



Job Tips for 50+ Workers

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Raise Your Job Prospects with an Elevator Speech

The elevator speech is an essential tool for the 50+ job hunter. If you've been out of the job market for a while, the term may be new. But the underlying concept is simple. The elevator speech consists of a few well-chosen sentences that tell your work story.

The common explanation of the term "elevator speech" is that it's like a brief commercial for yourself that can be delivered in the time it takes to ride from the top to the bottom of a building. That's maybe 90 seconds. In other situations, it can be shorter or longer .

Creating an elevator speech helps you think in new ways about yourself, your job history, and your goals.

When do you use it?

You must be ready with an elevator speech any time, any place. This may sound like a tall order, but the result will be worth your while.

- Use your elevator speech anytime you are networking. It can be more casual if you're talking one-on-one, and more formal if you're introducing yourself in a group.
- Use it in an interview. The elevator speech is shorthand for how you respond to questions such as, "Tell me about yourself" and "Why should I hire you?"
- Use your elevator speech in cold calls to employers—for example, when leaving a voicemail message for a hiring manager.

Elements of an elevator speech

A good elevator speech is short but packed with information that is memorable, original, and personal.

- It reflects your "personal brand"—that is, your unique skills, abilities, and achievements.
- It contains brief examples or stories describing your successes—the achievements that set you apart.
- It contains answers to these key questions:
 - Who are you?
 - What do you do best?
 - How have you made an impact?
 - What sets you apart from the competition?
 - What are you seeking?

Tips for developing your speech

- Create a “hook”—something that will engage the listener, prompt more questions, and keep the conversation going.
- Write down your speech if that helps, then practice without reading or memorizing it. Aim for spontaneity.
- Rehearse with family and friends. Your speech must sell you professionally and be natural.
- If appropriate, add a request for action, such as asking for a business card or interview appointment.

Example of elevator speech

Here’s an example of an elevator speech that includes both personal and professional information. This speech can be adapted and expanded depending on the situation. The speaker could use it when looking for a job, seeking funding for a project, or networking.

”I’m Sandra Green and I make things grow. I’ve created gardens of all sizes for friends, schools, and senior centers. I teach gardening at after-school programs and have started a gardening blog. So far, I’ve worked with ten schools and five other community organizations in my local area. My goal is to create better neighborhoods by bringing people of all ages together around gardening.”

Avoid these mistakes

- Don’t confuse an elevator speech with a resume. An elevator speech is much different than a list of job titles and years of experience.
- Resist the impulse to exaggerate. It’s easy to spot a phony.
- Don’t use the exact same speech in all situations. Adapt to your audience and purpose.

To-do list

- Schedule time to work on your elevator speech.
- Jot down personal success stories and accomplishments the you could include in your elevator speech.
- Look for examples and advice on elevator speeches at Quintessential Careers.
http://www.quintcareers.com/job-search_elevator_speech.html
- Ask someone you trust for feedback on your speech.



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