



### **Everyone Needs an Elevator Speech**

It's truly amazing how fast the tension is broken in an elevator or waiting line as soon as someone starts to talk. And what better subject than where you work and what you do?

Create a succinct description of your business that you can deliver in the time it takes to ride an elevator. To make your elevator speech truly effective, prepare about a dozen variations on it and practice, practice, practice. Since one size never fits all, and you never know just who will be riding that elevator (or train, or standing by you in line, etc.), you want to be ready with an explanation that sounds tailored to that person's interests and needs.

Not only will you sound more polished when your words flow smoothly in a focused, accurate description of your business, but memorizing your elevator speech frees you to pay attention to the person you're talking to.

You won't be staring at the ceiling for words or struggling to find the right way to connect with that person.

To prepare your perfect elevator speech, do the following:

- Write 12 statements describing what you do.
- Write 12 statements describing what you sell.
- Write 12 statements describing your service.
- Write 12 statements why you can do it better or why you are unique.
- Commit them all to memory.
- Practice in the mirror, on your friends, in your car, and on strangers.
- Pull out whichever speech is most appropriate when the time comes.

Try this for fun the next time you are in an elevator: Say, "Everyone who isn't looking at his feet or the ceiling say hi!" Quickly introduce yourself and say, "Thanks for the ride." Everyone usually leaves with a chuckle—except grumpies who would be grumpy regardless.