

Coach's Guide

Mastering the Elevator Pitch

We've had those awkward conversations...

What do you do?

I'm a life coach.

What does that mean?

Well, eh, I help people reach their goals.

Compare that to: *I help people discover their greater purpose.*

So what exactly is an elevator pitch?

You walk into an elevator and your perfect potential client walks in. You're heading up to floor 10. Now is your chance to introduce yourself. Ready... go! That's where the name came from... the idea that introducing yourself and your business should not take you longer than it would to ride in an elevator—so 30 to 60 seconds. But don't worry if you don't regularly find yourself in elevators. That's not the point! You never know who you might run into at a cocktail party, or the movie theater, or grocery store...or any other number of places.



An elevator pitch (or speech) is a quick persuasive speech that is used to create interest in your coaching. They highlight who you are, what you do, and instills curiosity so they want to hear more.

The truth is that most people have a hard time answering "what do you do?" Sometimes it feels impossible to sum up what we do and why it matters. Plus, because most people don't take the time to identify a scripted elevator speech, what they say ends up being boring and leading to a kind "that's nice."

Being able to introduce yourself and quickly express what you can do for people is a vital skill as a life coach. Once you develop your elevator pitch, you're going to use it, or variations of it, everywhere you go and in all of your marketing materials.

So, first, let's look at what DOESN'T work:

"I'm a life coach and I help people get more out of life. Let me give you some information about my services and about life coaching so you can learn more."

Do you think this will work? Chances are it won't, and here's why.

The focus of this approach is on services, titles, and processes. Your potential clients aren't interested in these things. They don't care about your industry or how you run your business. We've said this before:

*People don't want life coaching, they want **results**!*

Here's another example of a terrible elevator pitch. This one is from a different industry, which you most likely are not familiar with. Reading this will put you in the same position as someone you may meet that is not familiar with life coaching.

"I'm Regional Vice President of Sales for Puffery Manufacturing. We manufacture office furnishings, electronic casings and belt buckles out of recycled asbestos, so you know your dollars are going toward making a greener planet. And we have manufacturing partners across the United States and Asia, which means we can ship finished product to your warehouses faster than the competition. Here's my card. Maybe we can set up a time to meet and talk about your office furniture or belt buckle needs."

Are your eyes glazed over yet? So what's wrong with this pitch? First, it's technical and boring, like the last bad example. Second, it sounds like a commercial and it is TOO LONG. While, it is good to have this much detail written out about your coaching services, you want to save some of this content and length for the follow-up conversation. You don't want your elevator pitch to be this long.

So, the question is: What DOES work?

The truth is that there are many different ways to introduce yourself and explain your services that work. SO, instead of giving you a specific template to follow, we're going to offer you several tips and a bunch of examples. You can play around with the different templates and make your own versions and see what works best for you.

First, let's start with the basics. You must convey the following information:

1. Who you are
2. What you do
3. How it benefits the people you do it for (aka the outcomes)
4. Something that captures interest

But, there are many ways to do this. The piece most people overlook is number 4—creating intrigue or interest. There are several ways to do this, and the examples we give will show different ways these ideas can be implemented.

- A hook—say something that surprises them or is uniquely interesting because their curiosity will make them want to know more
- A story—humans are natural storytellers, so sharing a story that illustrates what you do without having to say it is a great way to pull people in

- A question—ask a question that leads them to think about the problem they may face that you solve with your coaching
- A metaphor—the brain works in symbols and associations, so if you can make a comparison between what you do and something the person is already familiar with, it will click into place for them
- A pain point—talk directly to a point of pain or frustration that your target client experiences

Here are example of these methods:

STORY: When was the last time you printed out and saved a thank-you email? I was at a trade show recently and took digital pictures of the booths of my prospects. When I got back to the office I sent each one a thank you card with a picture of their booth on it. When I stopped by for a sales call a few weeks later, the card was proudly displayed on their desk. When you're ready to make a lasting impression, hand me your business card for a free walk through of our proprietary system. My name is _____ and I want you to build better business relationships through effective follow up.

PAIN: I help frustrated dog lovers who are tired of their dogs ruling their lives discover a simple process that will put the dog owner in charge so that they can finally enjoy greater times with both their pets and with friends and family.

or

I help frustrated small business owners who want to develop a marketing program that is affordable and easy to execute and help them implement the exact strategies and tactics they need so that they can instantly generate more leads, attract more clients and generate healthy profits.

QUESTION: Do you remember about 10 years ago when the space shuttle Columbia was destroyed on re-entry? It turns out the engineers tried to warn NASA about the danger. But the PowerPoint slides they used were a complete mess and no-one understood the danger. That's what I do. I train people how to make sure their PowerPoint slides aren't a complete disaster.

METAPHOR: A commercial water purification company's primary differentiation is its low cost, small size, and rapid deployment capability. They could use the following metaphor to capture this: "We are the IKEA of Commercial Water Plants."

HOOK: Prospect: So, what do you do?

Me: I help build PowerPoint muscles.

Prospect: Huh?

Me: I teach people how to use PowerPoint more effectively in business. Now, for instance, I'm working with a global consulting firm to train all their senior consultants to give better sales presentations so they can close more business.

The "PowerPoint muscles" were the hook. It's strange enough that ANYONE would feel compelled to ask a follow-up question. This example is using one template for an elevator pitch

called the “WOW, HOW, NOW approach” Below you will find an explanation of how this method works.

Additional Examples of Effective Elevator Pitches:

More traditional: Great for a networking meeting because it clearly expresses what she's looking for. (Fill in the spaces between the * * with your own material.)

Hi, I'm *Benay* from *Universal Coaching Systems*.

