

MCAT Education Platform

UM Pre-College Entrepreneurship Bootcamp

Day 8 = Pitch Day. All work completes by end of Day 7.

Vertical 1: MCAT Education Platform

Sponsor: Ansh Bhatt

Mission: Find who actually uses MCAT prep tools, what frustrates them most, and what they would pay for. Build a marketing funnel and a feature roadmap the sponsor can use immediately after the program ends.

Your KPIs

- 20+ customer interviews completed and logged
- 3 validated student personas built
- Competitor analysis with real traffic data (Similarweb)
- Pricing model with willingness-to-pay data from interviews
- 3-email marketing funnel built in Mailchimp
- Feature prioritization roadmap using MoSCoW method
- **Stretch:** A real marketing experiment that acquires at least 1 user

Your Toolbox

Tool	Use
Google Forms	Customer interview survey
Google Sheets	Data analysis and pricing model
Miro	Persona boards
Similarweb	Competitor traffic data
Mailchimp	3-email funnel
Typeform	Final validation survey
Canva	Pitch deck

Day 1: Foundations

Absorb the vocabulary. No execution yet. Read the Glossary at the back of this playbook. Watch the DoorDash YC pitch – note how they describe the problem before they describe the product. Prepare your 2-minute personal pitch for Day 2 using: who you are (15 sec), your most impressive thing (30 sec), why entrepreneurship (30 sec), what you want to build (30 sec), one memorable closer (15 sec). Practice out loud at least 3 times. Use an index card with bullets – not a script.

Day 2: Pitches, Team Reveal, Setup

Deliver your pitch. Hard 2-minute cutoff. After pitches and team reveal, complete in order:

1. Create your Slack channel: #team-mcat
2. Set up Notion workspace with 4 pages: KPI Board, Interview Log, Task List, Pitch Deck Outline
3. Watch the sponsor's founder video together; post 3 things you understood + 3 open questions in Slack
4. Assign roles: Customer Discovery Lead, Build and Execute Lead, Pitch and Story Lead
5. Read Days 3–4 of this playbook before leaving today

Days 3–4: Discovery Sprint

Day 3 – Morning

Competitor analysis on Similarweb (60 min). Search kaptest.com, princetonreview.com, and uworld.com one at a time. Capture monthly visits, traffic sources breakdown (organic vs. paid vs. social), and top countries. Save screenshots to a Notion page called “Competitor Landscape.”

Build the interview survey in Google Forms (60 min). Title: “MCAT Student Experience Survey.” Eight questions: year in school and exam timeline, current prep resources (checkboxes), satisfaction rating (1–10 scale), single biggest frustration (paragraph), monthly spend on prep, why they quit a platform if they did, WTP for the sponsor's main feature, and optional follow-up contact. Turn on “Collect email addresses” set to optional. Link to a new Google Sheet via the Responses tab.

Launch outreach (30 min). You need 20 responses. Text college pre-med contacts. Post in Facebook groups (MCAT prep, premed 2025). Post in r/Mcat and r/Premed. Frame it as a bootcamp project. Goal: form live, outreach sent to 25+ people before noon.

Day 3 – Afternoon

Study the sponsor's platform for 45 minutes. Sign in, use it like a real MCAT student. Write in Notion: what's confusing, what's missing, what actually works. These are hypotheses you'll validate with interviews.

Build the analysis tab in Sheets. Add a tab called “Interview Analysis” with columns: Persona Bucket, Number of Responses, Top Frustration, Budget Range, Key Quote. Leave it empty for now.

Day 3 checkpoint: Competitor screenshots in Notion. Form live. Outreach sent to 25+. At least 5 responses collected.

Day 4 – Morning

Find your 3 personas. Read every response. Look for clusters: overwhelmed/budget-limited students, heavy spenders seeking premium quality, and lapsed users who started prep and stopped (the lapsed segment is often the richest persona). Label each respondent by bucket. Fill in the analysis table.

