

## Preparing Your Elevator Speech

An 'elevator speech' is a term taken from the early days of the internet explosion when web development companies needed venture capital. Finance firms were swamped with applications for money and the companies that won the cash were often those with a simple pitch. The best were those that could explain a business proposition to the occupants of an elevator in the time it took them to ride to their floor. In other words, an elevator speech that worked was able to describe and sell an idea in 30 seconds or less. Today, an 'elevator speech can be any kind of short speech that sells an idea, promotes your business or markets you as an individual.

An elevator speech is as essential as a business card. You need to be able to say who you are, what you do, what you are interested in doing and how you can be a resource to your listeners. If you don't have an elevator speech, people won't know what you really do.

**KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE-** Before writing any part of your elevator speech, research your audience. For our purposes we will create a general speech, which can be modified to a specific situation.

**KNOW YOURSELF -** Before you can convince anyone of your proposition you need to know exactly what it is. You need to define precisely what you are offering, what problems you can solve and what benefits you bring to a prospective contact or employers  
Answer the following questions:

1. What are your key strengths?
2. What adjectives come to mind to describe you?
3. What is it you are trying to let others know about you?
4. Why are you interested in the company or industry the person represents?

**OUTLINE YOUR TALK -** start an outline of your material using bullet points. You don't need to add any detail at this stage; simply write a few notes to help remind you of what you really want to say. They don't need to be complete sentences.

You can use the following questions to start your outline:

1. Who am I?
2. What do I offer?
3. What problems have I solved?
4. What are the main contributions I can make?
5. What should the listener do as a result of hearing this?

**FINALIZE YOUR SPEECH -** Now that you have your outline of your material, you can finalize the speech. The key to doing this is to expand on the notes you made by writing out each section in full.

To help you do this, follow these guidelines:

1. Take each note you made and write a sentence about it.
2. Take each of the sentences and connect them together with additional phrases to make them flow.
3. Go through what you have written and change any long words or jargon into everyday language.
4. Go back through the re-written material and cut out unnecessary words.
5. Finalize your speech by making sure it is no more than 90 words long.

Tips:

You should be easily understood by a layman, rather than filled with acronyms and industry terminology.

What can you do for your target audience?

Spell out what makes you qualified to do what you do, without using buzzwords like "outside the box" or "synergy." Using credibility-driven words like "certified" or "bachelor degree" will help sell you.

The pitch should be tangible and easily grasped by your audience.

No matter how many versions of your pitch you have, they should all convey the same basic message.

Remember that it's not about you, put yourself in the position of the listener.

Bad Elevator Speech:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sfCVQEVahhA>

Good Elevator Speech

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8FPvAET2tc8>