



# MODULE: ELEVATOR SPEECH

## OVERVIEW

### Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this module, you will be able to:

- Interpretation: Identify topics that are appropriate to include in an Elevator Speech.
- Interpretation: Explain the importance of an Elevator Speech.
- Application: Prepare an Elevator Speech based on your own experience, knowledge, and goals.
- Evaluation: Predict how you should revise your Elevator Speech based on your audience. (Are you talking with a business manager, a lab technician, a recruiter, the CEO of the company?)

### Checklist

#### Prior to meeting with mentor

- Review materials provided on the module topic.
- Write down your career goals to form the basis of your talking points.
- Put together “story” about yourself and what perspective you would bring to a business
  - Interests
  - Goals
  - Strengths
  - Weaknesses
- Practice your elevator speech with a friend or colleague
- Five Minute Reflection

#### Discussion with mentor

- When would use of an elevator speech be appropriate? How might an elevator speech be adjusted based on audience?
- What are some techniques to build confidence so that you are always ready to deliver your speech?
- Topics from Five Minute Reflection



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## Mentee Deliverables

- ❑ **Deliverable 1:** Use the templates in the Handout 1 and Handout 2 to create a 1 minute personal commercial. Bring a printed copy of the text and present at the next meeting with Mentor. We will use Handout 3 to give feedback on the presentations.
- ❑ **Deliverable 2:** Bring a printed copy of your responses to the Five-Minute Reflection to the next meeting.

## Materials for this Module

- ❑ Handout 1: Job Seekers, too, Need an 'Elevator Pitch'
- ❑ Handout 2: My 30 Second Commercial
- ❑ Handout 3: Elevator Speech Evaluation Rubric
- ❑ YouTube Video: "The Art of the Elevator Pitch" by Chris Westfall  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GqsWkaR9Q6M> (15 minutes)

## Module Content Introduction

Everything is an opportunity. Have you ever unexpectedly crossed paths with someone for a brief few seconds or minutes, only to realize (as they are disappearing into the distance) that you wish you had told them something about your work because they could have helped you. An elevator speech is a short, concise, easy-to-understand few sentences that have purpose. Whether you are really in an elevator or not, you will find that you have the opportunity to share information at/in very unexpected times/locations. So imagine that you are in an elevator, the doors have closed, and you have the time it takes the elevator to move two floors to "sell" your idea to your boss or to an investor or to a member of the public. You were not expecting to cross paths with them today and have this great opportunity. You need a pithy description, that gives brief but compelling introduction, moves quickly to the point (are you asking for something or simply providing someone with an educational opportunity), and culminates with a closing action sentence (have several closing sentences ready, choose one that is relevant to the person...."I'm happy to send you a detailed overview as I know we're not meeting in person this week", "may I have your business card, I would love to follow up", "may I give you my business card", "be sure to voice your opinions by casting your vote in the upcoming elections", "watch for this weekend's CNN's science report for more detail", etc. Yes, EVERYTHING is an opportunity.

### [Watch Presentation on Elevator Speech Tips](#)

Watch the presentation "The Art of the Elevator Pitch" by Chris Westfall. He gives great insight into why you are building the elevator speech - he would probably say you are actually building an "Elevator Conversation". He challenges you to complete the charge "**Because**" of this **achievement or skill**, it shows that I can do **what** "with", "for", or "through" others. Note: consider this same charge as you add items to your resume.



