

The Elevator Speech

Everyone needs a good elevator speech. It is the fundamental sales conversation starter. The elevator speech has been around for at least as long as there have been elevators, probably longer. The elevator speech is a succinct overview or quick summary of your value proposition. It's a sales pitch in the time span of an elevator ride—a verbal business card. Introduce yourself and your company. Explain what you do and for whom. Announce your uniqueness.

Tips for elevator speeches:

- Keep it short—30 seconds or less. Your message must be tight. Fewer words are better. Avoid clutter. Trim.
- Planned need not mean canned. Rehearse until it sounds natural and conversational.
- Passion sells and enthusiasm is contagious. Share your natural excitement for what you sell. If you cannot get excited about it, how will the other person get excited?
- Follow this format by answering these questions: Who are we? What do we do? To whom do we sell? What makes us stand out?

For example,

Tom Reilly Training is a 33 year-old sales and management training company specializing in teaching and inspiring business-to-business salespeople and their managers how to compete aggressively and profitably on total value, not price. We stand out because we literally wrote the book on Value-Added Selling.

The elevator speech is one of those old chestnuts in professional selling that we sometimes forget. Bring it out and dust it off. Try it on your next cold call, which I know you're making.

Author byline: Tom Reilly is a professional speaker and author of twelve books. Tom is literally the guy who wrote the book on *Value-Added Selling* (McGraw-Hill, 2010), the book that started the value selling revolution. For more information on Tom's presentations, training, and products, visit his website www.TomReillyTraining.com or call his office, 636-537-3360.

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