

# Creating your Elevator Pitch

IDP in Educational Technology



As part of HS 791 course, IIT Bombay

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# Scenario

Consider that you are at a job interview and the interviewer says: “Tell me about yourself”. You have one minute to make a good impression.

What do you say?

Write down some points for your answer in your notebook. (you will get a chance to revise it later, so write your initial ideas now).

# The answer to such questions

*“Tell me about yourself”*

*“Let’s introduce ourselves” (around a table, GD,...)*

*“So what are you working on?”*

*“What is your research about?”*

...

The Elevator Pitch

# Elevator Pitch

An elevator pitch is a short summary used to quickly and simply define a person, profession, product, service, organization or event, and its [value proposition](#).

It should be possible to deliver the pitch in the time span of an elevator ride, or approximately thirty seconds to two minutes



Another Perfect Business Opportunity **Wasted**  
Because of No Good **Elevator Pitch**

# Why should you care?

Important for:

- Job interviews
- Talking about your research
- Conference meetings

You get only one chance to make a first impression.

Being able to sum up unique aspects of yourself, your service or product in a way that excites others, is a fundamental skill.



# Why prepare an elevator pitch?

Many interviews start with a question like “Tell me about yourself.”

The interviewer doesn't want to know about your childhood.

The interviewer wants to know your background, achievements, future goals, and determine if you are a good fit for XYZ company.

If you learn how to address this open-ended question smoothly and effectively, your interview will start off on a great note.

# Ph.D students' → 2-minute thesis

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We challenged grad students and researchers all over the world to describe their thesis in two minutes or less. What we got was an incredible sampling of their creativity and communication skills.

Episodes:

How on... How to Build an Artificial N... Mystery Tubes in the Stick..

The 2012 Winners are:

**Grand Prize Winner:** "The Synthesis of NAViSection"  
Description: What defines driver capabilities and how to link that capability to safety.  
Author: Nahom M. Beyene, U. Pittsburgh  
Secret sauce: He appealed to his 2,921 Facebook friends for support, using clever and funny photo collages to motivate them.

**Second place:** "Transubstantiation"  
Description: Protestant and Catholic understandings of transubstantiation may not be so different after all.  
Author: Brett Salkeld, Regis College  
Secret sauce: He was featured in a local Saskatchewan

# Example

*Hi, my name is Samantha Atcheson, and I am a senior Environmental Sciences major. I am 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 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?*



# Activity – Peer Discussion

Why is this a weak pitch: I have spent the last three years in market research. I want to move to a larger platform. I graduated from XYZ university.

Why is this a strong pitch: I have three years of market research experience with expertise in research design, construction of analytical models and data analysis. I developed a new tool using Facebook that was adopted by my last company. I am looking for bigger challenges. I graduated from XYZ university as a marketing major.

# Example: Ph.D students' → 2-minute thesis

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# Activity: Compare elevator pitches

Below are two elevator pitches. Which is better ?

1) Ex-1      2) Ex-2      3) Both are equally good.

EX-1: I graduated from XYZ college in 2012 with courses in marketing and research methods. I worked for my college annual festival team on their publicity. I have spent the last three years in market research for ABC company. I want to move to an interesting platform and use my skills.

EX-2: I have expertise in research design, modeling and data analysis through three years of market research experience. As a student in XYZ college, I developed a tool using Facebook that was adopted by my college annual festival team. I would like to create marketing programs for non-profit organizations.

# Class Discussion: Compare elevator pitches

EX-1: *I graduated from XYZ college in 2012 with courses in marketing and research methods. I worked for my college annual festival team on their publicity. I have spent the last three years in market research for ABC company. I want to move to an interesting platform and use my skills.*

EX-2: *I have expertise in research design, modeling and data analysis through three years of market research experience. As a student in XYZ college, I developed a tool using Facebook that was adopted by my college annual festival team. I would like to create marketing programs for non-profit organizations.*

# Example of a popular elevator pitch

MIT 100K Business Plan contest

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a22T27rU4b0>

(0.01-0.53)

# What makes a good elevator pitch?

*FASTEST FINGER FIRST!*

Based on the video and the previous examples, come up with 2 features for a good elevator pitch.

30 seconds ...



