Creating your Elevator Pitch
Communication Skills (HS 791)

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Scenario

Consider that you are at a job interview. The interviewer says: “Tell me about yourself”. You have one minute to make a good impression.

• What do you say?
• Write down some points for your answer in your notebook.
Elevator Pitch

• An elevator pitch is a short summary used to quickly and simply define a person, profession, product, service, organization or event, and its value proposition.

• It should be possible to deliver the pitch in the time span of an elevator ride, or approximately thirty seconds to two minutes.

Source: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elevator_pitch
Why should you care?

• Important for:
  • Job interviews
  • Talking about your research
  • Conference meetings

You get only one chance to make a first impression.

• Being able to sum up unique aspects of yourself, your service or product in a way that excites others, is a fundamental skill.
Why prepare an elevator pitch?

Many interviews start with a question like “Tell me about yourself.”

The interviewer doesn't want to know about your childhood.

The interviewer wants to know your background, achievements, future goals, and determine if you are a good fit for XYZ company.

If you learn how to address this open-ended question smoothly and effectively, your interview will start off on a great note.
Example

• Hi, my name is Samantha Atcheson, and I am a senior Environmental Sciences major. I am looking for a position that will allow me to use my research and analysis skills. Over the past few years, I’ve been strengthening these skills through my work with a local watershed council on conservation strategies to support water quality and habitats. Eventually, I’d like develop education programs on water conservation awareness. I read that your organization is involved in water quality projects. Can you tell me how someone with my experience may fit into your organization?

Source: career.uoregon.edu/blog/students/2010/04/elevator-speech-30-seconds-interview
Activity – Peer Discussion  [3 Minutes]

Why is this a weak pitch: I have spent the last three years in market research. I want to move to a larger platform. I graduated from XYZ university.

Why is this a strong pitch: I have three years of market research experience with expertise in research design, construction of analytical models and data analysis. I developed a new tool using Facebook that was adopted by my last company. I am looking for bigger challenges. I graduated from XYZ university as a marketing major.
Some points that came up in class

• Weak – casual tone, only facts but no details

• Strong – enthusiastic tone, facts + specific details
• has personal emotions
• how can he/she use the skills
• has defined achievement
• expertise is given explicitly
• why he/she wants to join the company
• shows acquainted with technology
Features of a good elevator pitch

- Explain what you do, or what you can offer
- Communicate your USP (Unique Selling Proposition)
- What should the listener do after hearing you?

Tips:
- Should be ~200 words. You should be able say it in ~1 minute.
- Cut out any information that doesn't absolutely need to be in.
- Practice saying it aloud.

Source: careerservices.wvu.edu/students/build-it/interviewing/developing-your-elevator-speech
Activity [15 Minutes]: Create your elevator pitch

Suppose you are going for a job interview.

• Think (Individually) - Create your one minute elevator pitch. Write this down. Make sure you state your target audience.

Pair (with your neighbour) - Examine your neighbor’s pitch for strong features. Help to identify missing features. Eliminate redundant or unnecessary phrases.

Share (with the class) – Mention a point that you liked in your neighbour’s pitch (and why).
Use of Technology

Elevator pitch need not be only a written statement

• It can be a prezi, video, code demo, whatever ...

• Example: Search for “2 Minute Thesis” on http://phdcomics.com/comics/archive_list.php

• Show - T4E 2012 teaser video – Minute 6:30 and 7:45
• Show - T4E 2013 teaser video – Minute 10:15 and 18.10
How-to: Technology

Many tools exist for creating short videos, screencast and animations

Some of these tools are: Camstudio, Camstatia Studio, Jing, Screen-o-matic, RecordMyDesktop, and Unity game engine

The websites for these tools have easy-to-follow tutorials for their usage. Simply follow the instructions and create your screencast/animation
Assignment

1. Read the following for what to include in your pitch:
   • http://www.wikihow.com/Develop-Your-Personal-Elevator-Pitch
   • http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/elevator-pitch.htm
   • http://www.preparry.com/how-to-create-an-elevator-pitch/

2. Choose one of the following tools and create your pitch:
   • http://www.techsmith.com/jing.html
   • http://process.spoken-tutorial.org/index.php/Main_Page#Technology

3. Upload your elevator pitch on your website:
   • Submit a link to your pitch as the assignment.
   • Participate in the IITB Elevator Pitch Competition.
Conclusion

• Your elevator pitch is not a static statement

• Refine it over time:
  1. As you do more projects
  2. Find better ways to express your contributions
  3. Pitch to different audiences

• Load your pitch onto your phone and you are good to go!

“I’ve got an elevator pitch, an escalator pitch, and, just to be safe, a stairway pitch.”