

IGNITE³⁶⁰

STORYMASTERS SOLUTIONS

The Elevator Pitch *Reimagined*

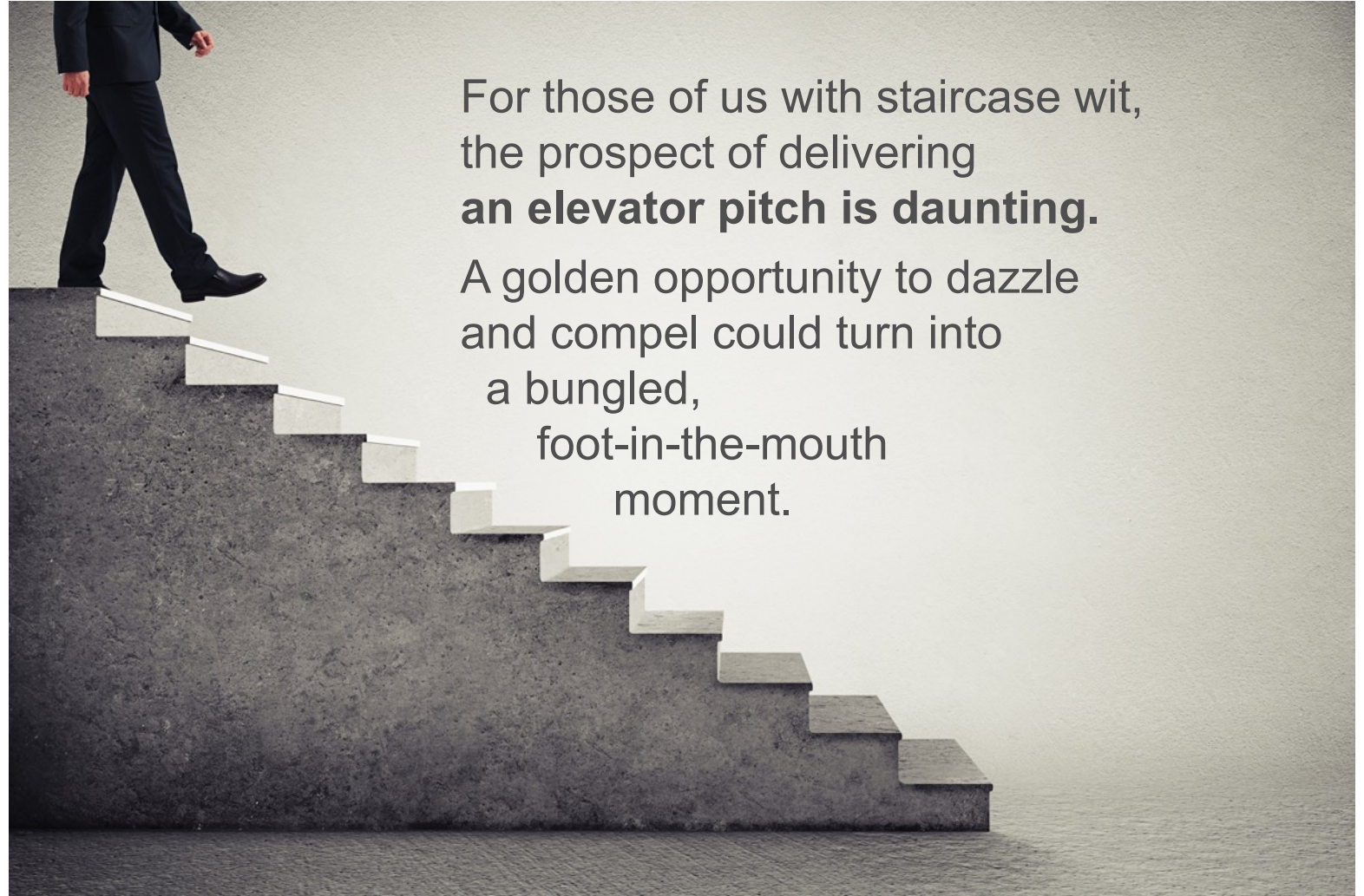


Do you suffer from staircase wit?

Borrowed from French, the expression l'esprit de l'escalier, or esprit d'escalier, literally **wit of (the) staircase**, denotes a retort or remark that occurs to a person after the opportunity to make it has passed.

