

## WHAT'S YOUR ELEVATOR PITCH?



**Summary:** *You have seconds to deliver a pitch to an audience that makes them want to ride the elevator past their floor instead of jumping out at the first open door.*

It's called an elevator pitch for a reason. An elevator pitch is supposed to be a quick, less than a minute explanation of what you do. How can you do this effectively to develop relationships and form connections? Engaging the listener in less than 225 words can be difficult but when you have the right pitch prepared, you can make a big impact.

What is your mission statement?

A **mission statement** is a brief synopsis that describes what you or your business is all about. While you or your business may offer a variety of skills, services or products, a mission statement hones in on why you are in the industry or business. If the statement is for your business, include what you offer to the customers you serve. Make a point of discussing the need that you fill. Your mission statement is the driving force for the rest of your pitch.

Spice up your pitch

A mission statement is good to have but it doesn't get the conversation going and this is why you need to include more. Eliminate the boring jargon with the **addition of vibrant words**. If your skills are not easily understood, give the listener a familiar reference to compare to. If you are a catalog copywriter, you might say something along the lines of "I write captions that persuade you to buy a wool sweater from the Gap in the heat of summer."

Make the pitch about the audience

The best way to capture their attention and interest is to **make the pitch about them**. Your accomplishments won't mean anything if you can't effectively make a connection with the listener. Think about how politicians address their audiences. They don't talk about themselves the whole time; instead they talk about what they can do for the audience. You don't have to completely lock them in by the end of the pitch but you need to peak their interest.

Transition the conversation

Have a rehearsed, open-ended question ready to go that will facilitate the conversation farther. If you give an excellent pitch that has the listener interested but then just end it, their interest will also end. You want to keep their mind thinking about the possibilities and opportunities you have to offer.

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