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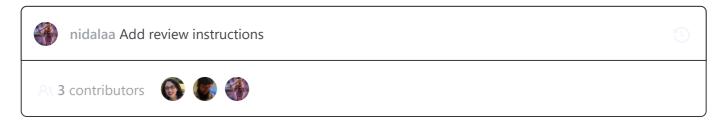
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nidalaa Add review instructions

3 contributors

Use your USP to craft the first draft of your elevator pitch

Learning objectives

- Confidently pitch yourself in a short Elevator Pitch.

Estimated time: 1.25h

Description

In this project, you will use the Unique Selling Point (USP) you created earlier in the curriculum to craft the first draft of your elevator pitch: a short speech that you'll use regularly during interviews and while networking, and that summarizes who you are, what makes you special, and why you'd be a good fit for a specific job. Remember, this is your first draft, so don't expect it to be perfect. You'll have an opportunity to receive feedback and make changes in later activities.

If you are a transitioned student who did not create a USP in previous lessons, please take a moment to read our curriculum on what a Unique Selling Point is and how to create one for yourself. You **do not** need to complete the "Define your personal USP" activity. Instead, please take 20-30 minutes to read the articles on how to create a USP and how to create a USP that compels people to hire you.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Read through each section thoroughly, and then add on to your project as you move through the lesson.

Why is an elevator pitch important?

An elevator pitch is a short speech designed to show others who you are and what makes you special. It's a speech that you'll be delivering over and over again during the course of your career, and that will change as you progress through your software development journey. Having a strong elevator pitch can mean the difference between receiving interviews and not, and they're an important part of your networking toolbox, so it's important to take time to create a pitch that will increase your chances of success. But why are they so important, and when can they be used?

Learn more about why elevator pitches are important:

Why are elevator pitches so useful?

Project Setup

Create a Google Doc and open up the share settings to allow **anyone with the link** to **leave suggestions** directly on the document.

Maintaining focus on development in your elevator pitch

As you start writing your pitch, remember this: **every single line should be related to software development.**

This may sound obvious to you, but it's a common mistake. A lot of people spend their elevator pitches talking about what they did before they started learning how to code, but **never explain why those experiences would be useful as a software developer**. This is a big problem and wastes an opportunity to explain why your unique experiences make you a software developer. In the link below, we'll review weak, average, and strong examples of how to maintain focus on development in your elevator pitch.

Learn more about maintaining a laser-focus on development:

[How to focus on development, even when discussing non-development topics](#)

Apply what you've learned

1. Take 5 minutes to think about how the experiences you wrote about in the USP exercise would make you a stronger developer.
2. When you've done so, proceed to the next step.

Introducing yourself effectively

The introduction to an elevator pitch is simple: say hello, give your name, and then give a one-sentence overview of what you do.

If you've ever worked in sales or marketing, you may have heard of a format like this: "My name is [X], and I help [Y] by doing [Z]." That format is a little too sales-y for a software development elevator pitch, but it raises one very important key point: **the purpose of an elevator pitch is to convince someone else that they should talk to you**. You don't have to say "I help [Y] by doing [Z]" directly, but your first sentence should still explain **what you can offer.**

In the link below, we'll go over strong and weak introductions, and will explain why each is strong or not.

Learn more about how to introduce yourself effectively in an elevator pitch:

[How to introduce yourself clearly and effectively](#)

Apply what you've learned

1. Go to your Google Doc and write 1-2 sentences for your introduction. Feel free to use the examples above as a reference, but **do not copy them**.
2. When you're ready, proceed to the next step.

Conveying your accomplishments and history

Now that you've written your introduction, it's time to **use your USP to write a brief overview of** your **relevant experience**. This should be **no more than 2-3 sentences long**, and should focus only on the **best experiences, the most relevant ones, or the ones that tell the best story.**

You already chose several experiences while [creating your USP in an earlier lesson](#). In this section, we'll be expanding on those stories with additional detail and context in order to showcase what you've done in your career thus far.

Learn more about how to convey your history and accomplishments in ways that are clear, full of context, and that persuasively indicate your potential as a developer:

[How to persuasively convey accomplishments and history](#)

Apply what you've learned

1. Pick 1-2 of the stories you discussed while writing your USP, and copy them into your elevator pitch Google Doc.
2. Using the examples above as a reference, rephrase those stories to ensure that they convey your history and accomplishments in ways that are clear, contextual, and development-focused. Feel free to use the examples above as a reference, but **do not copy them**.
3. When you're ready, proceed to the next step.

