Elevator Speech

**What is an Elevator Speech?**

An elevator speech is a 30 second to one minute overview of your knowledge, skills, and experiences. (The term comes from the time it would take to answer the question “Who are you?” during an elevator ride.)

It’s an opportunity to get your point across in a concise, timely manner and to spark interest in the person with whom you are speaking. An elevator speech is essentially a business card. You need to be able to say who you are, what you do, what you are interested in doing, and how you can be a resource to your listeners.

**When will you need to use your elevator speech?**

Anytime! You never know when it will be important to have your elevator speech ready. When you’re on campus, you might use your elevator speech when you’re meeting an employer at the career fair or an alumni career event. Off campus, you might use it when you’re volunteering in the community, attending an academic conference or just meeting people who are doing work that you’re curious about. Considering the potential of each and every personal encounter you have is a great way to build your community and is a vital part of the internship or job search process.

**Tips for Creating An Elevator Speech**

KNOW YOURSELF - Before you can convince anyone of your proposition you need to know exactly what it is. You need to define precisely what you are offering, what problems you can solve, and what benefits you bring to a prospective contact or employers.

Answer the following questions:
- What are your key strengths?
- What adjectives come to mind to describe you?
- What is it that you are trying to ‘sell’ or let others know about you?
- Why are you interested in the company or industry the person represents?

Be sure to include:
- Name, class year, concentration or possible concentration, or department.
- Your experiences or internships.
- A job, internship, or career you might be interested in exploring.
- A question at the end to get the person you’re connecting with talking.

**Sample Elevator Speech:**

"Hi, my name is Mary Jones. I’m a sophomore student at Brown and my concentration is History of Art and Architecture. I’m passionate about museums and European art and I’m a painter. I’ve also taken a number of courses related to business and entrepreneurship because I’m interested in how organizations function. I studied abroad in Florence to learn more about Italian art and sculpture and last summer I completed an internship in the European Art Department at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. This summer I’d like to be in the Boston area, working at a museum, but on the business side, because in the future I’m hoping to find work at the intersection of art and business."

**Example questions:**

If you know the person’s current profession: “Can you tell me how you got from Brown to your current job at the museum?”

If you don’t know much about the person you’re connecting with: “What do you do for a living?”