



Mark Sampson

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7 Tips for Making a Better Elevator Pitch

By Katherine Tarbox

You don't have much time to make a great first impression with a potential client. Whether you're on an elevator or standing in line for coffee, you should have a script in mind that could open the door to future conversation. Here are some tips from New York–based executive coach Dale Kurow.



- 1. Write it down.** Craft five to 10 ways to put into words what you do for a living.
- 2. Don't be convoluted.** Avoid industry jargon. Use everyday language that people outside the industry can easily understand.
- 3. Make it visual.** Use words that evoke imagery, perhaps describing the types of homes you sell. Powerful language—superlatives or strong adjectives—that are discouraged in writing can make a quick pitch memorable.

4. Practice it—out loud. Try out your elevator pitch a few times—you might even try recording it—so that it feels natural to deliver. If it doesn't ring true when you hear it, revise it and figure out which parts are most powerful. Then tweak it until it works.

5. Get to the point. Be able to tell the story of your business in 30 to 60 seconds.

6. Have a goal. A good elevator pitch accomplishes something, whether it's getting a business card or finding a referral.

7. Leave them wanting more. Incorporate a hook that enables you to capture contact information—for example, "I'd be happy to send you those statistics."