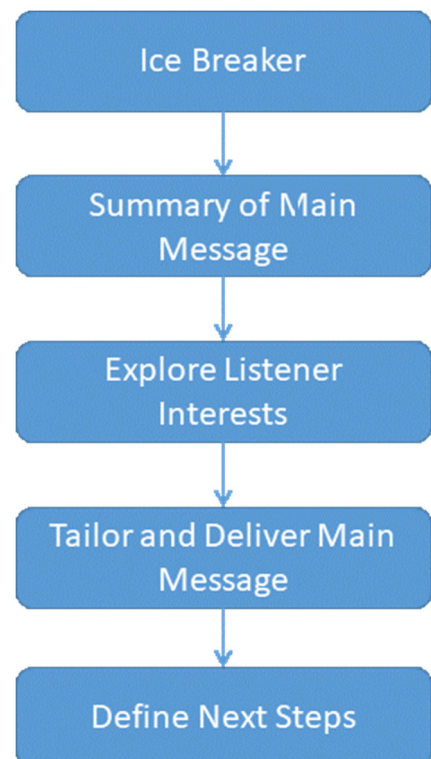
## Elevator Speech Tips

### Pointers to think about

- There are endless scenarios for an elevator pitch and it really depends on your audience.
- A good pitch has its own time and place and when it is successful, you feel that it was a natural development of the conversation.
- A pitch does not sell your research but it sells yourself as the researcher, while allowing room for possible outcomes to be imagined.
- Make your main point early in the speech in case you are interrupted or run out of time.
- It is your responsibility to start the conversation in an interesting way to grab the attention of the other party.

### A generic pitch frame work

- Start with an **Ice Breaker** – Compliment, interesting discussion point, a provoking comment about a third party and so forth...
- State your main point – A very brief summary in case you are interrupted or run out of time.
- The conversation stage – **Navigate** the conversation to the places that you want to discuss but cause the other party to comment on this subject first, so you can **evaluate which topic is worthwhile to develop**.
- The selling point – **Analyze** what would make the other party very interested in and **tailor your selling pitch** to preside on this point of view.
- Ending – End this engagement with a **positive note and provide your name and contact information** so that will be





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the last thing the other party will take away from the conversation. Be sure to get their information.



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**Example:** (I have just gone out from a lecture which fascinated me and the lecturer walks in the elevator with me)

- **Me** - Hi Dr. Party, I really liked your presentation it was very interesting. Did your research manage to prove how these psychological traits effect human performance in real time?
- **Dr. Party** – Thank you, well... we have several experiments that examine this aspect however we still do not have any substantial finding to present at the moment.
- **Me** – The reason that I ask this question is because I am researching psychological traits from an engineering point of view. I am managing a research group and our purpose is to convert engineering tools and methodologies to address human performance characteristics when considering real time performance assessment. We found a few interesting relationships however we still do not know exactly how to interpret our finding, would you mind to take a look and give us your opinion? We would really appreciate your take on the matter.
- **Dr. Party** – Well... my schedule is really tight these days, especially when the holidays are soon to arrive. You understand right... However, if you have a short summary of what your research is doing I might find some time to look at it but I am not promising anything.
- **Me** – Oh thank you so much, I will email you our findings, you should receive the email from [yourname@university.edu](mailto:yourname@university.edu), which is my name too so it is easy to remember. Have a good time on the upcoming holidays.
- **Dr. Party** – Thank you, you too.

## Summary

In this elevator situation, I have identified a point in Dr. Party's lecture that touches my research as well. I have inquired his point of view and notice that they are investigating their finding at the moment. The findings element was my key to my presentation which attracted Dr. Party's interest.



## Assignment(s) for this Module

### Assignment(s)

While reviewing the associated handouts, use the prompts in the templates in Handout 1 and Handout 2 to help build the framework for your own elevator speech. Produce an elevator speech for yourself based on your experience, knowledge, and goals. Practice it with a friend or colleague and be prepared to deliver it to your mentor, pretending he/she is not familiar with your project. Consider what you might need to emphasize based on your audience. For any item you include in the elevator speech you should be able to say **"Because" of this *achievement or skill*, it shows that I can do *what* "with", "for", or "through" others.** Use Handout 3 as a checklist to see that you have included all of the needed elements and can effectively deliver your speech. Work with your mentor to specify your audience and purpose, examples include:

- Potential employer – need job
- Venture capitalist – want funding
- Fellow Researcher – want to collaborate
- Community Leader – share impact on community
- Undergraduate Student – recruit for research experience
- K-12 Student – excite about science and engineering

**Deliverable 1: Use the templates in the Handout 1 and Handout 2 to create a 1 minute personal commercial. Bring a printed copy of the text and present at the next meeting with Mentor. We will use Handout 3 to give feedback on the presentations.**

### Five-Minute Reflection

Come up with one question to discuss with your mentor (maybe a concept you are unclear on, something you found interesting, etc.)

What information did you feel was the most informative? Least?

What was the toughest part of giving the elevator speech to your friend or colleague?

**Deliverable 2: Bring a printed copy of your responses to the Five-Minute Reflection to the next meeting.**