It originally referred to a witty remark coming to mind on the stairs leading away from a social gathering.

Source: wordhistories.net



For those of us with staircase wit, the prospect of delivering **an elevator pitch is daunting.**

A golden opportunity to dazzle and compel could turn into a bungled, foot-in-the-mouth moment.

The pitch is **one scene within a larger story**

But that's not how stories work. A better way to frame up the elevator pitch is to think about the pitch as one, short scene within a larger story. **It's a pivotal scene, but not the only one.** You will have more opportunities to build on what you started.

What matters is that the elevator pitch is an opportunity to enlist the help of a new partner, not dazzle them with your wit. **It's an opportunity to start a conversation about something exciting you want them to be a part of.** It shouldn't leave you kicking yourself in the stairwell because you didn't know what to say; you should always be prepared to tell your story.



To recap: The hallmarks of a good pitch

The elevator pitch **IS**

- a **conversation**
- an **opportunity to create a new connection** in the organization – not necessarily an advocate, but a stakeholder or partner
- **proactive**
- a 2-minute scene **in the context of a larger story**

The elevator pitch **IS NOT**

- a **one-sided** sales pitch
- **about you** and your accomplishments
- **reactive**
- **your only chance at success**

*Time to step into the proverbial elevator
(or phone call, zoom meeting, email, g-chat,
socially distanced lunch, etc.)*



How to put together your Pitch Puzzle

A successful pitch is comprised of 5 key pieces that fit together like a jigsaw puzzle.



KNOW YOUR GOAL

Your goal is the reason why you are pitching to this potential advocate or partner.

Example: To get XX excited/curious about our work so she joins the team.

ASK A QUESTION

The action begins with a question.

Example: Could you stay on the call with me for another two minutes?

Could I run something by you?

COMMUNICATE EXCITEMENT

Share something that genuinely excites you about the project.

Example: Hey, I don't know if you heard this, but we just kicked off the XX phase of our project where we will have a chance to change XX

CONNECT THE DOTS

Know *what* you want to communicate but also *why* it matters to your audience.

Communicate why the work matters to the organization and what the impact might be.

Questions to ask yourself: What do they care about? What do you know about initiatives they've worked on or care about now or in the past? Can you link your story to that?

Example: I know you worked on an innovation team. I would love your perspective on a similar project.

ADVANCE THE STORY

This is a “Yes, and?” moment.

like improv, keep the conversation going by building on the rapport you've established.

Example: Could we talk more about this?; Could I share this with you later to get your thoughts?; Would you have 30 minutes to review something?

And remember the little things

EASY ADDS

If you want someone to help you, make it as easy for them as possible. Planning on sending them something to review? Have the report you want them to review ready to go so you can click send right after you speak to them. Did you suggest a time to meet? Send them an invite right away with a recap of what you'll discuss. Want them to share your idea with others? Send them an engaging one-pager with exactly what you think they might be looking for. Make it easy for them to share it.

RECIPROCITY

Be sure to follow-up so people know how their ideas, actions, connections, input, etc. helped push the whole project forward. Additionally, offer your help to them for any future needs they may have. You'll have an advocate for life.

Photo Source: Maruizio Cattelan, Untitled 2001, (scale 1:7.5); stainless steel, electronic components, 23 1/2" x 33 3/4" x 18". Photo: Attilio Maranzano / Courtesy of Perrotin



In Action

Now take what you’ve learned and step into that elevator!

- Step 1:** Pick a potential advocate from the advocate list you made last month.

Step 2: Review what’s important to them

Step 3: Put together your pitch puzzle.

Extra credit for you over-achievers, over-preparers, or self-described staircase wits

Pick two advocates you have very different relationships with like a senior partner and an outlier advocate. Put them in the Pitch Puzzle. THEN roll play your pitch with a trusted advocate.

“Hey, I’m going to reach out to a senior partner about project X we’ve been working on and would love your help polishing the story.” The benefit is two-fold – you get practice, and your trusted advocate will be even more invested because you’ve brought them in on the whole idea.

Name	
Know your goal	
Ask a question	
Communicate excitement	
Connect the dots	
Advance the story	
The little things	

Thank you for reimagining the Elevator Pitch with us!

Still unsure of how best to
socialize your story?

Email us at
storymasters@ignite-360.com

