

The 30 Second Elevator Speech

An elevator speech is a clear, concise message or personal commercial about you. It precisely says who you are, what you are looking for and how you can benefit an organization. It should be brief, about 30 seconds, the time it takes for an elevator ride. The purpose of an elevator speech is to quickly introduce yourself to anyone you might meet, at any time, at any place and get them interested enough to want to learn more. Use it at a career fair or networking event to tell employers who you are and why they would want to hire you.

Your elevator speech needs to be practiced until it flows naturally, like a conversation. You should be relaxed and pleasant while speaking, with a smile and good eye contact. Let your listener know your experience and skills, how you got them and what you would bring to their company. Rehearse your speech out loud with another person or in front of a mirror. Practice enough to be comfortable with what you have to say so you are ready for any chance meeting with a potential employer or networking contact.

An elevator speech should be no longer than 25 to 30 seconds, about 8 to 10 sentences. But be ready go deeper about your background and experience should you be asked for more. Have examples ready to support your speech, more information on your education, and be prepared to tell them more on how you would benefit them and their organization.

Elevator Speech Topics

Write down a sentence or two about the following topics. Then put them all together in a style that flows like a conversation. Make short, strong, to the point sentences.

1. Who you are and what can you bring to their company.

Tell who you are, describe yourself, your background, and your experience. Be enthusiastic about how much you would benefit their organization. Give an example supporting your experiences.

2. Why you are interested in a particular position or about their organization in general.

Talk about a job opening at their company and tell them what you would bring to that position. Tell them something positive that interests you about their organization.

3. How are you qualified.

Tell them how your education and experience would make you the perfect person to fill their opening. Give examples to support this.

Always watch the body language of the person you are speaking to. If they seem interested engage them in the conversation as well. Also, be aware of when you have been speaking too long. It is better to leave them wanting more than to sell yourself too hard or go on too long.

Once you have your basic elevator speech down you may want to work on slightly different versions depending on the situations you may find yourself in. If looking to talk to someone from a particular organization learn about that organization to show them you are interested in them too. When attending job fairs research employers you are interested in speaking with before you go to the fair.

While an elevator speech is to “sell” yourself, at the same time you need to answer the employer’s questions of why they should hire you and what is in it for them. Relate your qualifications in terms that would answer those questions.