



The Perfect Format for the Elevator Pitch

From a blog by Ritzo Ten Cate

Many people have a very short attention span, so if you want to be heard by a potential customer or an investor, your message should be interesting, clear, simple and short. During the last four years at De Ondernemers, we have experimented with formats for the 'perfect elevator pitch' and have developed the

1131 format.

The 1131 format consists of four pieces: the catch, the solution, details and the proposition. During a one minute pitch, the customer's attention is divided between the four phases, as in 10 seconds for the catch, 10 seconds for the solution, 30 seconds for details and 10 seconds for the proposition. In written format, the presentation on a single page would contain one paragraph, one paragraph, three paragraphs and one paragraph.

1-1-3-1

The catch is about gaining attention. How will you attract the attention of the listener? What will capture her interest? What problems is she coping with? To what unique opportunities is she attracted?

The solution is about gaining interest and enthusiasm. What is your solution to the problem or opportunity addressed above? What is the added value of your product or service? What is your brilliant plan?

Details are about converting interest into trust. Prove that you can make it happen. Presenting a few important technical, financial or statistical details will legitimize your previous claims. Supplying fact sheets with specific details might provide excellent support.

The concrete proposition is about converting trust into business. What is your offer to the listener? What do you want from her at this moment? Make sure that she can give a very clear and short answer. Aim for a "yes" and be prepared for a "no".

An 1131 elevator pitch can be delivered during a hallway chat or a business lunch. It can be a short presentation using PowerPoint or it can be printed on a leave sheet. You should always be ready with your elevator pitch, where ever you go!