

More Elevator Pitch Examples

Overview

Chapter 4 of *Smart Networking* takes you through an example of how to put an elevator pitch together from the perspective of a small business owner or salesperson whose main objective for networking is to gain new customers.

Because networking can be used to accomplish many other things, this bonus section includes examples of elevator pitches for three other popular objectives, including:

1. Finding a new job
2. Starting your own business
3. Getting your first job

In each example, we'll follow the same methodology of thinking about your pitch in different levels, from big picture to the details. That way, you'll be prepared for both a quick introduction, as well as a longer conversation. I've outlined the kinds of questions that might be asked of you, as well as some commentary and sample answers.

These are just to get you started. When crafting your own elevator pitch, start with the example that most closely matches your situation, then put your own spin on the answers. Think about other questions that might come up for your particular industry, as well as other questions you'd want to answer to highlight the information that you'd most like to convey. You also might want to take a peek at the other examples to spur additional ideas.

Being prepared with clear, focused answers will help you maximize your chances of meeting the right people and find what you're looking for more quickly. In the process, you'll start to build quality connections that will help you through your entire career.

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***** Example #1: Finding a Job**

Finding a job can be a stressful experience, particularly if you are currently unemployed. However, you never want to go into a networking situation projecting desperation. Preparing a clear and compelling elevator pitch will make you sound confident, and more importantly, make you *feel* confident.

Example: Tom lost his mid-level marketing job in a restructuring at Food & Co, a specialty foods company he's worked at for the last seven years. Since he'd like to stay in the industry, he's planning to attend the local chapter meeting of the Food & Beverage Association.

Level 1 Questions: The Basic Coordinates

What's your name?

Say your name slowly and clearly and wear your nametag on the right side of your body so people can see it when they shake your hand.

"Hi, my name is Tom Ross."

What do you do?

Keep it brief and use simple language.

"Most recently I was a marketing director at Food & Co."

Level 2 Questions: The Additional Hooks

What brings you here?

Most people won't know what jobs are open within their company. So to say you're looking for job openings may shut the conversation down before it starts because they won't think they'll be able to help you.

"Food & Co. just went through a restructuring and laid off 90% of my division. So I'm here to meet other marketers in the industry and also hear about the trends the speaker will be sharing."

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Who's your ideal job prospect?

It's best to describe the profile or the job title of the person who would actually hire you directly. This will help narrow down the field and give people a chance to give you a specific name if they have one.

"I really love the food industry and would prefer to stay in it. I worked directly for the vp of online marketing at my last company, so that's who I'd want to talk to if I had the chance."

Level 3 Questions: The Juicy Details

What's your specialty?

It's easier for people if they're able to put you in a niche, rather than think of you as a generalist. This is also the time to talk about your biggest strength vis-à-vis a new position.

"I've done a lot of work with our online marketing initiatives and feel I really know a lot about using social media and viral marketing to boost sales.

Can you give me an example?

Be prepared with a 2-3 minute story describes the situation, what you did and the result.

"I helped develop a campaign in partnership with the National Apricot Association which was looking to increase the consumption of dried apricots. We set up a viral marketing program using Facebook Social Ads and Twitter to drive traffic to their blog and consumers could sign up to receive a free gift pack of chocolate covered apricots. It was highly successful and now the NAA has some hard data about which parts of the country to focus their advertising since they don't have the money for national campaigns."

If I hear of anything, what's the best way to contact you?

Again, this "call to action" question will rarely be teed up so nicely, so it's up to you to end the conversation by leaving the door open. Also, be sure you create some business cards for yourself with a personal email address and telephone number so people can contact you. Make sure the email address isn't something embarrassing like HotMama91 or BoyToyNYC. If you want to be treated like a professional, you have to project a professional image.

"It was nice talking to you and I'd love to keep in touch. Do you have a card? Here's mine as well."

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***** Example #2: Starting Your Own Business**

Example: Nancy survived five rounds of layoffs at the financial services company she's worked at since college, but now she's stuck doing the work of three people while the firm enacts a hiring freeze. Thinking that enough is enough, she wants to make the leap out of the corporate world and start her own career coaching business. She's beginning to network to learn more about the field and line up potential clients so that she can leave her job as soon as she has another source of income. In this example, she is checking out a networking event sponsored by her local Chamber of Commerce.

