

How to **pitch** effectively during a **matchmaking** event?



PoISCA
Polish Science
Contact Agency
in Brussels



Context: a matchmaking event

4 minutes

1 slide

CROSSPATHS
Matchmaking Event | HE Cluster 6
Promoting strong research partnerships throughout Europe

Bioeconomy • Sustainable Food Systems • Biodiversity

25 March 2026 9:00-16:30 Permanent Representation of Estonia to the EU
Rue Guimard 11/13, Brussels

Funded by the European Union In Life Estonian University of Life Sciences UNIVERSIDADE CATOLICA PORTUGUESA PAN PoISCA Polish Science Contact Agency in Brussels Estonian Research Council

In-house rules

Moderators will keep track of each person's time using a phone alarm and a sign indicating the remaining **1 minute**

Moderators will bring the presentations.

The speaking order will be communicated to participants.

Goals

Pitch = hook + tailoring + invitation to a follow-up

It's good to set 1-2 realistic goals before the event, e.g.
“I want to arrange at least 3 follow-up meetings within two weeks after the event” or
“I want to identify 2-3 potential partners for a specific project”

Goal: a concrete next step (e.g., *an online meeting, sending materials, etc.*)

Think: “I have 4 minutes to show it's worth continuing the conversation”

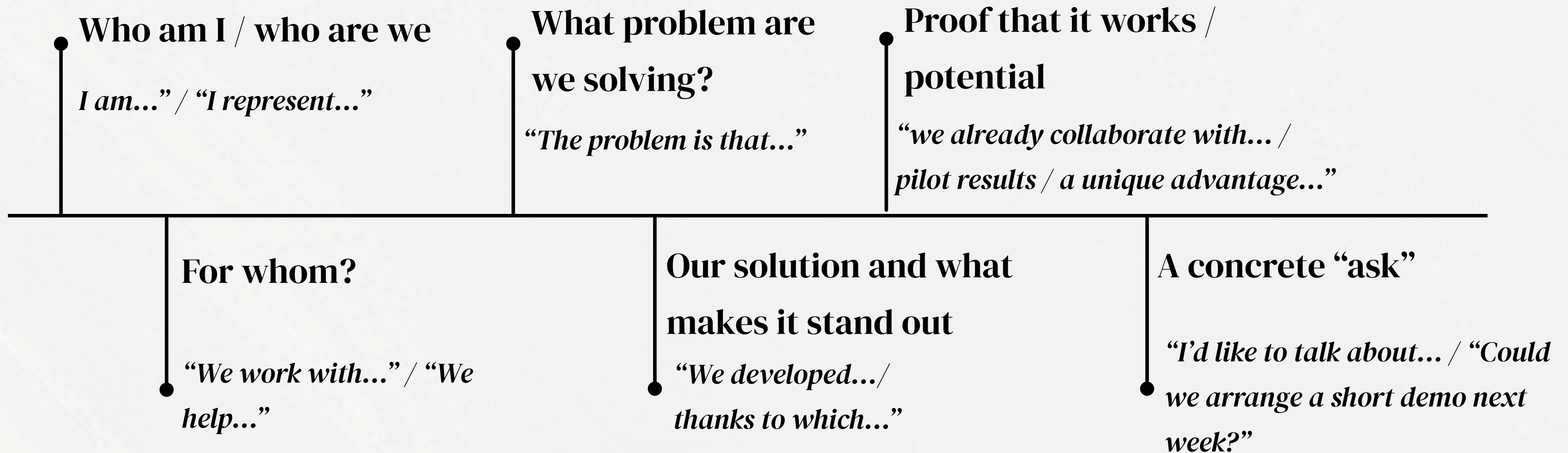
The goal is not to tell your entire CV / the whole story of the project or institution!

Preparation before you enter the room

- **Check** who will be there (*participant list, matchmaking app, LinkedIn*)
- **Define** 3 types of interlocutors: *e.g., coordinator, scientific partner, end user, etc.*
- **Write** down a specific “ask” for each type of interlocutor (*what exactly do you want from this person?*)
- **Prepare** 2-3 versions of your pitch (*e.g., 30 seconds, 2 minutes, 4 minutes*)

Pitch structure

A mini-framework that works in most situations and is based on the classic “problem → solution → proof → call to action” approach



“We help [who] solve [what problem] thanks to [solution/technology], and from conversations like this one we expect [a specific next step]”

How to deliver the pitch?

This should start a dialogue, not be a mini-lecture

Start lightly, not with a slide right away

A short small talk + introduction

Enter a conversation, not a monologue

“Before I continue - what sounds most interesting to you?”

“What does this look like in your organisation right now?”

Tailor / improvise

Close with a specific “next step”

“Can we schedule a 30-minute online meeting within the next two weeks?”

confirm: exchange business cards, add each other in the matchmaking app right away, a quick email.

Body language, voice, and the impression of *“I’ve got this / I’m in control”*

First seconds:

face the audience, stable stance, smile, eye contact

Voice:

speak a bit slower than usual, pause after key sentences, don’t “squeeze” your voice at the end

Gestures:

natural; don’t cross your arms; don’t “clutch” your notes/phone like a shield

Tools:

if you have a tablet/phone with material, treat it as support, not as a wall of text

The best presentation on paper won’t work if your body says: I’d rather go home

Most common mistakes and a mini end-of-session checklist

Most common mistakes	Your quick checklist before you enter
A monologue throughout the whole meeting; no questions to the interlocutor.	Do I know who I want to talk to and why?
A pitch that's too general - no clear problem and value.	Do I have 2-3 pitch versions ready?
No concrete "ask" (the interlocutor doesn't know what to do after the meeting)	Do I have questions prepared for the interlocutor?
Zero follow-up despite a good contact	Do I know what specific next step I will propose?

Questions and difficult situations

Model:

STOP – PARAPHRASE – ANSWER – CHECK

Stop:

don't answer immediately; you can say:
"Thank you, that's an important question"

Paraphrase:

"If I understand correctly, you mean...?"

A short, concrete answer:

max 2-3 sentences; if the topic is complex, propose discussing it in a follow-up

Check:

"Does that address your concern?"

Don't treat difficult questions as an attack, treat them as a chance to clarify

The End

THANK YOU AND GOOD LUCK!

Łukasz Pieczonka



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