

Teacher Overview

Silicon Valley Startups™ is the hilarious game of pitching crazy companies. Entrepreneurs must think on their feet and convince an Investor to fund their startup company. The player with the most convincing pitches wins!

When to Use This Lesson

This lesson can be used at any time during your program and repeated often to practice pitching and creative thinking. It may be a valuable activity to play before, after or in conjunction with Disruptus.

Time



BEFORE CLASS PREPARATION

- > Review the cards and remove any you feel necessary.
- > Review the rules of the game that are included, as well as be familiar with the activity guide.
- > Decide how you will group students
 - Groups of 3-4 students play as "Single Owner".
 - Groups of 5 or more play as "Partners".
- > Decide how many rounds you will play
 - The instructions suggest that the game ends after each player has been the Investor twice, but you can decide if it is appropriate to play more rounds.

FOUNDATIONAL VALUES

- > Passion
- > Opportunity
- > Win-Win Focus

MATERIALS

- > [Silicon Valley Startups™ card game](#)
- > **Optional:** Make copies of the instructions for students to reference.

KEY TERMS

- > Innovation
- > Pitching
- > Target user (target market)
- > Subjective value
- > Value creation

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- > PE 3a, 3b

NOTES

.....

.....

.....

.....

ACTIVITY INTRODUCTION

Pro-Tip: Show a Shark Tank clip or episode prior to playing to get students excited and in the mindset of being both an investor and an entrepreneur pitching an idea. It's also a great way to view pitching techniques!

When pitching to an investor, it is important to be able to pitch your company in a concise and exciting way. How will you generate enthusiasm for your business in someone who knows nothing about it? In this game, entrepreneurs must think on their feet and convince an Investor to fund their startup company. The player with the most successful pitches wins!

Some pitchin' tips:

- > Start with a big, attention-grabbing opener:
 - This tech will change the world!
 - How do YOU feel about world peace?
 - Don't you hate it when...
 - Have you ever wished that...
- > You may not know what every card means... and it's okay. Make it up! Pitching with passion and humor is the way to go.
- > Use data and numbers! They don't need to be accurate or make sense. Reciting numbers and percentages makes you sound really, really smart.
- > Name drop. Of course you met with Jack and he loved the idea!

ACTIVITY DIRECTIONS

- > **SETTING IT UP:** Pick a player (or teams of players if you have a large group) to be the first Investor. They will be listening to the pitches for the first round. Have them shuffle the HOT TREND deck and set it face-down in front of them.
 - The other players will be Entrepreneurs. Shuffle the other three decks separately and set them face-down in the middle of the table in this order: COMPANY NAME, TARGET USER and INDUSTRY.
 - **COMPANY NAME cards:** These cards have instructions for creating the name. If it includes the words "ASK FOR" that means you must ask for the group to provide something for you.
 - Example: If the card says "Ask for a COLOR", ask the participants to name a color that you will then use in creating the name of your company.
- > **ROUND 1:** This will happen either as a Single Owner or Partners.
 - PROTIP: Set a time-limit for pitches to keep the game progressing quickly (For example: Players have 30 seconds to pitch).
 - **Single Owner (recommended for 3-4 players):** Starting with the player to the Investor's left, each Entrepreneur pitches, one at a time, following the steps in this order:
 - Draw 2 COMPANY NAME cards and pick one, discarding the other.
 - Draw 2 TARGET USER cards and pick one, discarding the other.
 - Draw 2 INDUSTRY cards and pick one, discarding the other.
 - Pitch your heart out, using all three cards as your guide. The company name, target user and industry must be mentioned in your pitch. Outside of that, anything goes!

- BUT WAIT! There's more. At the end of each pitch, the Investor gets to ask the Entrepreneur a question to keep them on their toes. The Investor draws 2 HOT TREND cards and picks one, discarding the other. Then, they ask the Entrepreneur how that Hot Trend will be leveraged with their startup. The Entrepreneur now must pivot to answer the question.
- **Partners (recommended for 5+ players):** Starting with the player to the Investor's left, the pair of Entrepreneurs pitch, taking turns, in this order:
 - Player A - Draw 2 COMPANY NAME cards and pick one, discarding the other. Create the company name using the instructions printed on the card and start pitching!
 - Player B - Draw 2 TARGET USER cards and pick one, discarding the other and continue the pitch.
 - Player A - Draw 2 INDUSTRY cards and pick one, discarding the other and continue the pitch.
 - The Investor draws 2 HOT TREND cards and picks one, discarding the other. Then, they ask Player B how the Hot Trend will be leveraged with their startup. Player B must pivot to answer the Hot Trend question.
- **WINNING A ROUND:** After each pitch has been passionately presented, the Investor decides which one they want to invest in. The Entrepreneur that gets the investment receives one of the HOT TREND cards, using it as the way to keep track of points.
- > **ROUND 2:** Repeat steps for ROUND 1.
- > **WINNING THE GAME:** Continue playing rounds until each player has been the Investor twice. The player with the most "Hot Trend" cards wins the game!
 - In the event of a tie, the tied players play a tie-breaking round. If everyone is tied, go for another full round of everyone player as the Investor to decide the winners.
 - Pro-Tip: Consider having the winners of each group pitch to the entire class. This is a great way to debrief pitching skills and techniques.

SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

Optional - Here are some ideas of how you could expand this activity to touch on a variety of other topics:

- > **Equity** - In true Shark Tank style, instead of asking the investor to choose his/her favorite, entrepreneurs make a request for how much they would like invested and how much equity. Investors can counter and negotiate with the entrepreneur until a final decision is made. This may require a different set-up than previously discussed - Groups may be of multiple investors with only one entrepreneur pitching. Also, consider creating any supporting materials to help your investors dive into the math.
- > **Licensing and Intellectual Property** - What would it take to get their idea licensed? How can they protect it? Take the ideas shared during this activity and dive deeper into intellectual property rights. This could segway into conversations about branding, packaging, etc.

NOTES

.....

.....

.....

.....

