



First Impressions: How to Deliver a Professional 30-Second Elevator Pitch

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Quick! The C.E.O. of the company you've dreamed of working for your entire life is standing right in front of you in line at the grocery store. What do you do?

Data shows that when you initially meet someone, their first impression of you is formed within the first two minutes they spend with you. After that first impression is formed, it is extremely difficult for it to be changed. A 30-second elevator pitch should be a part of every professional's job search arsenal, including yours, for this very reason. An elevator pitch is a quick speech that you have memorized in case you ever meet someone who it is essential you make a good, professional impression on. It is also a great starting point for beginning a conversation with employers at job fairs, people who you want to bring into your professional network, or as a way of summarizing yourself at the beginning of an interview.

An elevator pitch should be about 30-seconds in length (about the time an elevator ride would take), and should highlight who you are, and what you have accomplished in your career. To get started on creating a 30-second elevator pitch, write out a list of the types of jobs you are interested in. This list can be as general as employment in a certain industry or field, or as specific as a position title with a certain kind of company. Next, list your experience that is relevant to those types of jobs, and pick three of your top qualities, such as communication skills, leadership or multi-tasking. Then write a script that will take you about 30-seconds to read, and which includes:

- your name;
- what degrees you have received and from what institution(s) it/they were from, and/or what degree you are currently working toward;
- the types of jobs you are interested in;
- your relevant experience;
- your three top qualities, and how those qualities will benefit the organization.

Once you are satisfied with your script, practice delivering it to a friend or your CMC Advisor. Remember, you should start by shaking the person's hand as you state your name, and maintain eye contact throughout the entire pitch. Every few months, you should review your elevator pitch to keep it updated, and so that you keep it committed to memory.

If you are planning on attending the 2007 Fall Career Fair on Thursday, September 27 from 12:00-5:00 p.m., the CMC recommends developing an elevator pitch beforehand. If you'd like us to critique yours, arrange an appointment with your CMC Advisor by calling (312) 567-6800, or attend the Resumania/Elevator Pitch Mania

workshop at the Downtown Campus on Friday, September 21 from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m.
For more information on the 2007 Fall Career Fair and workshops, please visit our
website at www.cmc.iit.edu