

Professional Networking Skills

Why This Topic?

Your Elevator Pitch

What if I am Shy?

Avoid These Errors



Why This Topic?

All business is personal ... so is all recruiting!

Your credentials are important, but **YOU** are more important than your credentials. Companies hire people, not credentials.

How will you stand out from the many other jobseekers who recruiters meet every day/week/month/year?

How will you become aware of good opportunities and who will vouch for you?

This is what Monster.com says about the [elevator pitch](#) ...

Elevator Pitch: A 100- to 200-word marketing summary about yourself that you can deliver to someone in the amount of time it would take your both to ride an elevator to your destination, i.e., approximately 30 – 60 seconds.

When you're looking for a job, you can use your elevator pitch to inform employers and recruiters about yourself, or to make connection at a networking event.

The name of the game is visibility. Modesty or shyness is a guaranteed route to obscurity.

You must be ready to make your pitch at a moment's notice.

Your pitch should be written to positively impress someone with one or more of your skills in a manner that is straightforward, factual, highly relevant to the conversation, and informative rather than self-congratulatory in tone.

Elevator Pitch [Continued](#) ...

Writing your professional elevator pitch:

Start with a script

The goal is for the listener to walk away knowing exactly who you are and what you can do.

Maria Marsala of business consulting firm Elevating Your Business in Poulsbo, Washington, recommends filling in the blanks in this sentence:

“I help (who) to do (what) by providing (what).”

Change it around a little bit until you find a sentence or two that feels comfortable and is easy to deliver. When you’re comfortable with that, consider adding an example that shows the results of your work.

Avoid using complex language or industry jargon when you write your pitch, says Angela Copeland of Copeland Coaching in Memphis, Tennessee. You want to be able to connect with a wide variety of people and have them understand what you’re talking about.

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Elevator Pitch [Continued](#) ...

Writing your professional elevator pitch:

Customize for the audience

It's critical to use the right pitch for the right situation, says Tampa, Florida-based Eric Liguori, vice president at the U.S. Association for Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

A pitch delivered in a social setting, for example, should tell the employer why you are special in a compelling manner. “It should not be sales-ish,” Liguori says. A sales pitch is different; in that case you are pitching the sale of your solution to the listener's problem.”

Give it a rehearsal

Once you've gotten the text of your pitch, practice it.

You need to be able to deliver it naturally, without rushing or sounding too pushy. Recite it out loud in front of a mirror so you can perfect your body language as well.

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Elevator Pitch [Continued](#) ...

Writing your professional elevator pitch:

Cut the monologue

Once you've gotten your elevator pitch out, then what?

Stop talking, Marsala says.

Wait for the other person to ask a question or if they want to learn more. "That's the most important part of an elevator pitch," she says, "to connect with another human being."



What if I am Shy?

Yes, shy people need to network ... even more than everyone else.

Do it your way rather than the way an extrovert does it.

Extroverts gain energy by interacting with lots of people, Introverts find it exhausting to interact with lots of people.

If you are an introvert, you will need to be selective about who you connect with at a networking event.

You know you have a limit on the number of people you can speak with and the length of time you will be comfortable within the environment.

So, plan ahead. Figure out who you want to speak with. Develop your plan so your time will be both effectively and efficiently used.

Then, get out. Get away from the event. Reflect on what you learned and what you need to do next.

For regular networking, pace yourself by doing a little every day rather than a lot on a few days. Use social networking sites and emails to expand and maintain your network.

Avoid These Networking Errors

Waiting to get started

Forgetting that it cannot be all about you

Being unprepared

Forgetting to consciously choose your attitude

Using an unprofessional email address

Forgetting that quality is more important than quantity

Being underdressed

Forgetting that you are not the smartest person in the room

Forgetting your manners

Forgetting that you are not the most important person in the room

Being pompous

Forgetting that recruiters are people too

Being passive

Lying

Being indiscriminate