

# Elevator Pitch

Everyone who is job searching should have an elevator pitch. One of the first tasks on your to-do list should be crafting the ideal elevator pitch.

The name 'elevator pitch' reflects the idea that it should be possible to deliver a summary in the time span of an elevator ride, or approximately 30 seconds to two minutes. The term itself comes from a scenario of an accidental meeting with someone important in an elevator. If the conversation inside the elevator for those few seconds is interesting the conversation will continue by them asking you a questions or end in an exchange of a business card or a scheduled meeting.

An elevator pitch is a short statement used to quickly and simply summarize who you are, what you do and why you'd be the perfect candidate. Elevator pitches should be interesting, memorable, and succinct. They also need to explain what makes you unique.

Your elevator pitch should excite you first; after all, if you don't get excited about what you're saying, neither will your audience. Your pitch should bring a smile to your face and quicken your heartbeat. People may not remember everything you say, but they will remember your enthusiasm.

## Steps to help you create your elevator pitch:

**1. Who are you?** \_\_\_\_\_  
i.e.: education; years of experience, etc.

### What do you do? Job / Volunteer History:

**Dates** \_\_\_\_\_ **Company Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Title / Role** \_\_\_\_\_

#### Accomplishment:

- **Situation** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Obstacle** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Actions** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Result** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Clarify your job target.** As Yogi Berra famously said, "You've got to be very careful if you don't know where you're going, because you might not get there."

So when you begin putting an elevator pitch together, nail down the best way to describe your field and the type of job you're pursuing. Until you can clearly explain the type of position you want, nobody can help you find it or hire you to do it.

**GOAL:** \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Put it on paper.** Write down everything you'd want a prospective employer to know about your **skills, accomplishments and work experiences** that are relevant to your target position. Then grab a red pen and mercilessly delete everything that's not critical to your pitch.

## Strengths

**Name of Strength** \_\_\_\_\_ **and what I mean by that is:**

\_\_\_\_\_.

**i.e.: I am customer focused meaning I listen carefully to understand the customers' needs and accurately communicate the required procedures to follow.**

**Name of Strength:** \_\_\_\_\_ **used this to**

\_\_\_\_\_.

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\_\_\_\_\_.

## What are you looking for? What's next?

This is where you indicate how you can apply your experience, knowledge and skills in the role organization you are applying for (or wanting to work in).

i.e.: Now, I want to take my \_\_\_\_\_ (area of expertise, experience, strengths and studies) and use them to \_\_\_\_\_ (results you can provide).

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### 3. Putting it all together in the Elevator Pitch:

- Include who you are
- Years of Experience
- Industries or companies / Department / organization you have worked with
- Area of Expertise / strengths
- Something unique about you
- Goal

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Here's an example of how to begin a pitch that includes the essentials:

**Hi. I am Jessica Hill. I am an accountant with 2 years' experience in the insurance industry. I am passionate about assisting companies and clients recover costs and save money. Currently, I'm looking for opportunities in the Dallas area with both insurance and finance companies" where I can use both my love for numbers, dedication to accuracy and joy in helping people.**

Hi, my name is Carmen Burke. I'm a 4<sup>th</sup> year Criminology student at Saint Mary's and I'm interested in working with at-risk youth. My research has focused on the role that socio-economic background plays in determining risk among youth and on early intervention programs. I've been volunteering with Phoenix House for 3 consecutive summers, so my goal is to secure an entry-level role in the non-profit industry this fall after I graduate. What is it that *you* do?

Hi, my name is Lysa Appleton and I am a Career and Employment Coach at Saint Mary's University. I have been working in the industry since 2009 and am passionate about helping people learn more about who they are, and then find work that expresses their purpose, passion and potential. One of my key strengths is building a strong working relationship with my clients while helping them to speed up the job search process. What do you do?

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**4. Read your pitch out loud.** Writing is more formal and structured than speaking. If you're not careful, your 'elevator pitch' can come off sounding more like an infomercial than a conversation. Reading it aloud then tinkering with the words will help you sound more authentic.

**Practice, practice, practice (then solicit feedback).** Rehearse your pitch in front of a mirror or use the recording capabilities of your computer, so you can see and hear how you sound. This might feel awkward at first, but the more you practice, the smoother your delivery will be.

Keep tweaking your pitch until it no longer sounds rehearsed. When your presentation is polished to your satisfaction, try it out on a few friends and ask them what they thought your key points were. If their response doesn't square with your objective, the speech still needs work.

Nail it with confidence. The best-worded elevator pitch in the world will fall flat unless it's conveyed well. When you give the speech, look the person in the eye, smile and deliver your message with a confident, upbeat delivery.

**5. Prepare a few variations.** You might want to say things slightly differently to an interviewer than to a former colleague. Also, sometimes you'll just have 15 seconds for a pitch (kind of a short elevator ride), other times you may have a minute or two.

Use the word count feature on your computer to create shorter and longer pitches; a good rule of thumb is that you can say about **150 words in one minute**.