



Someone Who Needs Almost No Introduction

By Dana Kader Robb

You know the look. That blank, glassy-eyed stare that people start to get when you explain what you do for a living. By the time you're done talking, they've long been done listening. It happens at cocktail parties and events at your kid's school and at meetings of professional organizations when you're supposed to give a "30 second introduction."

People are truly interested in what you do. They just want the very-much-abbreviated version. And you want to get your point across, especially if you are a business owner or in sales, where every new contact is a potential client or referral base.

Here are some tips that will help you make a lasting first impression...in 50 words or less.

Start with what you want them to remember most. They won't remember everything so choose carefully. (*Mind Your Business offers desktop publishing and marketing for small businesses.*)

Feature your Unique Selling Proposition – what makes you different from the opposition? (*We don't want to work with big companies.*)

Talk about the benefits. (*We handle as much or as little of a project as you want, saving you time and money and making you look good.*)

Develop a tag-line or memory hook. Use it in print and when you introduce yourself. (*We mind your business... because you can't do it alone.*)

Write down your introduction. Pretend someone's paying you a dollar for each word you can remove and still get your point across. Make yourself rich.

Practice. You're going "on stage." Even Oscar winning actors rehearse.

Tell them what you do, not how you do it. If they care what software you use or what training you have, they'll ask!

Avoid industry-specific language. Assume you're talking to someone unfamiliar with your business... unless you know otherwise.

Be sincere. And if you can't then fake it (just kidding!) Seriously though, people prefer that you engage them in discussion, not schmooze them for a sale.