

Elevator Pitch

Stephen F. Austin State University | Center for Career and Professional Development

"So, tell me about yourself." This dreaded statement will likely lead the conversation in almost every business transaction you make. 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 to career connections in a compelling way.

Think about it

You are using your elevator pitch as a way to share your expertise and credentials quickly and effectively to a potential employer, recruiter, or career connection. A future employer or recruiter is not interested in the fact that you have a 13-year old brother or that you are a Greek Week champion because these facts will not get you the position.

When will you use an elevator pitch?

- "Tell me about yourself."
- "Why should I hire you?"
- Networking
- Informational interviews
- Job fairs and career expos

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 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, intern, 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. This is your chance to brag a bit! Include related work experience, coursework and projects, leadership experience, and community service involvement. Remember to avoid sounding boastful while describing what you bring to the table.

Your professional career goals (25-30 seconds)

Finally, speak with enthusiasm as to why you are seeking a position with that company, or the 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

Practice, Practice, Practice | Have business cards ready | Don't speak too quickly | Sound enthusiastic | Be brief

*See the back of this document for examples and a chart to walk you through developing your elevator pitch!

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 for Hastings 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 perusing 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."

Utilize this chart to develop your elevator pitch!

Information and Education	
Work Experience and Accomplishments	
Professional Career Goals and/or Goals with the Company/Organization	