

The perfect pitch?

Bernadette Baynie gives you her top seven ways to create an exceptional elevator pitch, which you can use as your very own personal selling statement to build your network and attract new clients and business opportunities!

WHAT IS AN ELEVATOR PITCH?

A great elevator pitch is an essential personal marketing and networking tool for lawyers. It is a brief but powerful response that you give to someone who asks about you. A highly compelling elevator pitch achieves the following four things:

- » It helps you to engage potential clients and valuable stakeholders in conversation,
- » It grabs their attention and promotes their interest in you,
- » It inspires them to them asking for your business card; and
- » It encourages them to arrange a follow up meeting with you.

Here are the top seven ways to create an exceptional elevator pitch:

1 Create A pitch that covers the field

The best elevator pitch turns your credentials and accomplishments into potential benefits for the other person. So, choose words in your pitch that simply express:

- (i) what you do;
- (ii) your key value proposition for example: how your products/ services differentiate you from your competitors – eg: are they better, faster, cheaper and/or easier to use; and
- (iii) how they could benefit the other person.

If you are a professional - focus on your delivery of exceptional

services and solutions that provide a great client experience. If you sell products then emphasis their unique features of your products and/or services that stand out from the rest and make customer wanting more.

2 Make it personal

Explain what you like most about your products and/or services and why they would want to specifically seek you out to buy them?

3 Delivery time

An elevator pitch should generally take 15-25 seconds to deliver, representing the time that it would take to ride an elevator. But its best to have all bases covered and design a few that covers the following situations:

- (i) Super short one – 15-25 seconds
Suitable for informal get-togethers such as dinner parties or impromptu meetings, for example: when you bump into someone in an office lobby or on public transport, etc.
- (ii) Shorter one – 40-60 seconds
Suitable for formal conference, exhibition and networking events, etc.
- (iii) Longer one – 2-3 minutes
Suitable for marketing and presentation opportunities during interviews and client meetings and you are asked to respond to questions like: “Tell me about yourself” or “What is your background and current role” etc.

4 First impression counts!

We all know, as lawyers, that you only get to make a first impression once. This usually occurs within seconds of meeting someone new. Most first impressions occur during face to face meetings and such meetings offer you the best opportunity to deliver an elevator pitch.

Face-to-face communications were, studied some years ago by UCLA’s communication professor, Albert Mehrabian. His studies revealed some



surprising information for us lawyers, who pride ourselves on our choice of words, when presenting our key messages to clients and stakeholders eg: courts and regulators etc. His studies found that your words only account for 7 per cent of your face to face message and that your combined body language and tone of voice accounted for a whopping 93 per cent of your message (reflecting - 55 per cent for body language and 38 per cent for tone of voice). The rationale is that your combined body language and tone of voice are highly impacting. They connect positively with people on an emotional level, when they are aligned with the words that are being related to them.

So, when you deliver your elevator pitch to someone, always use the right body language and tone of voice to make the best first impression. This can be achieved by giving them a genuine warm smile and a firm palm to palm handshake, using strong eye contact and a friendly tone of voice.

6 Underlying messages count

During a first meeting, potential new client and business associate will usually ask you politely: “What do you do?” but be on guard as their underlying question could well mean: “What can you do for me?” or “Will this impact me positively or negatively?”. This was highlighted by Steve Woodruff in his book, ‘Clarity Wins: Get Heard. Get Referred’, when he said, “The buyer is always tuned in to one radio station: WIIFM (What’s In It For Me). The rest is filtered out as noise.”

So, always design a pitch that focuses on the other person and the positive impact that you could potentially have on them.

6 Practice makes perfect

To yield you the highest results – try practicing your elevator pitch in front of a mirror to and then on a trusted friend or family member, who knows you well and can provide you with honest feedback. It might take a few goes to develop your capability to connect confidentially and emotionally with your audience, but your effort will be worth it.

7 Pose a question at the end of your elevator pitch

Lastly, promote an ongoing conversation between you – by adding a brief follow-on question in warm and friendly tone at the

SOME HELPFUL EXAMPLES TO CREATE YOUR OWN ELEVATOR PITCH

Try using these as an outline:

“I’m a with overyears of experience. I lead a dynamic [organisation/ company/team] and we are focused on delivering exceptional services and solutions to our customers. Delivering consistent value for money to [my/ our] [customers/clients] is [my/our] number one priority. What differentiates us from other players in the market is that our services and solutions enable you to..... ”

“I’m a with overyears of experience. I lead an energetic and highly motivated team in [insert name of enterprise]. We deliver exceptional value for money, services and solutions to our corporate clients – on time, every time. We genuinely care about their needs and are consistently focused on providing them great results. Such outcomes enable them to become top performers in their industry and grow their market share [and profits] exponentially.....”

end of your pitch like : “So what about you, what do you do?”. You may also want to add a closing line to the conversation that might promote the exchange of business cards and a follow up meetings - such as: “It was a pleasure to meet you and I genuinely welcome the chance to catch up with you again, when convenient...”

CONCLUSION

Developing and delivering a standout elevator pitch may take a little patience and practice, but the rewards can be immense. Remember, though that people are more likely to forget “what” you said, but they are more likely to remember “how” you made them feel when you said it! 📌



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