IP: ELEVATOR PITCH EXERCISE

You’re on your way to your office, and you’re riding the elevator. The doors open, and a Venture Capitalist gets on. As the doors slowly slide shut, she turns to you and asks, “What are you working on?” Her eyes bore into you. You’re alone in the elevator with the biggest of the big cheeses, and you’ve got two minutes to tell her exactly why your project matters. So what is your pitch?

Sure, you’ve got butterflies in your stomach and a hammer in your heart — but the elevator pitch isn’t really about dealing with pressure. It’s about communication and caring. Can you take the hopelessly complicated set of problems that you’re juggling in your project and reduce those problems to a few bullet points that anyone can immediately understand?

One of the most important things a designer & businessperson can do is learn how to speak about their work to others. An elevator pitch is an overview of a product, service, person, project, group, or organization. The name "elevator pitch" reflects the idea that it should be possible to deliver an elevator pitch in the time span of an elevator ride, or approximately thirty seconds to two minutes. Being able to sum up unique aspects of your service, product or innovative concepts in a way that excites others should be a fundamental skill. The elevator pitch is one of the most effective methods available to reach new buyers and clients with a winning message.

STRUCTURE:

1. For (target customers)
2. Who are dissatisfied with (the usual product, service, or experience)
3. Our innovation offering is (describe your teams innovative solution)
4. That provides (the most important benefit that your solution provides: or the solution to the key problem)
   a. This is what the innovation does for target customers (i.e., the benefit).
5. Unlike (how is your offering better than what currently exists, list one or more of the usual products or services by name)
6. Our innovation (a description of the key features).
   a. This is how the innovation does what it does. Explain how your offering solves the customer need or issue, how does it solve the current problems.

EXAMPLES:
The below examples and the structure are from Geoffrey Moore’s Crossing the Chasm (Harper Paperbacks, revised edition, August 2002).

**Example 1.** Silicon Graphics in Hollywood
For post-production film engineers
Who are dissatisfied with the limitations of traditional film editors,
Our workstation is a digital film editor
That lets you modify film images any way you choose.
Unlike workstations from Sun, HP, or IBM,
We have assembled all the interfaces needed for post-production film editing.

**Example 2.** Intuit (Quicken)
For the bill-paying member of the family who also uses a home PC
Who is tired of filling out the same old checks month after month,
Quicken is a PC home finance program
That automatically creates and tracks all your check writing.
Unlike “Managing your Money,” a financial analysis package,
Our system is optimized specifically for home bill paying.
CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS:
Follow the 9 Cs of the Elevator Pitch & make sure that you answer the above questions and your team will create a successful concise elevator pitch that clearly communicates your innovative solution.

The 9 Cs of the Elevator Pitch
1. Concise
2. Clear
3. Compelling
4. Credible
5. Conceptual
6. Concrete
7. Consistent
8. Custom
9. Conversational

SUGGESTED READINGS:
