

## The tale of the Pitch Book

by Cathy C. Bonczek

### Too much of a good thing is a bad thing.” - Aesop

Once upon a time, a company representative wanted to share some ideas with his clients. He pulled out his computer and created a PowerPoint presentation.

It wasn't fancy, but he was able to get a lot of information, in very tiny font, onto each page, and he saw that it was good. He filled pages and pages with tiny words and meaningful charts. He added title pages and some cartoon graphics. He added pictures of his colleagues and a map of the company offices around the world.

This PowerPoint explained everything the representative could think of ever saying about his company and his products. He no longer had to create new messages or ways of describing his work. The PowerPoint was 100 pages long, but he knew, that if he just talked quickly enough, he could get through the whole presentation in an hour. Or run the meeting over by just 15 minutes. To help things along, he created an Executive Summary that was a 500 word version of the entire presentation. He would cram this onto one page at the beginning of the deck.

Thrilled with the exactitude of the data and the fulsomeness of the messages, he printed out copies and copies of the PowerPoint presentation. He didn't stop to realize that a printed version didn't have any of the animation or movement an online version could manifest. He didn't stop to think about the trees being chopped down to create the paper that would be used to print out 100 copies of a 100-page deck. He didn't worry about how to get the deck into the hands of his prospects or clients for he would simply mail boxes of the printed decks to his meeting locations. The costs of shipping or the fuel of the airplane didn't matter – they were inconsequential in relation to the brilliance of his opus.

When he arrived in a meeting room to meet with a prospect or a client, he would proudly hand out a copy of the deck to each person in attendance. Then he would ask if they'd read it already because, of course, he'd sent them an email version in advance of the face-to-face.

The client or prospect would mutter a polite, “Yes” even if they hadn't seen the email or removed it from their junk mail.

The representative would then open his copy of the presentation, take a contented breath and launch into a 60-minute exercise of reading words on a page to adults who had learned how to read by themselves many years before. On a good day, he would start on page 1 and be able to march through consecutive pages until the very end of the deck.

He learned to ignore the signs of confusion, frustration and fatigue that he would see across the table. His message was reaching so many people!

He heard tales of other meetings, where people were conversing freely, laughing and – gasp! – enjoying themselves.

But he knew those were just fairy tales.