Level 1 Questions: The Basic Coordinates

What's your name?

"I'm Nancy Connor."

What do you do?

"After spending 12 years in human resources, I'm starting a new business in career coaching for disgruntled financial services workers."

Level 2 Questions: The Additional Hooks

What brings you here?

Again, the more specific you can be about who you'd like to meet, the greater your chances of meeting them.

"I'd love to meet other coaches and get some advice on starting a practice."

Who would your ideal clients be?

While it may be scary to niche yourself and possibly turn away business, in reality, it's usually the specialists in a field that have an easier time charging higher prices. Think about a doctor who specializes in sports medicine versus a general practitioner who can be easily replaced by another.

"Since I spent so many years in financial services, I feel I really know what people in that industry are going through when they think about their careers, especially at the vice president level and higher.

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Level 3 Questions: The Juicy Details

Why are you making a change?

Don't go on and on with a long list of grievances, what you're escaping from. Talk about what is drawing you to this new career.

"The industry is going through a lot of turmoil and rather than deal with the politics, I'd rather focus on doing what I really love which is helping people."

What type of services would you offer?

At this point, you probably don't have a full idea yet of the spectrum of services you'd offer, but imagine if someone came to you and said, "I'm in the financial services industry, what would you do if I hired you?" What would your answer be?

"Since I survived the last five rounds of layoffs at my company, I feel I'm pretty good at career management. I'm thinking I'd help coach senior executives through major career decisions, like whether or not to leave, whether to take on a new role. I think it helps to have someone outside the company to confide in and bounce ideas off of."

If I hear of someone who fits your target, what should I do next?

Rather than give a business card from your employer, it's a good idea to create your own separate card with a personal email address and phone number. Otherwise, after you leave your company, no one will have a way to reach you. And then if you haven't given the other person an opportunity to share her story and what she's looking for, give her that chance.

"I'd appreciate that. Here's my card. Now what can I do to help you?"

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***** Example #3: Getting Your First Job**

Believe it or not, students may have an easier time networking (if you take the time to get out there!) because many experienced professionals like the opportunity to help mold young minds and give career advice. And the great thing about being young is that you can pretend to not know everything and ask a lot of questions without fear of appearing clueless. So take advantage of your student status and try to do as much networking as possible at recruiting events, and one-on-one with specific contacts.

Example: Dana is a senior at Top Students University, about to graduate with a degree in finance. She's participating in on-campus recruiting, but to bolster her chances of getting a job, she's also conducting her own job search through networking. To that end, she's decided to attend a recruiting event sponsored by the university's Technology Lover's Association.

Level 1 Questions: The Basic Coordinates

What's your name?

"I'm Dana Duncan."

What do you do?

"I'm a senior here majoring in finance."

Level 2 Questions: The Additional Hooks

What brings you here?

Act and sound like you came with a purpose and people will take you more seriously.

"All the big companies come on campus to recruit, but I also wanted to explore options at mid-size companies where I might be able to get more responsibility early on."

Who's your ideal prospect?

While it's tempting to say, "Anybody who will hire me" it's better to choose something you're really passionate about. Being more focused will help the person you're talking to home in on a specific place where you might fit, rather than put you in a bucket with everyone else who doesn't know what they want.

Bonus Materials for Readers of *Smart Networking* by Liz Lynch

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“I love technology and was able to intern last summer with Software Inc. I worked directly with the CFO on special projects, analyzing business proposals for new products. So I’d love to do work in high tech finance again.

Level 3 Questions: The Juicy Details

How’d you get the job?

This is a great chance to show your resourcefulness. Have a good story prepared here.

“I’ve played intramural volleyball since I was a freshman, and one of the women on my team was two years ahead of me. After she graduated, she went to Software Inc. in their sales department but we kept in touch on Facebook. I contacted her last year for some advice on an internship. She introduced me to the CFO and he liked my resume so he hired me. They’d like for me to come on board after I graduate, but I feel I should also look at other options.”

If I hear of anything, what’s the best way to contact you?

“I printed up a business card with my contact info, but I’d love one of yours as well.”