

ENGLISH 1302: Advanced College Rhetoric: Writing in Engineering
Texas Tech University
Unit II: Describing a Problem

Project 3: Elevator Pitch Video

Prompt

Create a short video pitch of 1.5-2 minutes (90-120 seconds) that accomplishes the following:

1. Introduces yourself
2. Briefly explains the problem (the mousetrap car) you're trying to solve and its goals
3. Explains your proposed solution
4. Explains the benefits of your proposed solution

Your ultimate goal with this elevator pitch video is to build confidence (that is, *ethos*) with your classmates that you would be a good team member for the group project based on your understanding of the problem and your proposed solution.

Your proposed solution should be accompanied by a detailed illustration, which you should either include in the video itself or submit as a separate image file. You can choose whether you want your video to be a “talking head” video of you talking, or a screencast with voiceover.

Further Explanation

Effective communication is central to being a successful engineer, but engineers do not communicate solely through traditional writing: They often give formal presentations on design problems or solutions, sometimes in co-located environments and sometimes through videoconferencing. Because this class is in an online environment, we will practice some of this oral and visual communication through an elevator pitch video project.

An elevator pitch is a brief “pitch” to a client, supervisor, or peers that succinctly explains the problem you are addressing, your proposed solution, and the benefits of that solution. Formal pitch presentations can vary in length, but the idea of an “elevator pitch” is that you present it briefly. The name comes from the practice of meeting someone new in an elevator (at work, at a conference, etc.) and you need to quickly explain your project as you ride the elevator together (thus, this pitch needs to be short, clear, and concise). In this case, we are creating an elevator pitch so that you can pitch a proposed solution to your classmates and we can subsequently create groups of 3–4 students for the course project.

This assignment, then, is designed with the following goals:

1. Give you practice pitching a project
2. Give you the opportunity to “get to know” your classmates a bit better
3. Help you find classmates who you want to work with or who want to work with you for the course project

Creating an elevator pitch can benefit you because it

1. forces you to achieve clarity on your idea;
2. helps you understand your audience's perspective; and

3. helps you find people who will aid you with your idea.

Minimum Expectations

Your elevator pitch will earn an A if you meet the following requirements:

- Your video is posted online (like on YouTube, unlisted, or another platform).
- Your video is between 90 and 120 seconds in length.
- Your video includes either captions or an accompanying transcript for accessibility purposes.
- Your video introduces yourself briefly.
- Your video explains the problem briefly and your goals.
- Your video explains your current proposed solution to the problem, with a detailed illustration either embedded in the video or as an accompanying digital file.
- Your video explains the benefits of your proposed solution.

You will not be assessed on your videography or video-editing skills. At this point in the course, you will also not be assessed on how professional your illustration design is: Amateur illustration design is fine, as long as the illustration includes details about your mousetrap car design (like materials and look).

Failure to include one of the above requirements or a late submission will result in a lower grade (down to an F).

Submissions

Submit a link to your video pitch here. If your video (hosted online) has captions, that's great. If it does not, include a file with a transcript. If your illustration is not embedded in your video, also upload your image file.

Additionally, post a link to the video (with a transcript if you don't have captions) to the Elevator Pitch Video Discussion Forum. If your illustration is not embedded in your video, also upload your image file.

Resources for This Assignment

"How to Create an Elevator Pitch" by Michael Hyatt: https://youtu.be/-t1ar_lpmUU

"Creating an Elevator Pitch" from MindTools: https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/elevator_pitch.htm

Course Goals Supported by This Project

Rhetorical Knowledge

- Develop facility in responding to a variety of situations and contexts (academic and nonacademic) calling for purposeful shifts in voice, tone, level of formality, design, medium, and/or structure
- Use a variety of technologies to address a range of audiences
- Read and compose in several genres, understanding how genre conventions shape and are shaped by readers' and writers' practices and purposes

Inquiry & Research

- Formulate viable research questions, hypotheses, and conclusions

Engineering-Specific Writing Goals

- Effectively and ethically identify, describe, and formulate a design problem through writing
- Effectively use visuals to communicate complex information