

Creating an Elevator Speech

- An elevator speech is a 10- to 15-second sound bite that briefly introduces yourself, your dream job and your unique qualifications. It is future-focused, not a history lesson.
- Studies have shown that 16 seconds is the average time spent with a stranger in an elevator. It's also all the time needed to make a favorable first impression. Delivering your "mini-speech" to a network contact, hiring manager or recruiter can open the door to new employment. In our meetings, a short concise elevator speech might help you make the necessary connections to move forward.
- Learn To Avoid Common Mistakes People Make

Mistakes People Make

- Not expressing the value of you or your service. If you mention your process rather than your results, or if you droll on about your history rather than the return on investment that chronology created, you've lost whatever significance you were trying to create. Remember, your elevator speech is all about the benefits (i.e., what your client gets), not a history lesson.
- Having a long elevator speech. People stop listening after 11 words. Yawn!
- Using jargon. Saying, "I provide robust multi-use business enhancement options" is presenting nothing of value to anyone (even if there's a good product or service behind that babble phrase).
- Using the wrong intonation. If you sound tentative, unsure of your own value or uncomfortable, it will ruin your chances of moving forward. Practice your elevator speech with a trusted friend, your coach or your spouse until you can say it as if you mean it and

like you believe it. Even the right words delivered the wrong way will call your credibility into question.

- Improvising. If you don't have a prepared elevator speech, you're doomed. Most people talk too much without making a point when they improvise-very unprofessional.

Put your elevator speech together, practice it, try it, rework it and try again. Keep at it until you are comfortable with the way you present yourself.

Short Format (10-Second Version)

My name is _____, and I have _____ years' experience in _____ (industry or function). (insert "hook" here.) I am looking for a _____ position in the _____ (industry) and have targeted _____ (company), _____ (company) and _____ (company) for further research. If you have any information or introductions for me at these companies, I would like to speak with you. For those interested, I can offer you contacts in the _____ (industry) and with _____ (company).

Be concise and targeted, and get exactly what you want.