

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.

[2 minutes]

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?*

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**.

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
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- 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.prepary.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!

