

What is an elevator pitch?

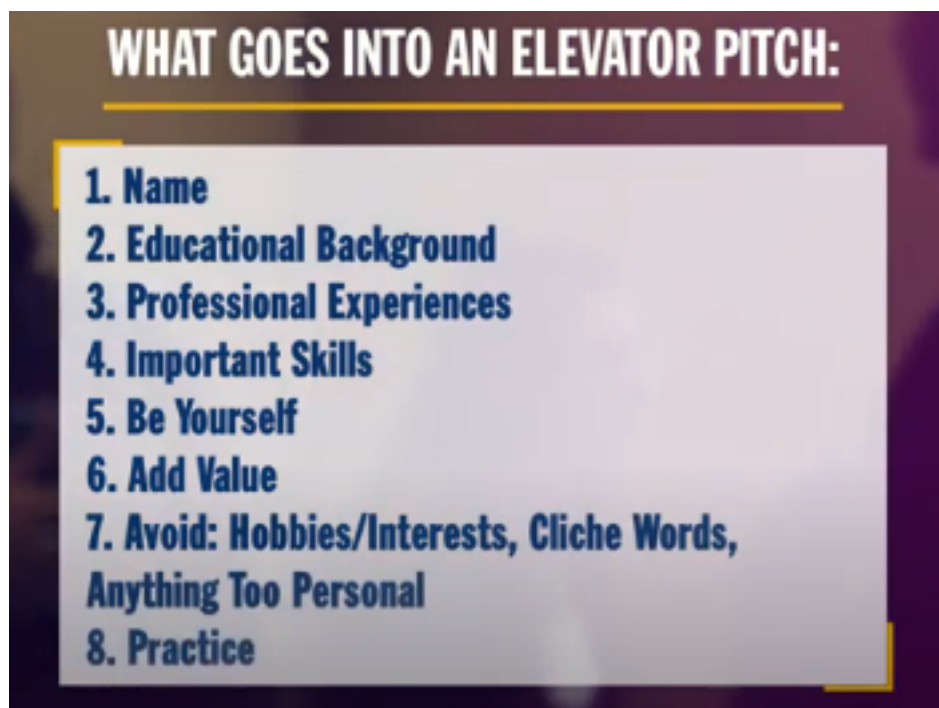
A personal elevator pitch is a **quick summary of yourself**. It's named for the time it takes to ride an elevator from bottom to top of a building (about 30 seconds). The elevator pitch is a way to sell yourself as a professional in a way that is **interesting, memorable and succinct (to the point) to create a new connection and leave a lasting impression** in the mind of your interlocutor.

Why is it important?

An elevator pitch is typically a **great icebreaker** to start a conversation in an interview. From phone screen to in-person interview, you'll be asked to **provide a summary of who you are, your background and what you want from your next job**. The elevator pitch can also be a helpful **framework** as you're planning your answer to the popular interview question "tell me about yourself" or considering what to include in a cover letter.

Another benefit of a personal elevator pitch is that it **prepares you to introduce yourself when exciting opportunities present themselves in everyday life**. In line at the grocery store, at a cocktail party or networking event, maybe even in an actual elevator, the pitch can quickly help new contacts understand why they should connect with you or consider you when an opportunity arises.

An advantage of using an elevator pitch when speaking about your career or aspirations is that you can take the lead (the initiative). Instead of waiting on the other party to direct the conversation, **you can assertively explain what you have to offer**. In many interactions, such as a job interview or mentorship proposition, this can be a relief to your audience—they will be glad to see you know both what you want and how to ask for it.



Esta imagen fue tomada de: <https://youtu.be/hGklVxwxrCk> (*What is an Elevator Pitch? Examples for Students and Job Seekers*: este video puede resultar útil; se pueden activar los subtítulos en inglés al mirarlo y reducir la velocidad ya que hablan demasiado rápido en algunas partes. El ejemplo que aparece es de una estudiante; el contenido puede servir, aunque habla demasiado rápido —ese aspecto no es para imitar)

How to write an elevator pitch

Your elevator pitch should answer the following questions: Who are you? What do you do? What do you want?

1. Start by introducing yourself

As you approach someone to pitch to, whether that's at an event, interview or anything in between, start off with an introduction. Give your full name, smile, extend your hand for a handshake and add a pleasantry like, "It's nice to meet you!"

2. Provide a summary of what you do

This is where you'll give a brief summary of your background. You should include the most relevant information like your education, work experience and/or any key specialties or strengths.

3. Explain what you want

This step will depend on what you're using the pitch for. The "ask" of your pitch could be a consideration for a job opportunity, internship, or simply to get contact information. This is a good opportunity to **explain the value** you'll bring, why you're a good fit for a job, or generally what your audience has to gain from your interaction. Focus on **what you have to offer** during this section of the speech. You can also give a concrete example or tell a short story, **show your uniqueness** and provide illustrations on how you work.

