

BUSINESS LINE

To Your Success

PERFECT YOUR PITCH

THE MOST IMPORTANT 30-SECONDS OF YOUR BUSINESS DAY

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Your elevator pitch is more than just a foot in the door; it's an opportunity to connect with someone while reinforcing your brand and the value you have to offer. Each time you give your 30-second elevator pitch, your single-minded goal should be to elicit the response:

"Tell me more ..."

You're not trying to tell your life story or to close a deal, but rather you're trying to invite someone to engage with you in a deeper conversation. If you're successful with your 30-second elevator pitch, you will find yourself attracting people who want to get to know you better. This is a great start to your business day.

Most people spend their precious 30-seconds going on in boring detail about what they do. They forget to reveal some of who you are. Strong networkers are also proficient at communicating what a good lead is for them and who they are looking to meet. The whole point of giving a 30-second introduction is to find out who you can help and who can help you. Remember, it's not a transaction or a close, but rather, a beginning.

What would MR. ABE say?

To ensure that your 30-second elevator pitch is strong, it must pass the MR.ABE test:

M - Memorable (something has to "stick" in their mind after you stop talking)

R - Relatable (to what the other person cares about)

A - Authentic (to you)

B - Believable (from you)

E - Engaging (it's all about energy!)

Identify Your Specialty and Communicate it

One of my clients is a real estate agent. When I first heard her give her 30-second pitch, it sounded like a cross between a generic job description and an apology. I could feel her nervousness. She had effectively (or ineffectively) communicated that she did all forms of real estate: residential, commercial, condos, million dollar homes, etc. As a result, she did not position herself as an expert in any area. It was not only unbelievable, but unconvincing and not very memorable.



After spending some time discussing her strengths, experience and passions with her, her boss and her past clients, we carved out an authentic position for her. She now communicates her specialty with confidence, energy and has a new ear for listening to what the clients want and need. Equipped with a stronger, and more compelling elevator pitch, she is

now growing her business more each day.

What can you do to sharpen your elevator pitch?

1. Practice. Practice until it feels natural and energizing to say out loud. Practice in front of a mirror or while you're driving in your car. You want it to be conversational, not canned. If you don't feel comfortable saying it, how do you think your audience will feel hearing it?

2. Experiment. Try different approaches to make it more relatable to different audiences. If you go to a regular networking meeting, don't be a broken record. Mix it up, but be sure to reinforce your main branding message every time.

3. Ask for Feedback. Find out what sticks by asking people what they remember hearing. What did they find compelling? What peaked their interest? When did they "tune-out." Give others feedback too. We can all get better at this!

4. Be Confident. What you have to say and to offer is valuable. Hold that belief as you stand and deliver. Let go of your fears and focus on your audience. By being confident and having a compelling pitch, you are more likely to engage with the people you desire to meet.

Kathy McAfee is President of Kmc BRAND INNOVATION, LLC, and is known as The Marketing Motivator. Serving as a marketing coach and consultant, she works with ambitious entrepreneurs and small business owners to grow their businesses through innovation and motivation. Learn more about her expertise in branding, communicating and unconventional marketing by visiting her web site at www.marketingmotivator.net

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