Build 3 persona boards in Miro. One cluster per persona. Include a made-up name, photo (Google “medical student” for an image), age range, their top frustration as a direct quote, current tools, monthly budget, and what would make them switch platforms.

Pricing analysis in Sheets. New tab: “Pricing Model.” Columns: Feature, Number Who Want It, Average WTP per month, Notes. Pull WTP data from survey question 7. Write a 3-sentence pricing recommendation in Notion: “Based on 20 interviews, we recommend a [freemium/tiered/flat] model at \$X/month because...”

Day 4 – Afternoon

Chase responses to hit 20. Follow up with anyone who gave their email. Offer a 10-minute call – fill the form yourself during it. Phone calls produce richer data than forms.

Day 4 checkpoint: 20+ responses in sheet. 3 personas drafted in Miro. Pricing model tab built. 3-sentence pricing recommendation written. KPI board updated.

Days 5–6: Execution Sprint

Day 5 – Morning

3-email funnel in Mailchimp. Create a new Audience called “MCAT Prospects.” Draft three campaigns (mockup only – no need to send):

Email 1 – Awareness: Subject line uses your #1 interview frustration as a data point (e.g., “67% of pre-med students don’t know if their study strategy is working.”). CTA: “See How It Works.”

Email 2 – Consideration: Feature one persona by made-up name. Highlight the platform feature that addresses their frustration. CTA: “Try Free for 7 Days.”

Email 3 – Conversion: Reference your pricing model. Use a real interview quote as a testimonial. Add a deadline for urgency. CTA: “Start Today.”

Screenshot all three email previews.

Day 5 – Afternoon

Feature roadmap in Notion. New database: “Feature Roadmap – MoSCoW.” Properties: Feature Name, Category (Must/Should/Could/Won’t Have), Number of Interviews Who Mentioned It, Notes. Minimum 8 features. Every row needs a real interview count – no guessing.

MoSCoW thresholds: Must = 60%+ of respondents. Should = 30–60%. Could = 1–3 people. Won’t Have Now = out of scope for 90 days.

Day 5 checkpoint: 3-email funnel drafted with screenshots. Feature roadmap started with 8+ features categorized. Pricing model complete.

Day 6 – Morning

Finalize pricing model with LTV. Add to the Sheets pricing tab: Avg. Months of Use (ask sponsor or estimate 4–6 months for MCAT prep), LTV (Monthly Price x Avg. Months), Break-even CAC (LTV x 0.33 – you can spend up to 1/3 of LTV to acquire a customer).

Canva funnel diagram. Search “funnel infographic” in Canva. Three layers: top of funnel (Similarweb competitor traffic as a market proxy), middle (estimated % who pay for premium tools from your survey data), bottom (your revenue target at your recommended price). Download as PNG.

Day 6 – Afternoon

Stretch task: Build a 3-question Typeform asking about WTP for the sponsor’s specific platform. Include a link to the platform. Share in one pre-med community. Goal: 10 responses. This is your “real traction” slide.

Update KPI board with current counts on everything.

Day 6 checkpoint: Pricing model complete with LTV and break-even CAC. Funnel diagram downloaded. Feature roadmap finalized. KPI board fully updated.

Day 7: Pitch Preparation

Build your deck in Canva. Search “pitch deck” and choose a clean minimal template.

Slide	Title	Content
1	Cover	Team name, vertical, sponsor name
2	The Problem	#1 interview frustration + 1 stat
3	Market Size	Similarweb competitor traffic as proxy
4	Customer Discovery	20 interviews, 3 personas – Miro screenshot
5	Key Insights	Top 3 direct quotes from real respondents
6	Pricing Model	Recommended price + LTV calculation
7	Marketing Funnel	Canva funnel diagram
8	Feature Roadmap	MoSCoW table screenshot from Notion
9	Traction	Typeform responses, email signups, or any real experiment data
10	The Ask	Specific 30-day action plan for the sponsor

Afternoon: every person speaks at least 1–2 slides. Run one full timed rehearsal. Record it on your phone. Cut anything that runs over 8 minutes. The Ask slide should name a specific channel, a dollar amount, and a timeline – not a vague suggestion.