I am a *product development expert* who works specifically with *coaches*.

I've already helped almost 2,000 coaches, from all over the world, create their first coaching products!

One thing that makes my business stand out from my competitors is *that I personally do what I love, feel totally fulfilled by my choices, AND lead a balanced and free life on my terms. My business teaches others how to do the same, from a place of trust and integrity*.

Something I am specifically looking for right now is *new and creative ways to get even more coaches using our Life Coach Office coaching software*.

If you have any ideas, I'd love to discuss them with you after the meeting.

Good first lines:

I help creative people succeed.

I help people find their destinies.

Short and to the point:

As the Founder and CEO of Bossed Up, I help women beat burnout and achieve sustainable success.

Blush offers online life coaching for the modern day girl. Enjoy private sessions with your personal life coach for as low as \$79/month. Life can be mean. Let's talk behind its back.

I'm a women's leadership coach and I help change makers stand in their power and create a badass spiritual life and biz. I don't coach coaches, I activate leaders.

I help small business owners increase their profits while helping them create more balance and fulfillment in their life.

I work with professionals who hate their jobs and are ready to transition into the career of their dream...

Story telling examples:

I work with women who are facing divorce. I was working with a client recently whose husband announced that he had a girlfriend and wanted a divorce. Rather than staying mad, she joined my coaching program and took charge of the situation. She kicked him out, changed the locks, filed for divorce, and ended up saving the marriage. I'm _____ and while I can't always guarantee that result I can empower you in your relationships.

I am a first grade teacher turned entrepreneur. My passion for education — ignited when my family immigrated to the U.S. seeking educational opportunity — led me to the classroom. My frustration with a system disserving my students led me to found Springboard in 2011.

I used to work in venture capital, until my dad got sick and needed a heart transplant — and I found the problem I really care most about solving. ORGANIZE is modernizing the organ donation system and trying to save as many lives as possible.

IMPORTANT note about being conversational:

Often, when you're actually using your elevator pitch, you will not say the entire pitch in one breathe. It is intended to be conversational. Notice how in this example, she says elements of her pitch as the other person is asking follow-up questions.

Networker A: So, what do you do Nancy?

Coach: I'm the most supportive, direct, motivated Business Coach you'll ever meet!

Networker A: Really?!

Coach: Yes! I help struggling entrepreneurs create the successful business they've always wanted and deserve.

Networker A: How do you do that?

Coach: Through a series of one-on-one or group phone calls, e-mails, webinars and worksheets, I teach skills such as business identity, goal setting, marketing, and sales. In addition, I help them with their time-management, mindset, confidence, and communication skills.

Networker A: Wow...that's great.

Coach: Yeah, what's so cool is, in our time together my clients gain incredible confidence, grow their businesses and achieve whole new levels of success! I just LOVE what I do!

Templates and Methods:

WHO, WHAT, WHY

I help _____ by doing _____ that _____, _____ and _____

Example: I help *job seekers* by *writing resumes* that *open doors, generate interviews, and outperform the competition*

PROBLEM SOLVING

Ask these 3 questions first:

1. What problems do I solve or enjoy solving?
2. How do I solve them, or what are the results?
3. For whom do I solve them?

A) I love/enjoy _____ for _____ in order to _____.

“I love *analyzing operating budgets for non-profits* in order to *find creative ways to save money.*”

B) I help _____ by doing _____ that results in _____.

“I help *food industry clients* by *designing quirky PR campaigns* that *catch the attention of customers and boost sales.*”

WOW, HOW, NOW:

1. **WOW.** Say something intriguing (even puzzling) that will make the other person want to hear more. A creative summary of what you do that demands some clarification. Ideally, the prospect’s reaction will be to cock their head and ask “what does that mean?”
2. **HOW.** Answer the stated (or unspoken) question and explain exactly what you do.
3. **NOW.** Shift into storytelling mode, giving a concrete example of a current customer. The key phrase is “Now, for example...”

DIFFERENTIATION (Fill in the spaces between the <<>> with your own material.)

Have you ever <<the situation that the prospect faces>>?

<<company name>> manufactures <<product line>> for <<target market>> so that you can <<primary value proposition / benefit>>. Unlike <<traditional alternatives/competitive offerings>>, <<our product>> is <<competitive point of difference>>. <<call to action>>.

NARRATIVE (Fill in the spaces between the <<>> with your own material.)

Once upon a time <<introduce character and context>>
Every day, <<establish the way things were>>.
One day <<introduce problem/inciting incident>>.
Because of that <<challenge>>.
Because of that <<search for solution>>
Until finally <<finds solution>>
Now, <<establish the way things are better now>>

GOOD TRADITIONAL SCRIPT

I + action verb (*help, guide, teach, provide, present, aid, assist, support, give, evaluate, assess*)
+ **negative emotions being experienced** (*frustrated, overwhelmed, clueless, demanding, frightened, desperate, struggling, angry, concerned, worried*)
+ **ideal client description** (*dog lovers, young adults, chronic pain sufferers, overweight wo/men, homeowners, business owners, brides-to-be, new mothers*)
+ **“who want to...”** (*what they want – increase their profits, find the relief they need, become fit and healthy*)
+ **solution** (*discover a process, learn a fast and easy way, create the perfect solution, uncover the best method, determine the number one reason, realize the best course of action, find the dramatic solution, position themselves, place themselves first, find out everything they need to know*)
+ **benefits** – “so that they can...” (*list 3 benefits – live a pain free life, build the business of their dreams, feel they’re getting the most value for the money they pay, receive the highest value, obtain the best guarantee, receive award-winning service, receive the highest level of expertise at the lowest possible price*).