

The ten questions a publisher asks a board game designer, and the order the one-page pitch goes in

A publisher meeting is twenty minutes and the publisher asks the same questions in roughly the same order, whatever the game. Write the answer to each one before the meeting — one or two sentences, from your own logs and notes — and the meeting becomes a conversation instead of a quiz. The examples are from the invented Tidewrack pack on the sample page.

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- ☐ 1. What is it?
The 15-second hook: kind of game, players, time, the pull. "A 45-minute set-collection game for two to four players about beachcombers salvaging after storms. Every tile you take pushes the tide in for everyone."
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- ☐ 2. What does a turn look like?
One round shown, not the rules from setup. Flip a storm card, walk the beach, pick up tiles, watch the tide marker move. If you start at setup, their eyes glaze by minute two — your own testers already told you this.
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- ☐ 3. What is the one decision?
Keep walking for the better tile, or bank what you carry before the tide takes it. Name it plainly; it is the proof there is a game in the box.
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- ☐ 4. What does it play like?
The comparison, held until they ask: "Incan Gold's push-your-luck inside Cascadia's tile-and-tableau scoring, with the timer shared." When they ask, it places the game; offered before, it replaces it.
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- ☐ 5. How long does it really run?
The logged range, not the box number: 38–52 minutes over the last ten plays. A publisher hears a range as a designer who keeps a log.
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- ☐ 6. What is the best player count?
The honest answer from your logs, including the count you would not print. If your logs are thin at two players, say so — they will find out at the demo table anyway.
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- ☐ 7. How many playtests, and where?
The count as logged, blind tests named separately, the clubs or events named. Rounded-up numbers are the ones that come apart under one follow-up question.
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- ☐ 8. What is in the box?
The component list with counts — 60 tiles, 24 storm cards, 4 meeples, the tide track. They are pricing manufacture while you talk.
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- ☐ 9. Where does it sit?
Whose shelf, which slot: a 45-minute family-plus game that teaches in five minutes. Their list has gaps; your job is to name the gap you fill.
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- ☐ 10. What do you want, and where does it stand?
Prototype version, whether the rules are final, whether the art is placeholder and yours to keep or theirs to direct, who else has seen it. Asked last, answered plainly.
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The one-page pitch, in the order a publisher reads it

Title line → what it is → how a turn goes

The strip (players, age, time), the hook, one round in one paragraph.

Why it sells → where it sits → the numbers

The one decision and the shared timer; the slot it fills; the logged figures — teach time, run range, playtest count.

Components → status → contact

The counts; prototype version, rules, art, availability; name, email, city, one link. One page, nothing else — the rulebook and the video are links.