

How to write a good story pitch

From ‘A Short Guideline for Rural Reporting’ compiled by Journalists’ Association of Bhutan

How to write a good pitch

- Introduce your story idea and define your angle. In other words, say concisely what you want to write about.
- Explain concisely why your idea is news worthy, unique, and important.
- Explain briefly why your story has the potential to engage readers.
- Explain how your story adds to the conversation already out there.
- Give a deadline for your story.

Dos & don'ts while writing a pitch

- Select a specific topic, not a broad idea. Example: Write about poultry farming, not livestock rearing. Target a particular audience. Example: Women, youth, girls, private sector employees.
- Include a clear, concise ‘top line’ for your story. Top line means the most important aspect of your story. Example: Farmers in Punakha lost more than 70% of their paddy to an unexpected rainfall.
- Give a brief summary of who you are. Example: I am Sangay Dorji, a senior reporter with Bhutan Express. I mostly cover rural issues, with a particular focus on women and children.

Example of a good pitch

Of late conversations about locked empty homes in rural areas have reached the highest level of policymaking. There is a general agreement that rural-urban migration is chiefly behind this phenomenon. However, there hasn't been any serious attempt to look into the issue at a deeper level. As a part of my analysis, I'd like to delve into other possible reasons for the increasing number of empty homes, what long-term impact would this trend have for the country, especially Bhutan's rural social fabric, and propose solutions as policymakers deem right. I will talk to the people who have left their rural

home for urban areas. I will also talk to local leaders, policymakers, and lawmakers about how the trend could be reversed, or at least put to a halt. For example, would ensuring basic amenities like healthcare, water, road, schools, electricity, and making rural life more attractive through improved infrastructure and diversification of economic opportunities halt this disturbing trend? Should the government incentivize farming, or put in place policies and measures to bridge the widening gap between rural and urban pockets? I will look into how Bhutan could draw lessons from similar trends abroad, and talk to scholars who have researched on the phenomenon elsewhere. If my pitch is accepted, I can turn in a draft of the piece by 15 June 2017. Thank you.

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