

SO, TELL ME ABOUT YOURSELF

THE ELEVATOR PITCH

“So, tell me about yourself...” This statement will likely lead the conversation in many professional encounters, especially at career fairs and interviews. In order to provide an interviewer with a competitive answer, you will need to develop a compelling elevator pitch.

What is an elevator pitch?

An elevator pitch is a quick synopsis of your background and experience. The reason it is called an elevator pitch is because you should be able to present it during a brief elevator ride (30-60 seconds). Otherwise, you risk losing the person's interest or monopolizing the conversation. Done right, this short speech helps you introduce yourself in professional settings.

When will you use an elevator pitch?

- Career Fairs
- Networking
- Informational interviews
- “Tell me about yourself”
- “Why should I hire you?”

Essential Parts of an Elevator Pitch

Information and Education (10-15 seconds)

Start by saying your name (the more you say it, the more likely they will be to remember it).

Communicate relevant information concerning your educational background. Mention major/minors, professional interests, extracurricular activities, and any travel or study abroad opportunities you might have had. *Do not include personal information such as marital status, children, age, or other topics that might lead to discrimination.*

Work Experience and Accomplishments (25-30 seconds)

Next, communicate the work, internship, or volunteer experience that taught you skills necessary to be successful in this position and make you the best candidate for the position. Try to focus on assets that add value in many situations or organizations (think transferable skills). Include related work experience, coursework and projects, leadership experience, and community service involvement. Remember to avoid sounding boastful while highlighting what you bring to the table.

Your professional career goals and passions (25-30 seconds)

Finally, speak with enthusiasm as to why you are seeking a position with that company or in that related field. This is your “why” – Why are you passionate about this field? Why are interested in a role with this company? You can also include goals you have for the partnership. For instance, you might say, “a role in your accounting department” or “an opportunity to apply my sales skills to a new market.”



Things to remember

- Keep it brief and make it flow. Each section needs to flow naturally to the next, like a conversation.
- Practice to feel more confident and be succinct, but don't read it like a script. Again, this needs to feel like a conversation, not rehearsed. Plus, the more you practice, the slower you will speak.
- Speak slowly and do not mumble. You may be meeting a recruiter in a loud career fair so speak up!
- Show confidence and assurance of self when you meet someone new. Shake their hands firmly. Look them in the eye when you meet them.
- Keep most of your content professionally related.

Examples

"Good afternoon! My name is _____ and I am pursuing a degree in finance and I will be graduating this December. While attending college, I worked 25-30 hours a week in a cooperative education position with Lowe's in their accounting and finance department. I was able to get "hands-on" experience in cost accounting, cash-flow analysis, budget development, and assisted in preparing client proposals. Through my work experiences, I have been given the opportunity to polish my customer service skills, as well as gain technical skills. I have strong planning and documentation abilities and am analytically oriented. My career goal is to work for a bank and eventually become a loan officer. I believe I have the key traits for success in banking."

"My name is _____ and I will be graduating in December with a bachelor's degree in marketing from Stephen F. Austin State University. While pursuing my degree I worked for the Center for Career and Professional Development 20 hours a week as a Student Career Advocate. This position has taught me professional skills, traits and habits such as teamwork, problem solving, communication and leadership. During this time I also obtained an Internship with Walgreens as a Community Management intern. I look forward to the opportunity of joining your team at CVS and becoming a vital member of your team."

You can use this chart to develop your elevator pitch:

Topic	Write down ideas or examples of:
Basic Information About Me and My Education	
Work Experiences & Accomplishments	
Professional Career Goals (short-term & long-term), what goals do I have at this company	
My "Why" – why do I want to work in this field or with this company, what am I passionate about, etc.	
What are some transferable skills that I have? (Read up on the NACE Career Competencies)	