Writing tips

- absolutely not longer than 60 seconds
- in words: approximately 150 words
- in sentences: 7 to 10 sentences

STEP 1: First write down all what comes up in your mind.

STEP 2: Then cut the jargon (technical language) and details. Make strong short and powerful sentences. Eliminate unnecessary words.

The perfect elevator pitch is incredibly simple and can be **understood by people who have no knowledge of your discipline**. In order to accomplish this, you should **avoid all jargon or terminology** that the average person wouldn't understand. You'll want to be able to speak to people with a variety of backgrounds, so try replacing with general, easy to understand language. Asking friends or family for feedback can be useful for this step.

STEP 3: Connect the phrases to each other. Your elevator address has to flow natural and smoothly. Don't rush.

STEP 4: Memorise key points and practice.

STEP 5: Have you really answered the key question of your listener: *Why should this person be hired?*

STEP 6: Create different versions for different business situations of your elevator speech. Note them on professional business cards

Delivery tips

✓ Make it conversational:

It's good to plan your elevator pitch out ahead of time and practice, but **you should avoid sounding rehearsed when you say it**. A good way to keep the pitch conversational is to memorise a general outline or key points of your speech. Keep this structure in the back of your mind and **adapt your pitch for each person you give it to**. For example, if you're talking to someone you've just met, keep the conversation general, focused on your background and possibly state if you're seeking new opportunities. If you're talking to someone you want to work with, it's important to refer to their open position or company, and how specifically you can provide value.

✓ Express confidence

Even the best elevator pitch can lose its effectiveness if your delivery lacks confidence. Keep your chest high, shoulders back and smile when meeting someone and delivering your pitch. Use a strong speaking voice to show confidence in your experience and what you want in the future. If you're nervous, try mentally reversing roles: If you were the person being pitched to, you'd likely be happy to listen and help the inquirer as best you could.

ELEVATOR PITCH EXAMPLES

From students:

Hi, my name is Samantha Atcheson, and I am a senior¹ Environmental Sciences major. I'm looking for a position that will allow me to use my research and analysis skills. Over the past few years, I've been strengthening these skills through my work with a local watershed council on conservation strategies to support water quality and habitats. Eventually, I'd like to develop education programs on water conservation awareness. I read that your organization is involved in water quality projects. Can you tell me how someone with my experience may fit into your organization?

Nice to meet you, I'm Alex Biondo. I'm currently a senior and am studying Computer and Information Science. I hope to become a computer programmer when I graduate. I've had a couple of internships where I worked on several program applications with a project team. I enjoy developing computer applications for simple business solutions. The position you have listed in UO-JobLink seems like it would be a perfect fit for someone with my skills.

Hi, my name is Brad. I am currently a sophomore² student attending XYZ University in Wallapalooza, Maparaza. In college I plan on majoring in business, specifically in the area of finance. This summer I did an internship with the Groundhog Hedge Fund Group and I hope to work in my college's credit union when I return to school this fall. Ever since I can remember I have always had an interest in numbers and I feel certain that this is something I want to do in my future career. Next summer I'm hoping to get another internship learning more about how the international financial market operates. I also want a career working with people since I enjoy assisting others with their finances and I had a fruitful time this year preparing a presentation as a team with a group of other students for my business management introductory course."

"Nice to meet you, I am John Doe. I am a senior year studying Information Technology. I hope to become a computer programmer when I graduate. I have had a couple of internships where I worked on several program applications with a project team. I enjoy developing computer applications for simple business solutions. The position you have listed in CareerLink seems like it would be a perfect fit for someone with my skills. I would like to hear more about the type of project teams in your organization."

¹ *Senior*: used in the USA to refer to the last year of studies. ² *Sophomore*: used in the USA to refer to the second year of studies.

From professionals:

Job Title: Executive Assistant

“Hi, my name is Mark. Thanks so much for sitting down with me today. After graduating with my Bachelor’s degree in Business Administration, I’ve spent the last three years building professional experience as an Executive Assistant. I’ve successfully managed end-to-end event coordination and have generated a strong professional network for my colleagues. I was excited to learn about this opportunity in the sports management space—I’ve always been passionate about the way sports bring cultures together and would love the opportunity to bring my project management and leadership abilities to this position.”

Job Title: Media Planner

“Hi, I’m Tom. I’ve spent the last eight years learning and growing in my role as Media Planner, where I’ve developed and optimized strategic media plans for our top client and managed a subset of planners as a Team Lead. One of my proudest achievements was a pro-bono project that was recognized as a top non-profit campaign last year. I’ve been interested in moving to non-profit for quite a while, and love what your company does in education. Would you mind telling me about any media planning needs you may have on the team?”

Adapted from <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/perfect-elevator-pitch>
Examples and tips from: sfp.ucdavis.edu and UAFSCareerServices

More info:

Elevator Pitch Examples for Students: <https://youtu.be/aDt6cukCz7k>

How to Make an Elevator Pitch: <https://youtu.be/Noowl0ydDvA>