



The Elevator Pitch – An important sales tool for any business

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We know everybody says you should have an elevator pitch – the short (20-60 second) statement that immediately sums up in a positive way what your company does, how clever your product or service is and why they should buy it. Maybe you've decided it's just for start-ups but in these networking days it has uses far beyond start up – it allows you to provide an instant baseline for your listener and done well, it engages them. Everybody has a different idea of how this works – timing, content and outcome. In summary, the point of an elevator pitch is to get your prospects interested in your company to improve their business.

To achieve this:

1. Be concise – An elevator pitch is a clear, brief and well-practiced description of how your product or service will benefit their company, who you are, how it works and how they access these benefits.
2. Solve a problem: Avoid sounding like a solution in search of a problem. Explain how your unique solution makes a demonstrable difference. These days talk profit not savings.
3. Tell them what they want to hear: in their terms but succinctly.
4. Speak in plain English: talk in tangibles, prune the three letter acronyms, translate benefits into real cash, develop a strapline to focus interest and capture the imagination. Or make an analogy between you and a well-known company.
5. Show your commitment: a good pitch should get your clients complete attention.
6. Conclude with identifying the actions that are needed to make it happen.
7. Tell a consistent story.
8. When you are happy with it, practise it, don't let the first time you use it be the most important.

First of all – saying what you do helps but only if the questioner already has some understanding. Getting their attention requires that you say something that engages their interest and is relevant.

Secondly, no matter how good it won't close the deal but it should give you the opportunity to open the dialogue that makes the deal that you will close.

Thirdly, it needs to be short and simple – not for nothing do great speakers use three part lists.

Probably the best way to frame your pitch is to ask yourself and by implication your clients "What difference would you or your company make to the client"?

- So for software it could be "We make software that transforms time to market by over 20% for any engineering company by fully coordinating all the individual processes."
- For a company offering milling services it could be "We provide peace of mind through fast, efficient, cost effective service."
- For training it could be "We provide effective training in... for companies who want to make their people more efficient."

For example – A software company offering process improvement software, one of the most intangible sells.

We're the Whizzy Software Company and we turn process into profit. The range of companies, mostly engineering, we've worked with have improved their manufacturing efficiency, in some cases by over 50% or in one case, by £25,000. Our system links all the key parts of your processes, it's compatible with all the major suppliers such as... and you can even give your customers controlled access. We know how risky it can be to migrate from existing systems so we offer a trial programme.

We're holding a meeting (seminar, briefing...) for buyers to see it for real. Let me book you in?

