

## The Elevator Speech - a.k.a. Your Personal 15-60 second Commercial

During your life & throughout your career you will need to be able to effectively & succinctly introduce yourself to others, either one-on-one or in a group presentation setting. Most people do this very poorly & sell themselves short. Have different versions: 15- seconds, 30-seconds, etc... Make sure it is well thought out & conveys your strengths & experience.

**An elevator speech is a conversation you might have in an elevator when you first meet someone. It needs to be very short as most elevator rides end quickly.**

Your elevator speech is that **15-30 second sound bite** that sufficiently introduces yourself, your dream job and your unique qualifications. It may be your key tool for landing your next job.

- What can you contribute to an employer?
- What are your key strengths?
- Which organizations have you worked for?
- What do you want to do next?

*Your elevator speech should consist of your name and title, occupation, field of interest or desired position, and something special about yourself: talents, experience or approach. The goal is to stand out from the crowd, so be memorable.*

### **USING FIREWORKS in the ELEVATOR ... *being memorable***

Pitching what you do needs ENERGY - energy in your voice and body language. Elevator speeches have become over processed and passive. People only notice if you give a POOR one and that is because they measured it against their own. Make the first sentence a DECLARATIVE statement.

**Hone your presentation** of yourself to a few short sentences which convey the essence of who you are, why you're calling or speaking with the person, and what you want. You will need to take some time to compose this speech. Phrase it in terms of the benefit to them.

- Try to memorize as much of it as you can, but don't simply repeat it to the person as if it were a canned speech.
- Try to make it sound spontaneous and fresh.

**Represent an occupation in its most ennobling light.** A dietitian describes her work as "teaching people how to behave in front of food." An attorney tells people she "empowers the powerless." A midwife "brings life into this world." These phrases invite further inquiry

**Step 1: Write a short personal commercial that includes the following:**

- *Who you are*
- *How you help people*

**Step 2: Get a timer and practice your introduction of yourself in front of a mirror - restrict yourself to 30 seconds & then create a 15-second version. Practice it until it feels natural.**

**Pronounce your name clearly.** Be upbeat. Smile. Perhaps you'll press a card into their palm, or give strangers a mnemonic or other easy way to remember you/your name.

**Leave the industry jargon out.** You may deal with widgets and their special terminology all day, but most people won't know what you're talking about.

**Be brief, and then be quiet.** Remember the helpful advice: "Fifteen seconds used well beats the heck out of 30 seconds used poorly."

**Listen to others' introductions.** You're there to listen and build relationships, not just introduce yourself.

The ride is just beginning. Craft your second sound bite. Hone it among friends and acquaintances. By being poised, polished and prepared, you can ride your elevator speech from the streets to the suites.