Highlighting what makes you special and unique

The next 1-2 sentences of your elevator pitch are where you explain **why you are special**. This is not the place to be humble: this is the place where you say "**Look at the cool things I've done.**"

Think about a few things that you're proud of. You may have already come up with a few examples when crafting your USP; if so, copy/paste them into your elevator pitch. If you did not specifically write about things that make you special when creating your USP, take some time to brainstorm some. In the link below, we'll offer some ideas to get you started, and will review examples of strong and weak ways to highlight uniqueness.

Learn more about how to showcase what makes you special in an elevator pitch:

[How to highlight what makes you special or unique](#)

Apply what you've learned

1. Pick 1-2 things that would make you unique as a software developer.
2. Using the examples above as a reference, rephrase those qualities to ensure that they provide detail and depth. Feel free to use the examples above as a reference, but **do not copy them**.
3. When you're ready, proceed to the next step.

Personalizing your elevator pitch for your audience

One of the biggest mistakes a person can make during their elevator pitch is only talking about themselves. If you spend the entire time saying "I," the person you're

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You've talked about who you are and why you're special. Now it's time to talk about **why exactly your audience is special--and why you're talking to them and not anyone else.**

In the link below, we'll discuss how to personalize your elevator pitch in such a way that your audience feels recognized, and therefore more likely to respond.

Learn more about how to showcase what makes you special in an elevator pitch:

[How to personalize your pitch in order to build rapport with your audience](#)

Apply what you've learned

1. Use the questions in the link above to identify 1-2 things that make your audience special.
2. Using the examples above as a reference, add 1-2 sentences of personalized outreach to your pitch. Feel free to use the examples above as a reference, but **do not copy them**.
3. When you're ready, proceed to the next step.

Using calls to action

Congratulations! You're nearly done writing your elevator pitch. All you need is the very last sentence: the **call to action**. A call to action (or CTA) is a short statement meant to **encourage the audience to do something valuable for you**: to continue the dialogue, to have a chat on LinkedIn, to meet you over Zoom. Unlike the rest of your elevator pitch, the CTA can be pretty formulaic, but it's still important to write a strong one.

In the link below, we'll review examples of weak and strong calls to action, and discuss what makes each work or not.

Learn more about how to showcase what makes you special in an elevator pitch:

[How to continue the conversation by ending with a call to action](#)

Apply what you've learned

1. Using the examples above as a reference, add a strong call to action to your elevator pitch. Feel free to use the examples above as a reference, but **do not copy them**.
2. When you're ready, proceed to the next step.

Editing and refining your elevator pitch

Editing is difficult for everybody, but it's also a valuable and necessary skill to have as a developer. A poorly-written elevator pitch can be worse than not having an elevator pitch at all. A well-written one, though, can not only help convince a recruiter, hiring manager, or software developer to spend time interviewing you, it can also help convince them of your communication abilities.

In the link below, we'll discuss a few strategies you can use to help edit and refine your pitch before you submit it.

Learn more about how to showcase what makes you special in an elevator pitch:

[How to edit and refine your elevator pitch](#)

Apply what you've learned

1. Use the techniques listed above to find and locate grammatical errors, typos, capitalization mistakes, and spelling errors.
2. Read the pitch aloud to help you identify sentences that sound robotic. Then edit those sentences by varying sentence length and sentence type, in order to help them sound more natural., add a strong call to action to your elevator pitch.
3. When you're ready, proceed to the next step in order to submit your project.

Project submission

Project requirements

- [Make sure that your elevator pitch meets every requirement of the elevator pitch rubric](#). If you have followed the curriculum above, it should do so automatically.

Submission instructions

Check out this FAQ if you need a refresher on [Google Doc submission best practices](#)

- Make sure that your Google Doc is shared so that **anyone with the link can leave edits or suggestions**. If you do not share the document, your project reviewer will return the document to you without review.
- Run your document through Grammarly before you submit it.

Review

Follow [these steps](#) to request a review of your project.

Submit your project

Read this FAQ for a reminder on how to submit your exercise.

Now go to your Student Dashboard and submit your exercise.

Additional materials

If you'd like to learn more about how to create compelling elevator pitches, take a look at some of the supplemental materials below, which include video and written examples of elevator pitch best practices. Not all of these pitches are specific to software development, but they all contain useful information that you can use to further refine your elevator pitch.

- Video: Elevator Pitch Example - How to Create a Personal Elevator Pitch
- Video - How to create an elevator speech about yourself - elevator speech sample!
- Video - Create the perfect elevator pitch & sales pitch - best elevator pitch examples & template
- Article - how to write a sure-fire elevator pitch for your job search

If you spot any bugs or issues in this activity, you can open an issue with your proposed change.