

Connection Pros

As I am writing my column for this month, I'm sitting on an airplane returning from a speaking engagement in Omaha, NE. Oh, the glamorous life of a professional speaker. As the flight took off, I started up a conversation with a woman sitting besides me. She asked me what I did and I said "You know those people that attend business functions, feeling nervous and uncomfortable and would like to meet some new people but just don't have the confidence to approach them and start a conversation? Well, I have a way of showing people how they can learn to meet and create connections with just about anyone and do it with comfort and confidence."

She must have liked what I said because she handed me her card and started talking to me about how I might be able to help her upper management team. As it turns out, she was the vice president of sales for a huge telecommunications company. Will she hire me? Who knows but at least that woman will walk away knowing EXACTLY what I do. Chalk that lead up to a great elevator speech.

You've probably heard the term "elevator speech" before but not know how it works. They are sometimes called 30 second introductions and are also referred to as 30 second commercials. Call them what you like but they all do the same thing.

An elevator speech is a short (15-30 second, 150 word) sound bite that succinctly and memorably introduces you. It spotlights your uniqueness. It focuses on the benefits you provide. And it is delivered effortlessly.

Elevator speeches are intended to prepare you for very brief, chance encounters in an elevator. But elevator speeches are not just for elevators! You should use it whenever you want to introduce yourself to a new contact. That could be in the supermarket, waiting in line at an ATM, getting your morning latte, or sitting on a plane.

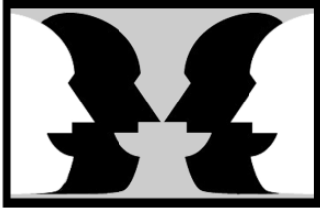
Who better than you to describe with passion, precision and persuasiveness what you do? A great elevator speech makes a lasting first impression, showcases your professionalism and allows you to position yourself. And if you want to meet more people and make more connections, you need an elevator speech!

The reason an effective elevator speech is so important is because the most well known icebreaker of all time happens to be "what do you do?" People never fully understand the great opportunity you have when people ask you this question. Unfortunately, most people just babble out the first thing that comes to their mind and then wonder why people don't seem intrigued or interested in what you do.

Think about how you normally answer a question like this. You might say your title and the name of your company and then you'll typically ramble on with a series of random thoughts that will probably confuse, bore and torment other people. The first thing you need to understand is that NO ONE REALLY CARES WHAT YOU DO FOR A LIVING!! Sorry for the abruptness of that statement but it's the truth. Most people ask you about what you do because it's the only way they know how to break the ice.

To really drive this point home, think about the people that you meet. Most of them are thinking the following as you are rambling on:

- "What line of bull is this?"
- "So what, why should I care about how long you've been in business...?"
- "How quickly can I dump you?"
- "What do you offer that can help me solve my problems, increase my success, save money, avoid hassles, reduce risk...?"



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If you want to prevent people from thinking this way about you, you must start putting together an elevator speech that will grab their attention, engage them in conversation about your business and encourage them to say the most beautiful words you will ever hear, "TELL ME MORE!!"

For those of you that have been frustrated by not being able to explain to people what you do in a short and simple fashion, I feel your pain and I'm here to help you. For the next several months, I'm going to focus on what it takes to develop a well-crafted elevator speech.

If you can't wait several months and need help right now, I offer individualized consulting programs that help people develop powerful elevator speeches that are guaranteed to get them results. People will learn what information should be in an introduction and, more importantly, what shouldn't be included. They will also have the opportunity to learn how to deliver their elevator speech with comfort, confidence, and success. These programs are priced to fit everyone's budget and time can be schedule as soon as people want. For more information, please call me at 480-860-6100 or e-mail me at Dave@ConnectionPros.com. See you next month.