

The Elevator Pitch

Do you have your "Elevator Pitch" ready to go and present to maximum effect?

What is an "Elevator Pitch" you say??

OK, you enter a lift or elevator and a total stranger asks "Who you are or what do you do? Your answer should be a 30 to 40 seconds (time it takes in a lift), show stopping, synopsis, of what is special and great about you, and must grab the other person's attention! You're not being arrogant or boastful, just responding to the questions, "What do you do?" or "Tell me about yourself?"

This seems so basic, but nearly everyone finds it difficult to answer effectively. No one knows the answer better than you, and if you can't say something good about yourself, who else can?

As I say in my lectures and books, "Get comfortable with thinking good things and saying good things about yourself. Sell yourself and differentiate yourself from everyone one else." You only get one chance to make a good first impression or grab their attention, so don't waste it.

The other day I was listening to the radio and the announcer interviewed five food van owners over the difficulty of getting a good licensing arrangement. At the end of each interview, he asked them what was unique about their van and their number one best seller. No one could come up with half decent answer, let alone a stunning "Elevator Pitch" when a top radio station was offering them a free plug! I nearly crashed my car with frustration.

Let me give you an example:

What do you do? "I am an accountant with a large firm". **OR**

"I am a Chartered Accountant with KPMG and for the last five years have specialised in mergers and acquisitions of large entertainment companies and hotel chains in Australia by overseas corporations, which have lead to our team now evaluating overseas opportunities for our client". **Too upmarket for you?**

Let's say you want to break into the travel industry and find yourself standing next to Sir Richard Branson (happens all the time!)

So what do you say? "I work in a busy hotel part-time whilst at university." **OR**

"I'm in my final year at university studying a double degree in Tourism and Commerce. I currently work part-time in one of Melbourne's most popular bars and eateries. Over a weekend I would deal with over 200 clients, handling around \$10,000.00 in transactions and up to 1000 individual line orders. This has developed my ability to work really well under pressure and multi-task, whilst dealing with a wide variety of customers."

Normally we talk at around 130 to 150 words per minute. To develop your "Elevator Pitch" you will need 75 to 100 words to encapsulate your story, positioning statement and grab your listener's interest. Go on give it a go and create your pitch! Script it, craft it, review it, refine it and then practice it. Tailor it to the people you are going to meet or want to impress. Like an American Express Card, "Don't leave home without one."

Good luck in your next meeting, James E Lynch