# What makes a good elevator pitch?

## *Answers from class*

- Precise, specific (not broad, vague)
- Problem that needs to be addressed – emphasized
- Give a context – listener should relate to it
- Is unique, shows how are you different
- Explains why what you do matters
- Come to the core problem soon
- Shows clearly how my solution / service / product helps
- Give examples, back up statements
- Tailor your pitch to the audience – examples, tone
- Use interesting visual aids

# Features of a good elevator pitch

- . Explain what you do (not just what you studied)
- . Explain why you do what you do, why it's interesting
- . Focus on the listener - what you can offer them?
- . Communicate your USP (Unique Selling Proposition)
- . Include an engaging hook – you want the listener to get interested in you, your work
- . Say what you want the listener to remember most
- . What should the listener do after hearing you?



# How to craft your elevator pitch

- Decide for what purpose – Introduce your research? Job interview? Pitch for start-up to investor...?
- Decide what is your engaging hook? USP? What you want the listener to remember?
- Write 100 – 200 words. Say aloud in ~1min
- Practice saying it aloud

# Activity: Create your elevator pitch

Suppose you are going for a job interview.

**Think (Individually)** - Create your own elevator pitch.  
~ 100 words. Write this down.

**Pair (with your neighbour)** - Examine your neighbor's pitch for strong and weak features.

**Share (with the class)** – Some samples.

# Elevator pitch for research

- More focus on “selling” your research than yourself
- Have a clear answer to : why is your research needed
- Use a story or real-life scenario related to your research.

Cryptography : what happens when someone steals your credit card

- Make the audience care

Connect to – power, climate, food/perfume, education, disease ... or something you know listener cares about

- Tell something unexpected or counter-intuitive

Do you know blind people also gesture? And to other blind people?

# Use of Technology

Elevator pitch need not be only a written statement

It can be a prezi, video, code demo, other ...

T4E 2012 teaser video – Minute 6:30

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JE9142TWpA8>

Elevator pitch for STEM cell research

<https://www.cirm.ca.gov/our-progress/video/darryl-dlima-scripps-health-cirm-stem-cell-sciencepitch>

# How-to: Technology

Many tools exist for creating short videos

Some of these tools are: Camstudio, Camstatia Studio, Jing, Screen-o-matic, RecordMyDesktop

The websites for these tools have easy-to-follow tutorials for their usage. Simply follow the instructions and create your video/screencast

# Introduction to Assignment

1. Read the following for what to include in your pitch:

- <http://www.wikihow.com/Develop-Your-Personal-Elevator-Pitch>
- <http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/elevator-pitch.htm>
- <http://www.prepary.com/how-to-create-an-elevator-pitch/>

2. Choose a tool and create your pitch:

- <http://www.techsmith.com/jing.html>
- [http://process.spoken-tutorial.org/index.php/Main\\_Page#Technology](http://process.spoken-tutorial.org/index.php/Main_Page#Technology)

3. Upload your elevator pitch on your website:

Submit a link to your pitch as the assignment.

# Conclusion

Your elevator pitch is not static

Refine it over time:

1. As you do more projects
2. Find better ways to express your contributions
3. Pitch to different audiences
4. Devise multi-resolution pitches

Load your pitch onto your phone  
and you are good to go!



# Resources for crafting elevator pitch

## ***Job interview focused***

- Some how-to's for creating elevator pitch a 4-question guide, and examples  
<http://idealistcareers.org/a-quick-guide-to-writing-your-elevator-pitch-with-examples/>
- Two examples of college graduates' elevator pitches for job interview:  
<http://career.uoregon.edu/blog/students/2010/04/elevator-speech-30-seconds-interview>
- See the prescribed structure and examples from various fields (last section)  
<http://successwise.com/crafting-your-elevator-pitch>

## ***Research / academic focused***

- Two contrasting examples for a PhD student's elevator pitch, and some how-to's:  
[https://cfn.upenn.edu/aguirre/wiki/public:elevator\\_pitch](https://cfn.upenn.edu/aguirre/wiki/public:elevator_pitch)
- Videos of STEM cell research elevator pitch contest winners (understandable and exciting for non-biologists too!): <https://www.cirm.ca.gov/our-funding/stem-cell-elevator-pitch-challenge>
- Tips for a scientific elevator pitch:  
<https://dynamicecology.wordpress.com/2014/08/05/perfecting-the-elevator-pitch/>
- Search for '3-minute thesis' (or 2-minute thesis) on YouTube for several examples