

The Elevator pitch – Say it and fast

The “elevator pitch” is a short and concise speech stating an idea for a project, product or service. As its name indicates, it should be delivered in the time span of an elevator ride, i.e. approximately 30 seconds.

The elevator pitch is one of the most important branding tools for professional networking, as it helps people to place and memorise you. So you need to make sure that it shows you in the best light. Your pitch is key to getting you on someone’s professional radar screen.

Here is what the elevator pitch should convey:

1. Who are you? What do you do? What do you know?

What is your professional background and what are you really good at?

Give an indication of your profession in general. (*e.g. management consultant*) and highlight your skills and strengths (*e.g. leading large re-branding strategies*) and what makes you stand out (*e.g. working many years in Singapore, Germany and Poland*).

The opening of your elevator pitch is very important and should make people want to hear more about you.

2. What can you offer? How do you add value?

You want to let the other person know how you can help them and their business. Before you ask for what **you** need or want, you offer your help.

In broad terms explain how you see that you can provide a valuable service to the other person. This needs to be connected to the skills and strengths you indicated earlier in order to give a consistent and strong message.
(*e.g. I would be happy to offer you my help with your marketing and communication strategy in your new entry markets in Eastern Europe.*)

The more you already know a person and/or their company the more you can fine-tune what you can do for them.

3. What do you want? Why are you at this networking event?

After you have “stretched out” a hand to offer help you can also ask for it in return?

Don’t be shy. You need to say clearly what you are looking for. If you are going to a networking event, it is expected that you are there for a reason. Make sure the other person knows what that reason is.
(*e.g. I am very interested to work with companies who are looking to expand their business into new markets and might need some additional help and expertise in developing a structured approach. If you have contact with any companies of that profile I would appreciate you pointing them in my direction.*)

Put those three parts together and you have your elevator pitch. Make sure it flows and does not exceed 30 seconds.

Finally you might want to have a few different elevator pitches prepared to fit different audiences – particularly if you are attending a networking event.