

OPTIMIZING THE 2 MINUTE INTRODUCTION

Introducing yourself with a clear presentation at any event

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It was a pleasure seeing you at the Inaugural YPN event. To get the most out of selling and networking opportunities, you will want to be prepared with an effective two minute presentation about your business and its products or services. The YPN events will be a great opportunity to practice your presentation and learn from others what effectively sounds good while making that lasting first impression in any business setting. Here's a guideline to help you prepare your two minute commercial. Just spending ten minutes on preparation will go a long way!

People are bombarded every day with thousands of messages about businesses, products and services. Some of which compete with yours. Having an updated, concise and intriguing introduction about you and your business is not just a smart move... it's a savvy move in today's competitive world. An intriguing introduction can immediately differentiate you and make you stand out from the sea of competitors.

For example, if you are a life insurance agent, how do you introduce yourself? "My name is Bob Smith with Smith Insurance Services. We specialize in providing life insurance programs for businesses." This is bland, normal and uninformative.

What about this? "Here's a startling fact: most people retire with less than \$10,000 annual income. Well, to help you and your employees start planning today for the kind of retirement income you want, I can work with you to do just that. My name is Bob Smith. Remember: encourage retirement planning now. You will increase employee confidence in themselves and your business... and they will never forget you for it. "

The difference is clear. The second introduction demonstrates compassion for people and awareness of the approach that businesses must take to build solid employee relationships to improve retention and trust. You have a definite sense that Bob is not only knowledgeable about life insurance - he will also implement the program with care throughout the organization. In less than thirty seconds, Bob was able to paint a picture for what he knows, what he does, and how he does it.

For years, marketing professionals have mastered the ability to say little and mean a lot. TV, radio and print ads are created with great strategy and consideration of the short, expensive time they have to make an impact. Your time too is valuable. How you introduce yourself should have the same impact.

The following two part process is a guideline for developing an intriguing two minute presentation about your business. Remember, you want to focus on communicating the following lowest common denominators about what you do and how you do it: 1) your specific product or service, 2) your selected target market/customer, 3) the unique benefits you offer, and 4) your qualifications as a professional in your field.

Important Note: You can adjust the timeframes provided for each section – but together they must total no more than two minutes. In selling and networking situations, you will have little time to make an impact. Keep it concise and meaningful. You will never cover it all... just what is most important. Get feedback from others about how it sounds and refine it as you go.

Part 1: Introduce your business (60 seconds)

Construct a sixty-second presentation using these lead-off phrases as your framework. You don't have to use these exactly as they are shown – just the ideas behind them.

Lead-off...	Your Content
Did you know...	
Well, ...	
Here's how you'll benefit (from using my product or service)...	
My name is...	
Remember me for (reinforce the benefit of what you do best – your Memory Hook)....	

Memory Hooks

Ivan Misner, networking guru, suggests using Memory Hooks as a tool to vividly describe what you want people to visualize about your product or service to help them remember you. It doesn't have to be funny, but it helps. Here are some examples.

- Interconnect/telephone sales rep: "The next time you're in someone's office look at their telephone system. If they have fat wires, they need me." (Old phone systems use thick wires.)
- Skin care consultant: "If you have a face, you could use my products. If you know someone who has a face, they could use my products."
- Carpet cleaner: "We steal dirt from houses."
- Dentist: "My filling station is downtown, where I put the bite on decay."
- Lawyer: "Before you turn to dust, see me for your will or trust."
- Realtor: "I help people find a home – not a house, but a home. Not a place where you live, but a place where you love to live."
- Roofer: "A roof done right is watertight, but a roof done wrong won't last too long."

Part 2: Create word of mouth interest (60 seconds)

Next, at a networking lunch or event, you want to provide context for how others can help spread the word about your business. Many people make the fatal mistake of assuming that others know a lot about their business. Everyone has something to educate others about... businesses are changing all the time. Don't lose the opportunity to tell someone about it.

For example, just because you are a bank, doesn't mean I know what services you offer. Do you provide loans? What types? Do you offer debit or credit cards? Do you provide business services? Do you offer refinancing? Equity loans? Who is your desired customer? Or if you are a florist... are you a FTD florist? Do you handle emergency orders? Do you do a good job at weddings? What varieties of flowers do you offer? Do you provide business accounts? How do I keep flowers alive longer?

Choosing one aspect of your business, complete the following worksheet by being specific about what organizations you would like to get referrals from. This may change from week to week, but right now, who are you targeting. Create your presentation by answering the following questions.

Question	Your Answer
Who are you looking for (what kind of referrals)?	
What can you do for them?	
When do you do what you do?	
Why should they come to you?	
Where do you do what you do?	
Close by stating your name	

A shorter version example for Bob Smith might be: "I want to help secure the future for people who are about to retire from aerospace companies, like McDonnell-Douglas. Having two current clients with this profile, I understand what is lacking in the standard retirement programs they are receiving from their employers. There is great opportunity to improve their legacy by..."

In summary, this information will be useful in creating a dynamic two minute presentation for any business setting. Utilize any opportunity to practice your message until you like how it sounds. You will likely find that you want to frequently revise it to fit certain situations. Remember... be concise and meaningful. Talk about how you are unique. And by all means, have FUN doing it!