

Career & Professional Development Center

College of Natural Sciences
Morrill III, Room 215
www.cns.umass.edu/careers

30-SECOND ELEVATOR PITCH

*One day, you are lucky enough to get in an elevator with the CEO of your dream employer.
You have that CEO as your captive audience for the next 30 seconds.*

*Will you stumble through a clumsy introduction?
Or will you confidently present an advertisement so compelling that you are positively remembered?*

The difference is made by preparing in advance.

An “elevator pitch” is a 30-second spoken statement about you, in your own authentic voice. It is a well-prepared answer to the questions “Tell me a little bit about yourself,” or “So, what do you do?”

Who you are: My name is _____ . I am a(n) _____ specializing in

(Tip: Use your actual job title or a descriptive term for your occupation/skills. Move from the general to the specific) For example: “I am a graduating chemistry major specializing in the food sciences,” or “I am a Research Assistant on a project specializing in energy-efficient building materials.”

What you do: (Tip: Write a single sentence that *describes* what you do so the other person can picture what you mean). For example: “I work with...” or “My responsibilities include...” _____

Why you are the best, unique, talented, or particularly good at doing: (Tip: Write a sentence that expresses your best skills and/or strengths, and sets you apart from others with your same degree. Provide a concrete example if possible). For example: “My sales quota consistently exceeds that of my peers,” or “My experience speaking to large groups allows me to...” _____

What contributions are you hoping to make: (Taking the employer’s perspective, what problem will you solve for the employer, or for the world?) For example: “One of my goals is to use my skills and experience to maximize your company’s...” or “Continuing my research track, I hope to make advances in...” _____

Career & Professional Development Center

College of Natural Sciences
Morrill III, Room 215
www.cns.umass.edu/careers

ELEVATOR PITCH STRATEGY

- You are a good 20 years worth of varied experiences and interests. That's too big to easily sum up. And there is no need. But you can select the points that you most want your interviewer to know about you. Your task here is to present your (much smaller) *professional self*, in a way that is strategically designed to be attractive to your specific interviewer.
- The goal of your pitch is to have your interviewer *remember you*, no matter how many people they hear from that day.
- A *positive* core message will enhance your professional presence, boost your self-confidence, and reduce your anxiety. Avoid all negative qualifiers such as "but." Every word of your pitch should be positive. Sell sell sell.
- Think about what you want them to say about you after you leave. *In what ways* will they see that you stand out from the crowd? Use your pitch to *establish your brand*.
- Your pitch is a great way to start your interview, especially to answer questions like "Tell me about yourself," "What is your current job and how does that prepare you?" or the toughest question of all: "So... why you?"
- Your pitch is also a table of contents for your conversation, and easily organizes "who you are," both for you and for your interviewer. Your interviewer may even stop you part way through your pitch to say "tell me more about *this...*" at which point you can simply open up the relevant story in your head.
- Write your pitch and practice saying it out loud so you can change the wording to avoid difficult pronunciations (e.g. "first step" or "science signifying"). Adjust until it sounds and feels right for you. Practice saying it smoothly, using your friends, pet, shower, mirror, or car. *Keep practicing*.
- Memorization is great, but you are always allowed to refer to your notes. Speaking from notes takes practice however. Avoid reading your pitch though.
- Make eye contact. Smile. Address everyone in the room. If you feel like you belong in a new position, that will come across and your interview will feel it too. Fake confidence as needed until you make it. *Play the role* as if you are the natural choice or as if already work there.
- Your pitch should be revised for each situation. For example, in one interview it will make sense to emphasize your computer programming skills, but in another you will want to emphasize your people skills. Strategically revise your pitch to hook your particular kind of fish. What bait will they like most?
- You can use your pitch in many situations, including career fairs, networking events, & informal social settings. It can also serve as the start to a cover letter or as an introduction to a presentation.
- Make an appointment with the CNS Career Center (through the CNS Advising website) and practice your pitch on us!