

# 10 TIPS TO CRAFT YOUR PERFECT ELEVATOR PITCH

YOU'RE IN THE SUPERMARKET when you run into a friend who wields some clout and influence in the community. After a polite "How are you?" she asks what you're doing. Scrambling for a concise response, you freeze or, worse, ramble erratically.

What you need is an elevator pitch – a short, persuasive speech that sparks interest in who you are and what you do. Whether you want to talk about your organization, a project or product, or even an idea, you need a sharp pitch lasting no longer than a 30-second elevator ride.

How do you write such a pitch?

California Desert Arts Council has aggregated these 10 helpful tips from experts at Forbes, MindTools.com, The Balance, and The Muse.

- **Identify your goal.** Is it to raise awareness of your organization? Sell a sponsorship of an event? Win endorsement of an idea? Or simply explain what you do?
- **Explain what you do, with passion.** If you represent an organization, describe what it does, how, and for whom. Underscore your impact or value with a statistic or memorable fact. Show enthusiasm and genuine interest (spoken and body language).
- **Communicate your unique selling proposition (USP).** Identify what makes you, your organization, or your idea, unique, MindTools.com advises. You'll want to communicate your USP after talking about what you do.

Whether you want  
to talk about your  
organization, a project,  
a product, or even an  
idea, you need a  
sharp pitch.

- **Ask a question.** Follow your USP with an open-ended question to invite conversation.
- **Write your pitch.** It should answer three questions: Who are you? What do you do? What are you looking for? Be clear, concise (30 seconds), and relevant (tailor the pitch to whom you speak).
- **Read it aloud.** Use a stopwatch to time your delivery.
  - **Edit ruthlessly.** Speak in active voice and positive form, and eliminate jargon and unnecessary words. You want only a few key bullet points or sentences. Your goal is to interest the listener in learning more, Forbes emphasizes.
  - **Practice.** How you deliver your pitch is as important as what you say. Your body language should project confidence, and you should avoid talking too fast. "Practice it until the speed and 'pitch' come naturally," The Balance suggests. Practice in front of a mirror, and then with friends and colleagues.
  - **Offer a business card or item.** Share your contact information and invite further conversation.

The Muse offers one more piece of advice: **Ride an elevator and practice (when you're alone).** "Give yourself time by going to the highest floor. Then, try giving your pitch from a middle floor and then from the first to the third floor. Having to make just a few brief moments count will help you to hone the words you need and scrap the ones you don't!"