

MARCOM CORNER: Your Answers to Marketing & Communications

TOPIC: Your "Elevator Speech"

WHAT IS AN ELEVATOR SPEECH?

An "elevator speech" is really just a simple statement that sums up your value, and the value of your firm, to a given target audience. Think of it as your quick and concise answer to the question, "What do you do?" However, you don't want to bore them with the intricacies of your day-to-day job responsibilities. The focus should be on the company highlights that will pique their curiosity in the products or services that you provide. Ultimately, you want your audience to say, "Tell me more."

WHAT MAKES A GOOD ELEVATOR SPEECH?

First, keep it brief; 10 seconds is plenty of time to convey your main messages. Second, communicate your business value, focusing on what your company brings to its clients and how you could possibly help the person you are speaking with. Third, establish credibility and don't be afraid to name-drop a little (within reason). You have worked hard for your clients and should be proud to showcase them.

PRACTICE FORGETTING ABOUT "YOU"

When most people give an elevator speech, they are often too detailed about their personal tasks and specific projects with the company. If your elevator speech sounds more like an excerpt from your resume, it's time to re-examine your approach. Assess what the other person is trying to accomplish in a business context and you will be off in the right direction. You aren't looking to close a deal on the spot, but you need to leave them wanting to set a meeting with you.

RELAX

Delivering an elevator speech is not answering the Spanish Inquisition, nor are you presenting yourself as a professional salesperson. Just remember to keep the conversation casual, friendly and value-based and you will be surprised by how many phone calls you will receive as a result of your efforts.

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