

Project Olympus



Innovation Scholars



Open Field Entrepreneurs Fund



Entrepreneurship Through Acquisition



Swartz Entrepreneurial Fellows



James R. Swartz Entrepreneurial Leadership Series



McGinnis Venture Competition



LaunchCMU

# How to Win Friends and Influence Judges

## ... w/ Q&A

Adam Paulisick  
[Paulisick@CMU.edu](mailto:Paulisick@CMU.edu)  
[Adam@SkillBuilder.io](mailto:Adam@SkillBuilder.io)



nielsen

Acquired



Global Sales & BD  
Commercial Operations

Acquired



SVP of Product  
Marketing, Bus Dev  
and Strategy

Acquired



Chief Product Officer  
Lead Deal-Maker

BCG BOSTON  
CONSULTING  
GROUP

Acquired



Chief Product Officer  
Global Leader: Build,  
Operate, Transfer



Private Equity



Professor of Entrepreneurship at Tepper 2013 - 2023  
teaching "Jedi Mind Tricks" + Lead Instructor at the  
School of Computer Science (Exec Ed) for Cloud Advisors  
+ MHCI (Digital Service Innovation) + AI Innovation and  
Commercialization (MS AI) + **AI Venture Studio (S24)**



maad labs



V!B

# HOSTILE FAQS (A.K.A. SKILLBUILDER): A PLAY IN 3 ACTS

2021



+



2022



+



+



2023+

 **SkillBuilder.io**

slido



What's a word or emoji that represents how you feel about venture competitions/judges and the questions they ask at the end of a pitch?

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**How do you feel about pitching (to judges, in a venture competition)?**

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# TYPES OF QUESTIONS

(And How They Get Hostile)

## **CLOSED (Yes/No: Polar)**

Have you actually done this before?

## **OPEN**

Why would you prioritize/choose AI?

## **PROBING**

When will you likely be done? Who is my key contact?

## **LEADING**

Was the impact on that case study big enough for the investment?

## **FUNNEL**

What's your role on the case? How will I measure your impact?

## **RECALL & PROCESS**

Why are you the right lead on this case?

## **RHETORICAL**

Isn't it great to be slotting into something that is already working?

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What's the question you are  
**MOST** nervous about getting  
after your ~1-2 min pitch?

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# ARE ALL QUESTIONS HOSTILE?



Are you sure you  
that's your Ideal Customer  
Profile (ICP)?

**REALLY MEANS**

That segment doesn't  
feel intuitive or it's  
saturated



Do you really think it's  
going to work?

**IS ANOTHER WAY OF SAYING**

Some of your science or  
tech feels disconnected  
from sales realities.



Do you need to raise venture  
money?

**TRANSLATES TO**

This might be a great lifestyle  
business



# CONFIDENCE

What you are sure of.

VS

# DIFFERENTIATION

What can't be copied,  
at least easily.

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## What are ways we can differentiate an answer?

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DIFFERENTIATION

1 ← → 5



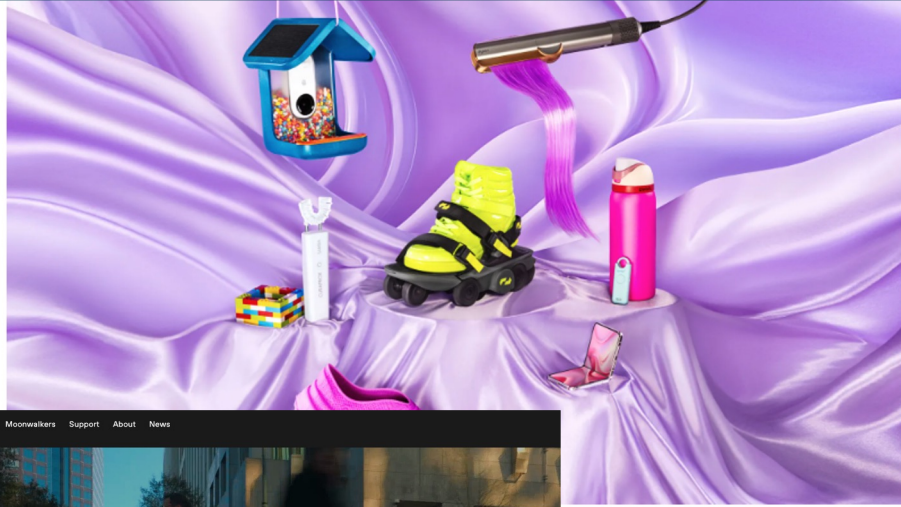
CONFIDENCE

# What happens when you can only get to 3 out of 5 on Differentiation?

## THE BEST INVENTIONS OF 2023

200 innovations changing how we live

[HOW WE CHOSE](#)



**SHIFT** Moonwalkers Support About News

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fastest shoes.

[Shop Now](#)

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**How would you explain  
Moonwalkers (intentionally)  
as a 1/5 differentiation?**

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**How would you explain  
Moonwalkers (intentionally)  
as a 3/5 differentiation?**

① Click **Present with Slido** or install our [Chrome extension](#) to activate this poll while presenting.

