that I've read and reviewed. In an age when many business book writers go on at length, giving too much information in one area and not enough in another, it's always a joy to read Mike Figliuolo. Plus, you get to see that he has put into practice exactly what he's teaching.

As CEO of a growing life science company, I am constantly looking for ways to simplify our core message to key stakeholders, investors, and potential customers. I am so happy that I was able to read "The Elegant Pitch" over the weekend. It made me realize how easy it is to fall into the trap of telling people everything you know, instead of telling them what they need to know to make a decision. Whether that ultimate decision I am looking for is to convince someone to make an investment in my company, or to purchase our products - this book serves as a communication road map to that destination. The principals that the author highlights are invaluable to both the experienced business leader, as well as the junior associate who is new to the team. The structured thought process for crafting a pitch is a crucial skill at all levels in an organization and should be the model for presentations in any type of organization - large or small. My company will be adopting this book as a guideline for presentations, so that we don't fall into the trap of including the kitchen sink in our presentations. This book is a must read for entrepreneurs, corporate managers, and even government and non-profit leaders. Let's end "Death by PowerPoint"... "The Elegant Pitch" is a great step in the right direction.

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