How SDU Cortex Lab used Pitcherific to help their students cope with pitching their ideas.

Pitches were received as convincing and well-prepared.

Students achieved focus, structure and kept within the time limit.

Overall nervousness among the student pitchers was lesser.

"We experienced that the student pitchers were very well prepared - they knew what they wanted to say and in what order, so we received solid, convincing pitches." - Erik Zijdemans, SDU

About Cortex Lab

SDU Cortex Lab is University of Southern Denmark's (SDU) innovation and entrepreneurship environment, a lively hub that connects students, companies and scientists in order to create the businesses of tomorrow. It's 32.290 sq ft of innovation and also the host for SDUs classes on entrepreneurship.

The Challenge

In late Fall '15 we sat down with Rasmus Uhre from SDU Cortex Lab to discuss how Pitcherific might fit into SDUs entrepreneurship course. As their final exam, 30 Master students from "Sports And Health" had to deliver a 2 minute investor pitch in front of a board of teachers, mentors and potential partners. The pitch would be based on an idea they had developed throughout the course, and they had to be sharp, focused and convincing.

Rasmus was very interested in seeing if Pitcherific could help the students with their exam and together with their teacher in charge, Erik Zijdemans, we set things into motion in early December.

How Pitcherific helped

Prior to an introductory workshop held by Lauge and Anders from Pitcherific at SDU Cortex Lab, Erik signed into his Pitcherific Enterprise account and began inviting his students to Pitcherific PRO. All 30 students were invited and subscribed easily, and when the workshop began, they were all set up and ready to use the pitching tools.

At the workshop, the students worked with the H-NABC-C pitch template (Hook, Need, Approach, Benefit, Competition, Close) available on the tool and wrote their pitches

according to its structure. The tool automatically told them if their pitch would go past the 2 minute time limit and provided them with tips on what to write.

After writing their pitch, the students could practice the verbal delivery of their message using the teleprompter feature. The teleprompter aids the pitcher to weed out any words that work well on paper, but not well when spoken. This also helped the pitchers to get more comfortable with the pitching situation by making continuous rehearsal easy. After the workshop, the students continued to work with improving and practicing their pitches to be and feel well prepared for their exams.

The Benefits

After the end of the exams in January, we called Erik and Rasmus to catch up and evaluate the whole process. They could conclude that:

1. Students were experienced as very well prepared, knowing what to say and in what order.
2. Students achieved focus, structure and kept closely within the 2 minute limit.
3. Overall nervousness was lesser due to focused preparation.
4. Pitches at the final exams were solid and convincing, resulting in good exam results.

In their words

"With the training tools, the students proved that practice really makes perfect. When we timed some of the students they were all close to, and still within, the 2-minute time limit."

"The Pitcherific framework helped them cope with the whole situation of pitching an idea. The tool helped them focus and kept them on track with content and structure."

"We naturally saw different levels of nervousness, but overall it was clear that a focused preparation made the nervousness lesser."

"We experienced that the student pitchers as very well prepared - they knew what they wanted to say and in what order, so we received solid, convincing pitches."

"The simplicity of the tool is really a strength. In large, it is self-explanatory and with a little intro on the best-practice way to use it, no further explanation was needed from me as a teacher. We could focus on creating a great concept and the communication of it was a lot less of a challenge with Pitcherific."