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**The Elevator Pitch**

**What's In an Elevator Pitch?**

An elevator pitch is a clear, concise introduction that can be delivered in the time it takes to ride an elevator from the top to the bottom of a building, usually between 30 and 60 seconds. Your elevator pitch is a way to share your expertise and credentials quickly and effectively with people who don't know you.

**When and How to Use an Elevator Speech**

If you're job searching, you can use your elevator pitch at [job fairs and career expos](https://www.thebalance.com/tips-for-getting-the-most-out-of-a-job-fair-2061616), cold calls for informational interviews and online in your [LinkedIn summary](https://www.thebalance.com/tips-to-make-a-better-linkedin-profile-2062332) or Twitter bio, for example. An elevator speech is a great way to gain confidence in introducing yourself to hiring managers and company representatives.

You can also use your elevator pitch to introduce yourself at [networking events](https://www.thebalance.com/types-of-career-networking-events-2059736) and mixers. If you're attending professional association programs and events, or any other type of gathering, have your pitch ready to share with those you meet.

Your elevator pitch can be used during job interviews, especially when you're asked about yourself. Interviewers often begin with the question, "[Tell me about yourself](https://www.thebalance.com/tell-me-about-yourself-job-interview-question-2060956)" — think of your elevator pitch as a super-condensed version of your response to that request.

**What to Say**

**Your elevator speech should be brief.**Restrict the speech to 30 to 60 seconds — that's the time it takes to ride an elevator, hence the name. You don't need to include your entire work history and career objectives. Basics to include are name, industry or field, skills, accomplishments, what you want to do and why, or what you enjoy doing in your current position, what your interests are in the listener’s company/industry, and what sets you apart from others.

**You need to be persuasive.**Even though it's a short pitch, your elevator speech should be persuasive enough to spark the listener's interest in your idea, organization, or background.

**Share your skills.**Your elevator pitch should explain who you are and what qualifications and [skills](https://www.thebalance.com/top-skills-employers-want-2062481) you have. Try to focus on assets that add value in many situations. This is your chance to brag a bit — avoid sounding boastful, but do share what you bring to the table.

**Practice, practice, practice.**The best way to get comfortable with an elevator speech is to practice it until the speed and “pitch” come naturally, without sounding robotic. You will become comfortable varying the conversation as you practice with it. Try saying your speech to a friend, or record it. This will help you know if you are staying within the time limit and giving a coherent message.

**Be flexible.**You aren’t interviewing for a specific position, so you want to appear open-minded and flexible. It’s your chance to make a [great first impression](https://www.thebalance.com/best-impression-at-an-interview-2060572) with a potential employer.

**Mention your goals.**You don't need to get too specific. An overly targeted goal isn't helpful, since your pitch will be used in many circumstances, and with many different types of people. But do remember to say what you're looking for. For instance, you might say, "a role in accounting" or "an opportunity to apply my sales skills to a new market" or "to relocate to San Francisco with a job in this same industry."

**Have a business card ready.** If you have a [business card](https://www.thebalance.com/what-to-include-on-a-business-card-for-job-seekers-2062582), offer it at the end of the conversation as a way to continue the dialog. A copy of your resume, if you're at a job fair or professional networking event, will also show your enthusiasm and preparedness.

**What Not to Say and Do During Your Elevator Speech**

**Don't speak too fast.**Yes, you only have a short time to convey a lot of information. But don't try to fix this dilemma by speaking quickly. This will just make it hard for listeners to absorb your message.

**Avoid rambling.** This is why it's so important to practice your elevator speech. While you don't want to over-rehearse, and subsequently sound stilted, you also don't want to have unfocused or unclear sentences in your pitch, or get off-track.

**Don't frown, or speak in a monotone.**Here's one of the downsides to rehearsing: it can leave you more focused on remembering the exact words you want to use, and less on how you're carrying yourself. Keep your energy level high, positive, and enthusiastic. Modulate your voice to keep listeners interested, and keep your facial expression friendly.

**Don't restrict yourself to a single elevator pitch.** Maybe you're interested in pursuing two fields — public relations and content strategy. Many of your [communication skills](https://www.thebalance.com/communication-skills-list-2063737) will apply to both those fields, but you'll want to tailor your pitch depending on who you are speaking to. You may also want to have a more casual, personal pitch prepared for social settings.

**Elevator Pitch Examples**

* I recently graduated from college with a degree in communications. I worked on the college newspaper as a reporter, and eventually, as the editor of the arts section. I'm looking for a job that will put my skills as a journalist to work.
* I have a decade's worth of experience in accounting, working primarily with small and midsize firms. If your company is ever in need of an extra set of hands, I'd be thrilled to consult.
* I create illustrations for websites and brands. My passion is coming up with creative ways to express a message, and drawing illustrations that people share on social media.