

The Elevator Pitch: A Sales Cycle Catalyst

The Elevator Pitch portion of the competition challenges students to sharpen their focus and quickly capture a prospective buyer's interest during a brief elevator ride. In this scenario, the student assumes the role of a salesperson who steps into an elevator and comes face-to-face with a prospect they have been seeking to meet. As the doors close, the student delivers a concise, persuasive pitch designed to spark interest and secure a commitment for a follow-up meeting by the time the elevator reaches the lobby.

Scenario: An Unexpected Opportunity

You are a sales representative preparing to pursue a prospective buyer whose organization could benefit from E.W. Scripps advertising and marketing services. While attending a local business event, you unexpectedly enter an elevator with the key decision maker for your targeted account, Jaime Reeves, Marketing Manager for Peerless Dent Repair. You have researched the organization and the buyer but have not yet earned a formal introduction. The elevator ride gives you approximately 60 seconds to introduce yourself, connect your message to a likely business priority, and earn a commitment for a longer discovery conversation. Your goal is not to close a sale in the elevator; it is to create enough relevance and credibility to secure the next step.

Competition objective: Deliver a targeted, professional introduction that earns a specific follow-up meeting. The commitment secured in this round becomes the opening event for the three round sales competition, where you will conduct discovery, identify needs, propose value, address concerns, and advance the sales cycle.

Elements of an Effective Elevator Pitch

1. **Introduction—Who are you?** Briefly state your name, company, and role. Establish credibility without giving a lengthy background. *Example: "Hello, Jaime. I'm Jordan Lee, a media sales consultant with E.W. Scripps."*
2. **Catch Statement—Why should the buyer listen?** Open with a concise, buyer-specific statement that earns attention. Reference a researched priority, market change, business goal, or relevant observation rather than using a generic slogan. *Example: "I noticed your team is expanding into two new markets while working to build stronger local awareness."*

3. **Pain Statement—What challenge might matter?** Identify a likely problem or missed opportunity that the buyer may recognize. Phrase it as an informed observation rather than an assumption, and connect it to a meaningful business impact. *Example: “Many growing organizations struggle to reach the right local audiences consistently across broadcast and digital channels.”*
4. **Benefit Statement—What value can you provide?** Explain how your solution could help address the pain point. Focus on the buyer’s outcome—such as greater reach, stronger engagement, improved efficiency, or measurable results—not simply on product features. *Example: “We help organizations coordinate targeted local campaigns across television and digital platforms so they can extend reach and measure audience response.”*
5. **Hook—What should happen next?** End with a clear, low-pressure request that advances the relationship. Ask for a specific follow-up conversation and give the buyer a reason to accept. *Example: “Would you be open to a 20-minute conversation next week to compare your target markets with our audience data and see whether there is a fit?”*

Pitch formula: Introduction + Catch Statement + Pain Statement + Benefit Statement + Hook (not necessarily in this order)

Delivery reminder: The five elements should sound like one natural conversation, not five separate statements. Keep the full pitch within 60 seconds, tailor every point to Jaime Reeves and the targeted account, and use the hook to secure the discovery meeting that begins the later sales competition.