

How to Pitch Yourself

One of the reasons people don't like to network is that they dread the question, "So, what do you do?" It is the biggest hurdle when meeting someone new, and its cousin, "So, what have you been up to?" can make meeting even the dearest friend uncomfortable.

What to do?

The easiest way to take the pressure off is to not talk about yourself directly at all. Instead, answer with a project. So, what do you do?

Right now, I'm writing a thriller that we're going to shoot in Bucharest once the pandemic has lifted.

Or:

I'm deep into my dissertation on code-breaking during the Renaissance.

Or:

I just launched an app to help new parents get more sleep.

I've color-coded the sentences so you can see the building blocks: open with a signal of new-ness (people love new things) and provide two points of interest: the thing + one interesting detail.

That's it. It really couldn't be easier. The only trick is to pick a project that shows you off in the light in which you want to be seen.

Most of the time, this is all you need -- something that launches a conversation around an area you're legit passionate about and an expert in. Even for job interviews where they may want to dig into your skill set, talking about a project you're in the middle of or have recently finished is a great way to show not only that you've got game, but also that you're a self-starter, creative, and committed.

Take it out for a spin!