

## Formulating Your Perfect Elevator Pitch

Want to be able to effectively communicate  
your qualifications in two minutes or less?

Here's how.

### First Step To Success

You're standing in a hotel lobby, scrolling through e-mails on your phone, when you recognize the person standing next to you as the owner of some of the hottest restaurants in town. Coincidentally, you have a background in the food and beverage industry and would love nothing more than to be part of this owner's growing empire. Now's your chance to introduce yourself and wow her with your impressive awesomeness. It's time to execute your big elevator pitch. You **do** have an elevator pitch, *don't you?*

### What's an elevator pitch all about?

An elevator pitch is essentially a 30-second to two minute soundbite that explains to people who you are, what you do, what you're good at and what your plans are for the near future ( i.e. what type of position you aspire to). The idea is that you can deliver your pitch to someone in the amount of time it will take an elevator to get you both to your floor.

Even if you have the necessary skills and you could talk about them at length, no hiring manager has time for that. That's why elevator pitches are so important. They seem easy enough to master. You just confidently and concisely summarize your skills and experience, right? What could be simpler?

Elevator pitches are like noses—everyone's got one, and some are longer than others. But what should you say? How will you make a great first impression? How will you stand out? How long should it be?

This article and the strategies provided are based on our decades of experience along with advice and examples from respected HR and Management professionals to equip you with the proper tools for when it's time to execute your pitch.

### Spotlight And Showcase Why You're Valuable

Human capital is one of the biggest investments an organization will make, so they want to get it right every time. Hiring managers will think about the ROI (return on investment) they'll get from each candidate—that's why getting right to your skills and experience will serve you well.

Make sure that you emphasize the skills you have, that match the position you're targeting. If you are changing careers / fields / industries, be sure your examples demonstrate the transferability of your skill set ... you need to be comfortable with the 'lingo' of the environment that you hope to move in to.

### The Proof Is In The Pudding: Give Supporting Examples

One of the best ways to demonstrate your experience is to include, within your pitch, specific, concrete examples of how you can apply your skills to improve the employer's business.

"If you're in marketing, don't just say one of your biggest skills is content marketing. Instead, say that you can grow their website's blog traffic, explain how you'd do that, and then tell them about that one time you doubled a company's traffic in a year."

If your pitch is rooted in examples and emphasizes what you, as the candidate, can offer the employer, you're going to appear prepared, driven, and experienced. You've shown how you can be valuable to them. Research the company you're interviewing for, and write down ideas about how to improve their business as it relates to the position you'd be working in.

## Keep It Succinct

Should your elevator pitch be one sentence? One paragraph? A minute long? Less?

Our (and our clients') experience has shown that 100 to 200 words is ideal, or four to five sentences. The key is to consider the amount of time you spend in an elevator, which is usually about 15- to 30-seconds.

"People are extremely busy, and the last thing they want to do is listen to someone ramble on about getting a job or plum assignment," says Mark Berkowitz a National Certified Career Counselor; Certified Professional Résumé Writer, Internationally Certified Job and Career Transition Coach, and Certified Employment Interview Professional who has been quoted in ***Winning Interviews for \$100,000+Jobs***.

Candidates should keep their speeches short and to the point; but be able to expound upon any details that an employer wants to hear more about.

Don't let this '*elevator opportunity*' go to waste by making sure that you are remembered! Offering your résumé is a great follow-up to a solid elevator pitch. For example, after you deliver your pitch, you can say, "I'd love to send (give) you my résumé if you're interested." Way to go! You've got your foot in the door, just like that.

## Add your personal spin

In the end, you just have to be yourself. If you aren't, your counterfeit speech will stink like an old sock. Let your personality come through. Hard-working and personable are not contradictory traits.

Check out the elevator speech that our resident career expert Mark Berkowitz prepared: "I'm Mark Berkowitz, a credentialed and certified career expert with Career Development Resources. Conference presenter, certified career counselor / job search and career transition coach, and highly respected résumé strategist, always interested in speaking with job seekers to help them find a better job—faster as well as significantly increasing their compensation!"

## Don't forget to follow up

Once you deliver your pitch, you need a plan of action to follow up. Ask the person if they'd be interested in taking a look at your résumé, and offer to email it to them (obviously make sure you get their email address!). Need some help getting your résumé in shape for prospective employers? Get a free résumé evaluation today from the experts at Career Development Resources. You'll rapidly get detailed feedback, including a review of your résumé's appearance and content, and a prediction of a hiring manager or recruiter's first impression. A great elevator pitch can help you get your foot in the door, but a standout résumé will really set things in motion.

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Mark Berkowitz is the owner and President of Career Development Resources, LLC. Changing lives and revolutionizing careers since 1985, Mark provides one-on-one career consulting services, résumé building assistance and guidance to help each client achieve not only job advancement, but lasting and meaningful success in their career path as well. A distinguished figure in his field, Berkowitz is one of the top career builders in the country and has been quoted in nearly two dozen books and publications on the topic of career advancement.

Passionate about empowering others to realize their dreams, Mark served as an executive board member of the Professional Assn. of Résumé Writers and Career Coaches. He has been helping clients successfully advance in and/or change their careers for over 36 years. With a Master's Degree in Career Development and four specialized certifications (National Certified Career Counselor, Certified Professional Résumé Writer, Int'l Certified Job & Career Transition Coach, and Certified Employment Interview Professional), he is uniquely qualified to help you improve your career situation. A recognized expert in the field, he had not only taught in Graduate Schools and led workshops and seminars, but also trained other counselors. Mark served as chairman of the Certification Board for the Professional Assn. of Résumé Writers and Career Coaches and was a founding member of the Career Management Alliance (fka Career Masters Institute). Additionally, he

has shared his expertise in effectively utilizing career assessment tools with graduate counseling students from nearby Fordham University, helping to prepare them for their future counseling careers.

Mark connects with clients locally as well as international clients via the internet. He also provides outreach to high school and college students, presenting career planning and job search strategy workshops.

- Nationally Published; Highly regarded with résumés, cover letters, and interview strategies showcased in nearly two dozen books.
- Enjoys an INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION as a “Résumé Guru” by members of the Professional Assn. of Résumé Writers and Career Coaches.

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*See how you can benefit from professional expertise instead of suffering from your career mistakes.*

