

ELEVATOR SPEECH POINTERS

by Katharine Hansen

- Make your speech sound effortless, conversational, and natural.
- Make it memorable and sincere. Open a window to your personality.
- Rewrite your speech, sharpening focus and eliminating unnecessary words.
- Avoid a speech that will leave the listener asking "So what?"
- Include a compelling "hook," an intriguing aspect that will engage the listener, prompt him or her to ask questions, and keep the conversation going.
- Don't let your speech sound canned or stilted.
- Practice your speech.
- Familiarize yourself with your speech as much as possible to keep you from getting off track.
- Be warm, friendly, confident, and enthusiastic. A smile is often the best way to show friendliness and enthusiasm, while a strong, firm voice the best way to express confidence.
- Take it slowly. Don't rush your speech. Pause between sentences. Breathe.
- Project your passion for what you do.
- Maintain eye contact with your listener.
- Don't get bogged down with jargon or acronyms.
- Be prepared to wrap up earlier than you were planning if you see the listener's eyes glazing over or interest waning.
- Don't hesitate to develop different versions of your Elevator Speech for different situations and audiences.
- When developing a speech for a specific employer, research the organization and use that knowledge in your speech.
- Incorporate examples and stories to help support your points.. Stories make your speech memorable.
- Don't focus just on yourself.
- Focus on how you can benefit employers and help them solve their problems. Do use concrete, listener-friendly language, but at the same time, don't be afraid to paint vivid word pictures.
- Don't forget to include your competitive advantage; in other words. how you can perform better than anyone else.
- Finish with an action request, such as asking for a business card or interview appointment.
- Update your speech as your situation changes.