Day 8: Pitch Day

Have Google Sheets open in a tab – judges will ask follow-up questions. Know cold: total interviews, top frustration, recommended price, estimated LTV. Have a specific answer ready for: “What would it take to launch this?”

Program Syllabus

What This Program Is

Seven working days, 9 AM to 3 PM daily. Day 8 is pitch day. You are placed into a live business vertical with a real sponsor on Day 2. You execute inside that vertical and deliver real, sponsor-ready work by the end of Day 7.

The Execution Formula: Validation + Marketing + Management. “Product” is not in the formula. Build nothing before you validate demand.

Schedule

Day	Focus
Day 1	Startup vocabulary, BMC, VPC, customer discovery, the three costs (time, opportunity, money). Watch DoorDash YC pitch and Snapchat explainer. Homework: prepare your 2-minute personal pitch.
Day 2	Individual pitches (hard 2-minute cutoff). Team reveal. Vertical reveal. Tool setup: Slack channel, Notion workspace (KPI Board, Interview Log, Task List, Pitch Deck Outline), founder video, role assignments.
Days 3–4	Customer discovery sprint. Interviews, research, first KPI check.
Days 5–6	Execution sprint. Build, test, iterate.
Day 7	Pitch prep. Dry runs. All deliverables finalized.
Day 8	Final investor-style panel pitches. Feedback. Debrief.

Assessment

Component	Weight
Individual 2-minute pitch (Day 2)	20%
Team execution vs. KPI board (Days 3–7)	40%
Final investor pitch (Day 8)	30%
Engagement, professionalism, tool use	10%

Three Rules That Apply Every Day

1. **Evidence over opinion.** “I think customers want X” is worth zero. “12 out of 20 people said X” wins.
2. **Done beats perfect.** A live landing page with a typo beats a flawless one that doesn’t exist yet.
3. **Update your KPI board daily.** If it’s not on the board, it didn’t happen.

Pitch Day Rules (Day 8)

- Open with a real number, not a plan.

- Hard 8-minute cutoff. Practice until you know your 7:30 mark.
- Every team member is assigned slides before you walk in. No fumbling.
- Know your 3 hardest numbers without looking at the screen.
- End with a specific Ask – named channel, dollar amount, timeline.
- Export the deck as PDF the night before. Record a Loom backup of any live demo.

If You Get Stuck

Problem	Fix
Can't get interview responses	Post in a different community, change the subject line, offer to share findings
Tool not working	Use the backup tool listed in your toolbox, or ask your TA
Team conflict	5-minute timer, each person states position once, majority vote, document and move on
Behind on KPIs at Day 5	Triage: pick your 1–2 most important KPIs and cut everything else
Sponsor unreachable	Use materials already provided. Document outreach attempts – that's data.

Startup and AI Glossary

Core Startup Terms

Term	What It Means
BMC	Business Model Canvas – your business on one page across 9 blocks. Fill outside-in: start with the customer.
VPC	Value Proposition Canvas – customer jobs/pains/gains vs. your solution. Mismatch = guess, not product.
MVP	Minimum Viable Product – in 8 days this is a landing page, a form, or a manual process. Not code.
PMF	Product-Market Fit – 40%+ of users would be “very disappointed” if your product disappeared.
Pivot	Change one core assumption based on data. Day 4: discipline. Day 7: denial.
CAC	Customer Acquisition Cost – total spend divided by new customers. In this program: hours spent divided by customers converted.
LTV	Lifetime Value – total revenue from one customer over their full relationship with you. Target LTV:CAC of 3:1.
Churn	Customers lost this period divided by customers at start. Fix retention before scaling.
KPI	Metric with a deadline. Red on Day 5 means fixed by Day 6.
Unit Economics	Revenue minus cost per single unit. Negative = scale makes things worse.
WTP	Willingness to Pay – found through interviews, not surveys. Ask: “Have you ever paid for something like this?”
ICP	Ideal Customer Profile – the exact person most likely to convert and retain.
TAM/SAM/SOM	Total market / reachable portion / realistic near-term capture. Investors care about SOM.
NPS	Net Promoter Score – % Promoters minus % Detractors. Positive NPS from real users is strong pitch evidence.
Viral Coefficient	New users each user generates. $K > 1$ = self-sustaining growth.
UGC	User-Generated Content – reviews, videos, social posts created by users. Lowest-cost, most credible marketing.

