

# How to craft the perfect elevator pitch

Want to master how to talk about your skills in less than a minute? Read on.

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You're standing in a hotel lobby, scrolling through Twitter 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 roll out your big elevator pitch. You have an elevator pitch, right? *Right?*

## What is an elevator pitch?

An elevator pitch is basically a 15- to 30-second soundbite that explains to people who you are, what you do and what kind of position you're seeking. 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 where you're going.

Even if you have hireable skills that you could talk about for days, 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 so difficult?

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

We've collected some of the best advice and examples from folks working in human resources and management to prep you with the right tools for when it's time to craft and deliver your pitch.

## Highlight why you're valuable

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

Sherri Mitchell, co-founder of professional recruitment and hiring firm All About People, headquartered in Phoenix, advocates voicing the skills you have that match the position you're interviewing for.

Here's a perfect example. Mitchell worked with a woman who was making a career transition from marketing to data storytelling, and she helped create her elevator pitch,

framing her experience in terms of the skills she acquired rather than the goals she met, which only made sense in her old industry.

It sounded like this:

I'm a savvy storyteller, and I navigate dense data sets with ease. My employers told me early on that I have a penchant for distilling vast amounts of information into usable insights, and I have used this to make strategy changes that led to dramatic improvements in business processes. I am inspired by the discoveries being made at this research hospital, and I am hoping to be able to use my skills to translate these advances into information everyone could understand and use.

The woman's elevator pitch worked for a number of reasons. It called out her top skills, drew from her past work experiences, and explained how she could help the hospital she had applied to work for.

"In less than 30 seconds, the interviewer had a solid understanding of what this woman could offer the hospital," says Mitchell. "It also didn't mention her lack of experience in a position exactly like this one, allowing that to be brought up later and keeping it from being the focus of the interview."

## 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. Hannah Wright, a digital marketer at FormAssembly, a SaaS web form solution headquartered in Bloomington, Indiana, agrees.

"If you're in marketing, don't just say one of your biggest skills is content marketing," she says. "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 example and emphasizes what you as the candidate can offer the employer, you're going to appear prepared, driven, and experienced. Research the company you're interviewing for, and write down ideas for how to improve their business as it relates to the position you'd be working in.

## Keep it short

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

Experts say 100 to 200 words is ideal, or four to five sentences. The key is to think about the amount of time you spend in an elevator, which is usually a 15- to 30-second time frame.

"People are busy, and the last thing they want to do is listen to someone ramble on about getting a job or plum assignment," former temp Sally Ross [told Monster](#). "When I decided I wanted to work full-time at the law firm where I was temping, I spent some

time figuring out what my bosses cared most about so I could do it quickly and effortlessly.”

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

Want to make sure they remember you? Offering your resume 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 you my resume if you're interested." Boom. You're 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.

Michelle Burke, a marketing manager for Future Insights in Dedham, Massachusetts, a company that produces conferences for designers, developers and entrepreneurs, warns against the dreaded robotic elevator pitch. “Put a personal spin on your pitch,” she says, “such as expressing your hobbies and how they relate (or don't) to your work.”

Check out the elevator speech that Monster career expert Vicki Salemi prepared: "I'm Vicki Salemi, a career expert for Monster. Author, speaker, career coach, columnist, and former corporate recruiter, always interested in speaking with job seekers to help them find a better job—fast!"

## 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 resume, and offer to email it to them (obviously make sure you get their email address!). Need some help getting your resume in shape for prospective employers? Get a free resume evaluation today from the experts at [Monster's Resume Writing Service](#). You'll get detailed feedback in two business days, including a review of your resume's appearance and content, and a prediction of a recruiter's first impression. A great elevator pitch can get your foot in the door, but a standout resume can really set things in motion.