



## How to Create an Effective Elevator Speech

All organizations and their associated personnel need an elevator speech that provides compelling and consistent information about your business, products and services.

1. Why do we need an elevator speech?
  - a. Makes us examine and focus on who we are and what we do
  - b. Enables us to learn how to speak about our business and products
  - c. Helps create a consistent message
  - d. Prepares us for planned and impromptu presentations
2. What is an elevator speech?
  - a. A short pitch – sells your product or service
  - b. Most effective quick way to articulate who you are to new buyers or partners
  - c. Must excite others about your business
  - d. Must compel response or follow-up
  - e. Can be given anytime and anywhere
3. Definitions:
  - a. A short statement about your business or service that interests your audience enough to want to hear more.
  - b. An **elevator pitch** is a short summary used to quickly and simply define a product, service, or organization and its value proposition.
  - c. Not all elevator speeches are the same for the same organization. Variety of pitches. Variety of lengths dependent on the situation (30 seconds to 2 minutes).
4. Key components of an elevator speech
  - a. Attention getter – what's the problem?
  - b. How do you solve the problem?
  - c. What makes you credible and unique?
  - d. Getting the next meeting or follow-up
  - e. Preparation and practice are key. You only get one first impression.
5. The process of developing an elevator speech
  - a. Preparation – analysis, planning and refinement of message
  - b. PRACTICE!
  - c. Adjustment, fine-tuning and polishing
6. Know your audience
  - a. What might their interest be in what you are pitching?
  - b. Are they a decision maker or influencer?
  - c. What is the response you want from your audience?
  - d. Adjust pitch as needed for particular audience or interest to the listener.

7. What's important to tell?
  - a. Who you are?
  - b. Who you serve?
  - c. What is your product, service or solution?
  - d. What problem do you solve?
  - e. How does product, service or solution impact your clients or constituents?
  - f. What makes it important or compelling?
  - g. What makes your offering unique over the competition?
  - h. Why should the person being pitched care?
  
8. Important considerations
  - a. Keep your elevator speech updated as organization or circumstances change
  - b. How does your message and pitch align with your organization's mission, vision, brand and values?
  - c. How do you articulate excitement and create interest to those outside your organization?
  - d. What do you highlight and even include?
  - e. What don't you mention?
  - f. Don't talk about yourself.
  - g. How does what you pitch change with different audiences?
  - h. Motivation for pitch – e.g., follow-up with a call or meeting, introduction to someone, make a sale
  
9. Consistency of key message points for entire organization (strategic communications plan), including
  - a. Staff
  - b. Board
  - c. Partners and sponsors
  - d. Constituents
  - e. Anyone speaking on your behalf
  
10. Types of elevator speeches – all variations to your core elevator speech
  - a. Prepared – for a meeting that is planned
  - b. Impromptu – for the unexpected opportunity
  - c. Very short – for a brief introduction that may lead to a longer conversation, or not
  - d. Longer – for a planned or unplanned encounter where there is potential or obvious interest in learning more
  
11. Develop your elevator speech
  - a. Write brief answers to each of the questions in #7 above. Have longer answers and examples for each as needed.
  - b. Relate to your future plans.
  - c. Use general language and don't use slang or jargon (don't recite mission statement or slogans and pat phrases)
  - d. Organize as statements that can be presented in any order, depending on the time, situation and perceived interest.
  - e. Arrange elements in an order that tells your story the best
  - f. Think of compelling examples of uniqueness and power of your solution
  - g. Anticipate follow-up questions and formulate answers
  - h. Let it become part of you – the same message points will be told differently by each presenter

12. Rehearse, practice and do it again

- a. Rehearse to yourself (speak out loud and in front of a mirror)
- b. Roll play with colleagues or friends, asking for their feedback
- c. Re-work until natural and comfortable

13. Delivery style and considerations

- a. Assess who your audience is – acquaintance vs. stranger
- b. Be personable, professional and friendly
- c. Capture your audience's attention quickly
- d. Speak slowly and with confidence
- e. Speak with passion
- f. Maintain direct eye contact
- g. Display confident body language
- h. Read the person's body language and interest and adjust as necessary
- i. Use listener-friendly language and don't use slang or jargon (don't recite mission statement)
- j. Be courteous and respectful
- k. Capture attention that will get you the next meeting

14. ASK for the next step

- a. Follow-up call or meeting
- b. Formal presentation
- c. Introduction or referral
- d. Exchange business cards or contact information

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