

the

ELEVATOR

PITCH

8 step process



the

BEAN COUNTER

with Andrew Argue

Intro

Congratulations,

Joining the accounting profession is one of the most challenging experiences you will go through in your life, and the elevator pitch is KEY.

While your experience getting hired with an accounting firm or company will take a number of months, contain numerous meetings, interviews, happy hours, and social, it may all end before it begins. If you aren't prepared for the first few seconds of every interaction (typically when the elevator pitch occurs), you will most likely end your chances right away before you've even begun.

While I am not trying to be a “fear mongerer”, these are the facts. Every single interaction you have with the professionals and recruiters can end it a victory, or an utter failure. And the truth is, at the end of the day, it only takes one person to disagree with you being hired at the firm, and your chances are over. Let's walk through the basics, what is an “elevator pitch”, what is its importance for accountants, and how can you develop a pitch that will keep you in the game? If you're ready, let's get started!

Objective

Congratulations,

The first step in developing your elevator pitch is defining your objective. What is it that you want to accomplish? Are you looking for an internship? Full-time offer? Summer Leadership Conference? There is an old Yogi Berra quote that relates directly to this topic:

“You’ve got to be very careful if you don’t know where you’re going, because you might not get there.”

Your pitch will slightly change based on your objective. The main importance of determining your objective is so when you deliver the pitch, you’re confident in who you are, and what you’re looking for. As long as you have good reason, and are confident, you can have the objective to have an internship OR full time offer depending on which works best for the firm (great option for people that are in the more desperate stages of their career.). You also need to have reasons for why you want each of these positions. Here are some common reasons for the three positions mentioned above:

Objective (continued...)

Summer Leadership

- Gain a better understanding of which line of service I want (audit, tax, advisory)
- Learn more about the firm
- Have the chance to be immersed in the company culture
- Meet employees whom they may work for in an internship or job

Internship

- Learn about the firm
- Get the “on-the-job” experience
- Validate your excitement and passion for auditing/tax/accounting from class

Full -Time

- You’ve done your research and know this firm is your top choice
- Have met people who work from the firm, and have consistently been impressed
- Are impressed with the clients and industries and know this firm has the right fit for you

Explain What You Do!

The **second step** is to define what you do, or what you have done. If you're applying for entry-level accounting positions, I'm guessing you've attended University and you've probably got a pretty good GPA (if you don't, no worries, I didn't either). Here are some other things you have probably done:

- Been involved in class projects
- Led or joined student organizations
- Led or participated in community service events
- Worked a part time job
- Worked a full time job
- Participated in campus competitions (speech, fundraising, other)
- Play University sports
- And the list goes on and on...

While this isn't a time to "toot your horn", you need to display the key and important things that helped you develop and be ready for a career in the accounting profession Try and shorten the list to two or three things that you may be able to work in to a version or two of your elevator speech. My advice is to keep them to the productive and competitive areas of your life such as any type of work, leadership position, or competition.

Get it on paper!

The **third step** is to write it down. Start with all the goals you have or positions you would like to obtain, and below that, write all the skills you bring to the table. Now I want you to take those and write an elevator pitch like the one below:

“Hi! My name is Andrew Argue and I am currently a sophomore NYU here in Manhattan. While I am originally from Kansas, I moved to New York at the age of 8 and have loved it ever since. I am pursuing my accounting degree and have joined the local Beta Alpha Psi Chapter and taken on a position at the reporting secretary. I am looking for a summer leadership conference next summer and I would really like to attend Deloitte’s. Everyone I have met has spoke very highly of the firm, especially Jane Doe who has been a great mentor to me since I started.”

I strongly recommend writing the pitch in sentence format. While I don’t recommend memorizing the pitch word for word, I think having the sentence structure in place ensures you will hit all the points you need AND keeps the flow.

Get it on paper! (continued...)

You may also be questioning why I added where I was born and that I love New York.

NOTE: This is an optional sentence.

However, I do encourage my coachees to include something personal and it keeps the conversation more light (but don't get too casual).

I have also touched on the following areas, which are all important to include:

- Year in University (sophomore)
- Name of University (unless obvious as you're at a career fair)
- Extracurricular activities (Beta Alpha Psi)
- My goal (to obtain a summer leadership conference next summer)
- Associated myself with a past employee/intern and showed that I talk to them, and they have helped me
- CPA (while I didn't include this, you could say when you will obtain the license, or that you already have)

Practice Out Loud

The **fourth step** is to practice this pitch out loud. As I mentioned before, this isn't going to be something you memorize word for word and it can't. You will need the pitch to be slightly different for different audiences.

For example, if you're talking to a first year who went to your same University, you may mention a professor's class you just "made it through" (to relate them more), however, if your speaking with a partner from another state, you may want to "stick to business" and go through your normal pitch.

Either way what's important is that you're able to stick with the verbal flow. You need to practice and practice and practice until the pitch is exuding from your pores. It's a very short set of sentences that shouldn't last more than 30 seconds, you should be able to practice it enough times to where it seems natural and not rehearsed.

Practice Out Loud **(continued...)**

Nowadays everyone has a device that can record him or her. If you have a smart phone, download the voice recording apps and if not, you should be able to use friends, or your computer. While your voice probably sounds strange to you, you should be able to be able to ask a friend and make sure that's your normal voice.

Then, get over the “strangeness” of hearing your own voice and ask yourself, does this flow? If I met this person on the street, would they sound confident? Like they know what they want?

Once you have heard your voice, feel free to go back to the drawing board and remove parts you added, or add additional parts to make it sound better.

The Elevator Pitch isn't something that is an exact science. They are as unique as the humans who speak them. With that in mind, play around with it a bit to get the right match!

Want the full version?

This is just a preview, for the full version of this eBook, visit the link below and join The Bean Counter's course!

thebeancounter.com/course

If you have any questions so that I can better help you obtain your goals, please don't hesitate to reach out to me at andrew@thebeancounter.org.

You can also follow me on twitter @andrewargue.

Thank you!

Andrew Argue &
The Bean Counter Team