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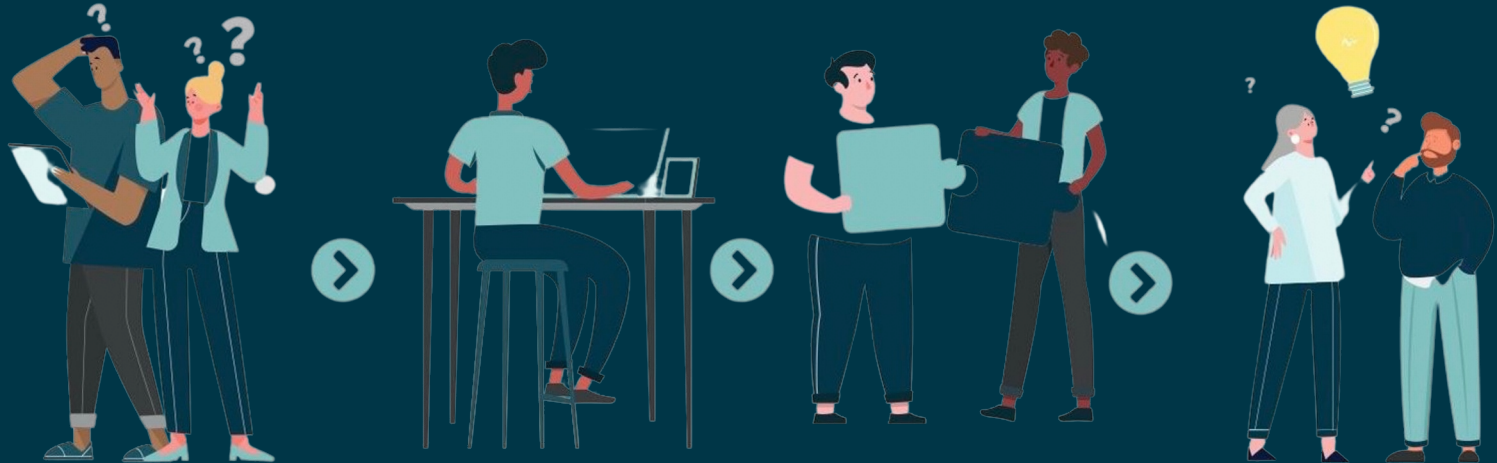


How would you explain  
Moonwalkers (intentionally) as a  
4/5 or 5/5 differentiation?

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# It's BREAKOUT Time (for 2-3minutes) !

- Grab a notebook/something to write on/Open a doc, etc
- Form teams of 2-4
- Align on the product you can workshop together (yours or someone else's)
- Each person writes down a CLOSED, OPEN, LEADING & RHETORICAL question that an investor would ask that is both IMPORTANT and FREQUENT







# TYPES OF QUESTIONS

(And How They Get Hostile)

- **CLOSED (Yes/No: Polar)**  
Have you actually done this before?
- **OPEN**  
Why would you prioritize/choose AWS?
- **PROBING**  
When will you likely be done? Who is my key contact?
- **LEADING**  
Was the impact on that case study big enough for the investment?
- **FUNNEL**  
What's your role on the case? How will I measure your impact?
- **RECALL & PROCESS**  
Why are you the right lead on this case?
- **RHETORICAL**  
Isn't it great to be slotting into something that is already working?

# Now, workshop a couple favorites:

- Pick 1-2 questions
- Workshop them on a scale from 1 TO 5 on Differentiation



What happens when you  
can only get to **3** out of 5  
on Differentiation?

## Differentiation

1/5 Low Differentiation

2/5 Slight Differentiation

**3/5 Differentiated**

4/5 High Differentiation

5/5 Extreme Differentiation

# Check clarity and urgency

- **Select 1 question**
- **Ask 1-2 people to help improve these questions until they feel a sense of URGENCY and not just IMPORTANCE**
- **Don't bias them to agree, extract max feedback**

# LOGIN USING YOUR PERSONAL GMAIL, MS LIVE, or FB

## Differentiate With Every Deal

SkillBuilder is the fastest way to get everyone on your team answering the toughest sales and product questions when it matters most.

Get started for  
the fields below  
and running in

Enter your team

Type your TE

Select your ro

Sales Leader

Sign in & expl

Get Started



## Say Hello to SkillBuilder



# SWARTZ BONUS (TY DAVE

MAWHINNEY)

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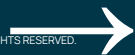
Code: FF2023

**\$99** → **FREE**

<https://courses.maadlabs.io/strategic-design>

Code: FF2023

**\$99**



**FREE**

# OTHER RESOURCES:

Try the 20-10-10!

<https://bit.ly/tepper201010>



Strategic Design Kit

[bit.ly/strategicdesignkit](https://bit.ly/strategicdesignkit)



# SUBSCRIBE:

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# THANK YOU!