The Four AI Tools

Rule: Use 3–4 tools in sequence. One tool for everything = mediocre outputs.

Tool	Best Use
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NotebookLM	Upload source documents. Answers cited directly to your sources. Fastest way to turn 40 pages into a 2-page action brief. Not a brainstorming tool.
Gemini	High-volume fast synthesis. Paste 25 interview responses, get a bullet-point summary. Longer free context than most.
Claude	Long-context reasoning and high-quality output. BMC/VPC analysis, pitch deck copy, pricing models. Save for pitch-critical work – daily message limits apply.
ChatGPT	Fast creative volume. 15 taglines, 20 headlines, quick name ideas. Generate options here, polish in Claude.

The Four-Tool Cascade

1. **Ingest (NotebookLM)** – Upload all source docs, get condensed outlines.
2. **Process (Gemini)** – Paste bulk data, synthesize fast.
3. **Reason (Claude)** – Feed outputs in for strategic analysis and high-quality writing.
4. **Ideate (ChatGPT)** – Generate volume fast, bring the best back to Claude to finish.

Context Management – 8 Rules

1. Compress before you paste. Run transcripts through NotebookLM or Gemini first. 90% fewer tokens, same output.
2. Keep a VERTICAL_BRIEF.md – under 400 words, updated daily. Paste at the top of every new AI session.
3. One task per session. Each major task gets its own conversation.
4. Match tool to task. Claude for quality reasoning. Gemini for bulk. ChatGPT for creative volume.
5. Build a Prompt Library in Notion. Save every prompt that produced a great output. By Day 5 you should have 10–15.
6. Specify output format. Weak: “Give me insights.” Strong: “Output a 4-column markdown table sorted by frequency.”
7. When a session degrades, start fresh. Paste your VERTICAL_BRIEF.md and continue. Don’t try to fix a degraded conversation.
8. Rotate tools when one hits its cap. Never stop working because one tool hit its limit.

AI Decision Matrix

Task	Tool
Summarize a 20-page document	NotebookLM
Synthesize 25 interview transcripts	Gemini
Build the BMC or VPC	Claude
Write the pitch deck narrative	Claude
Generate 15 tagline options	ChatGPT
Draft one cold outreach email	Claude
Draft 50 cold emails at scale	ChatGPT
Social captions and short copy	ChatGPT
Financial model from interview data	Claude

Web research synthesis	Gemini or ChatGPT (search on)
Build an automation	Make.com
Add AI to an automation	Make.com HTTP module to Claude API

No-Code Tool Reference

Tool	Use
Notion	KPI board, interview log, task list, pitch outline. Replaces five apps.
Canva	All design. Use the Brand Kit to lock colors and fonts from Day 2 onward.
Carrd.co	Landing page in under 1 hour. Free, no code.
Make.com	No-code automation. 1,000 free operations per month.
Mailchimp	Email marketing. 500 contacts and 1,000 emails per month free.
Buffer / Later	Social media scheduling. Plan content once, post across platforms.
Typeform / Tally	Polished survey forms with better UX than Google Forms.
Miro / Whimsical	Visual mapping. Whimsical for flowcharts, Miro for personas and journey maps.
Apollo.io	Verified B2B email finder. 50 free exports per month.
Hunter.io	Find emails by company domain. 25 free searches per month.
Loom	Record demos. 90 seconds of live demo beats any slide. Record before pitch day.
Similarweb	Competitor website traffic data. Use to validate market size.
Maze	Usability testing platform. Produces a quantified task success rate.