

# The Art of the Elevator Pitch

By Robert Pagliarini of SeekingCapital.com

## What is an "Elevator Pitch"?

An "Elevator Pitch" is a concise, carefully planned, and well-practiced description about your company that your mother should be able to understand in the time it would take to ride up an elevator.

## What an "Elevator Pitch" is not:

It is not a "sales pitch." Don't get caught up in using the entire pitch to tell the Investor how great your product or service is. The Investor is "buying" the business, not the product. Tell him/her how you will run the business.

## Creating the "Elevator Pitch"

### Six questions your "Elevator Pitch" must answer:

1. *What is your product or service?*  
Briefly describe what it is you sell. Do not go into excruciating detail.
2. *Who is your market?*  
Briefly discuss who you are selling the product or service to. What industry is it? How large of a market do they represent?
3. *What is your revenue model?*  
More simply, how do you expect to make money?
4. *Who is behind the company?*  
"Bet on the jockey, not the horse" is a familiar saying among Investors. Tell them a little about you and your team's background and achievements. If you have a strong advisory board, tell them who they are and what they have accomplished.
5. *Who is your competition?*  
Don't have any? Think again. Briefly discuss who they are and what they have accomplished. Successful competition is an advantage—they are proof your business model and/or concept work.
6. *What is your competitive advantage?*  
Simply being in an industry with successful competitors is not enough. You need to effectively communicate how your company is different and why you have an advantage over the competition. A better distribution channel? Key partners? Proprietary technology?



### What your "Elevator Pitch" must contain:

1. *A "hook"*  
Open your pitch by getting the Investor's attention with a "hook." A statement or question that piques their interest to want to hear more.
2. *About 150-225 words*  
Your pitch should go no longer than 60 seconds.
3. *Passion*  
Investors expect energy and dedication from entrepreneurs.

4. *A request*

At the end of your pitch, you must ask for something. Do you want their business card, to schedule a full presentation, to ask for a referral?

**Example of an "Elevator Pitch"**

Here is what I'd use to "pitch" SeekingCapital.com:

SeekingCapital.com is changing the future of private equity investing.

Private equity is a \$100 billion a year market, with over 400,000 entrepreneurs aggressively seeking capital at any given time.

SeekingCapital.com offers entrepreneurs and investors an efficient and uniquely interactive method for obtaining or investing capital in pre-IPO companies.

SeekingCapital.com is not an "Internet only" company, but supports its online community with local franchises in the United States and internationally.

Our team has decades of experience in the securities industry, investment banking, private equity, and executive management. My partner and I have worked together side by side for several years co-managing and running the entire Internet operations of a publicly traded brokerage firm.

Our competitors such as XYZ Corp. and ABC Capital have had much success-ABC Capital was recently valued at \$550 million . . . despite several limitations.

SeekingCapital.com isn't just a listing or matching service, we offer a community that breeds interaction, education, and discussion. We work with companies globally, through all stages of funding, and across all industries.

We are anticipating \$XXX million this round to be used for employee building, increased office space, and marketing.

We have a compelling two page executive summary that I would like to send you. Can I get your address?

**About the Author:**

[Robert Pagliarini](#) is the CEO of SeekingCapital.com-an online and offline community that offers entrepreneurs a cost-effective, efficient, and uniquely interactive method for obtaining capital while offering qualified investors access to select pre-screened, pre-IPO investment opportunities.