



Connection Pros

Title – Your One-To-One Elevator Speech

A man approached me at a connection function about three weeks ago and told me he's been reading my column in this magazine. He goes on to say that the information about elevator speeches has helped him immensely but he has one major problem. He is one of the millions of people that will never attend a function where you have to stand up in front of a group of people and deliver your elevator speech. I then spent the next 15 to 20 minutes explaining to him how to deliver a powerful elevator speech when you're only speaking to one person. It's my pleasure to share this information with all of you, too.

The term, elevator speech was created to describe the situation when you are standing in an elevator with someone that you'd like to meet and you only have about 30 seconds to grab this person's interest and encourage him to want to know more information about you. As you can see, an elevator speech was originally designed to be delivered to only one person. Allow me to share with you the following tips that will make these brief encounters far more successful and potentially more profitable.

- Never start with a business card - I'm sure you know these types of people, the ones that walk around with a handful of business cards in their left hand and their right hand out, ready to shake hands with anyone they meet. As soon as they meet you, they immediately shove one of their business cards into your hand, whether you want it or not. I have always believed that the best time to hand people your business card is after they have asked for it. This way, you're not giving something to people that they really don't want and it also saves you a fortune on business cards.
- Try to create a clever title - In one of my past columns, I stated that you should never start an elevator speech with your name, title, and company name. I'm going to make a slight alteration to that statement. When it comes to titles, a clever title can go a very long way. So many times you meet people with very non-descriptive titles. If you happen to be one of those people with such a title, I would start thinking of creating a new one. For example, my title is professional icebreaker. Whenever I say this to people, they always give me a little smile and ask me what that means. What I have done is grab these people's attention and engage them in conversation about my business. These are two of the most important reasons for needing a powerful elevator speech. On your drive home tonight, think about what you really do in your job, and try to come up with a clever title that best describes what you really do.
- Only focus on the benefits - In the sales game, people are taught that it's all about features and benefits. When it comes to elevator speeches, it's all about benefits, benefits, benefits. People really don't care about the features that your company currently offers. All they care about is how these features are going to benefit them. One of the best ways to remember this idea is when people ask you the question "What do you do?" answer the question as if they asked you, "What do you do that will benefit me?"
- Use the KISS method - As I am sure you know, the KISS method stands for "keep it short and simple." This is one of the best pieces of advice you can use regarding your elevator speech. Being able to grab people's interest and engage them in conversation about your business is very important, but if you don't know when to stop talking, people will start avoiding you like the plague. Nobody wants to hear that much information about your business. If they do, they will ask you. If you can provide people with enough information so they are interested enough to meet you for a cup of coffee, you've done everything you can to create the beginning of the connection and possibly pick up a nice piece of business from it too.

For those of you who have read this column for the last four or five months, you might be wondering when I might explain the exact way to develop a powerful elevator speech. Unfortunately, every elevator speech is different and there isn't one perfect way to develop one. For those of you wanting to get some input on your elevator speech, please feel free to e-mail me your introduction. Make sure you include your phone number so I can contact you to give you my thoughts. My e-mail address is Dave@ConnectionPros.com. See you next month.