



28 Developing an elevator speech

What is an elevator speech?

An elevator speech is you talking about your business in public in an inspirational way. To elevate means to raise or lift higher and this is what this speech is all about. You may be talking for one minute or longer at a networking event, introducing yourself to business colleagues, or giving your opening speech at the start of a presentation. An elevator speech should build you and your business up and motivate your audience to want find out more.

Why is having one important?

There are many opportunities to talk about your business with others. If you want to inspire sales then you need to get used to talking yourself and your business up. Once you are confident with the content of your elevator speech it can be a relief. You will know what to say in any situation when you are asked to describe what you do.

Your challenge

Do you find describing what you do difficult? Is building your business up in a positive way even harder? What is it that you find challenging? It can be hard to be succinct and powerful at the same time, especially when you know your own business well. It can be overwhelming when there is so much that you do. How do you choose what to say? Selecting exactly the right words and delivering them with passion and enthusiasm is the challenge. Knowing your business is very different from selling your business.

What makes an elevator speech successful?

How your elevator speech impacts on those listening is the most important thing. Your aim is to capture attention and build in your audience a desire to make contact with you. Your speech needs to communicate very quickly the essence of what you do and the value you offer. It must be relevant to and motivational for your audience. You must be fluent and believe fully in what you are saying.

ELEVATOR CREATOR – SPECIAL RESPONSE CHECKLIST

To create your elevator speech, get a pen and paper and write down your answers to the following set of questions.

- ▶ Who are you talking to?
- ▶ What are their interests/problems/needs?
- ▶ What aspect of what you do could be of most interest to them?
- ▶ What can you do to solve these problems?
- ▶ What is the best thing about your service?
- ▶ What is your USP?
- ▶ What have those that use your service said about it?
- ▶ What is your guarantee?
- ▶ What action would you like people to take as a result of listening to your elevator speech?

How to use this information

Take this information and use it to write your speech. Here is a simple structure to follow:

- I am... and my company is...
- Thank you for the opportunity to speak.
- We help people (describe target customer) who (describe typical problems these customers face).
- We help these people to (describe solutions to problems).
- The best thing about our business is...
- We are unique in...
- Those who have used us say that they appreciate our...
- When we work with people we guarantee...
- If you are interested in finding out more (action to take).

Your speech can now be used at any event where you get the opportunity to blow your own trumpet. Deliver it with honesty and sincerity and you cannot fail to inspire your audience.