How to Create Your Elevator Speech

This worksheet helps you best communicate who you are, what you do and goals, needs and desires in your life in structured or unplanned networking situations. This is useful whether you are promoting services, a product, a mission or yourself as in a job search.

What is an elevator speech? It’s a door opener, a conversation starter. “Elevator speech” is a term that was popularized to describe the most effective message you can give when you find yourself in an elevator, standing (magically) next to an ideal contact or prospect. After you make introductions, they ask “What do you do?” You only get to talk for as long as it takes both of you to travel in the elevator from the 30th floor to the lobby… a mere 30 seconds! When you hear the DING, your opportunity is over.

This scenario certainly makes it clear that you need to have a prepared, powerful, clear, concise statement. You may have alternate statements for the various roles in your life to fit the appropriate situation. Your elevator speech is a conversation starter for the right audience, possibly your exact target audience or someone who can make a referral. The object is to give people a chance to hear clearly what you do and for whom and then to ask you, “Tell me more!” This can also lead to your being of service for the other person.

Networking Approach: Especially at networking events or in situations where you want to meet people, your goal is to start a conversation, be curious about the other person, stimulate their curiosity about you, and see if you have something in common (values, goals, needs). Your elevator speech, whether the one-line or 30-second version, will help accomplish this in a provocative, memorable way. Plan to spend about 5-10 minutes discovering if you want to have a deeper conversation and then ask if they want to schedule a phone follow-up (or politely move on). You might say, “I’d really like to continue talking with you and learn more. When can we schedule a call? I have more I want to learn about you and how we can support each other’s goals. I know we’d both like to meet others in the room.”

Three Levels of Elevator Speeches:
Based on the situation and time available, you will want to consider using one of 3 elevator speech formats. Remember these are all conversation starters and not a sales or job search “presentation”. Use these to generate interest and make connections. The attached worksheet offers an example to guide you in practicing your own messages.

1. **Airline “high-level” single sentence elevator speech.** Use this when you have just a few seconds to make an impression, like introducing yourself to a fellow airline passenger, a brief encounter at a social function or standing in line at Starbucks. It’s like carrying around a mental business card. Example: “My name is Gail Sussman Miller and I teach women solopreneurs how to love marketing obstacles and overcome them with ease!”

2. **A 30-second elevator speech.** Four sentences for networking events or elevators!

3. **Longer (3-5 minute) elevator speech.** This tells others about the pain or the problems your target market is experiencing and the pleasure and outcomes your solution provides them. This focuses on the contribution and difference you offer.
Your WHO, WHAT and HOW:
These 3 elements need to be clearly defined to market you and your skills/services in your
elevator speech and in all your marketing or job search materials. Always keep an eye to
what differentiates you.

☆ WHO do you serve? This is your target market. Who is your ideal organization or
client/customer? What is their mission and culture? Who do you like to be around
and whose challenges do you care about?

☆ WHAT does your product or service and skills do for your target audience? This is
your niche or specialty. What are the results and benefits clients or companies get
from working with you? What problem do you solve? What pain do you ease or
pleasure do you increase?

☆ HOW you deliver your solution: This is your role or job, system, techniques,
methodology, or your program(s).

Key elements for a good elevator speech:
☆ Focus on outcomes, results, and benefits that provide a solution to a specific target
audience and their situation. Help your prospect to imagine you working with them
and helping them. In their heads they will say, “hey, you are talking about me!”

☆ Avoid using a “label” for your profession, such as “I am a coach” or financial planner,
or lawyer, or teacher. At least do not reply with the label alone. When we respond
this way, we invite the listener to place their own interpretation on what we do, often
based on their personal experience of dealing with the last person who used that
same label to describe their work. It is especially recommended that you do not use a
label if your profession is not well-known or understood and leads to long-winded
explanations.

☆ Make your airline and mini-elevator speech memorable AND repeatable to make it
easier for you to say and so others can easily refer people to you.

☆ Use language that is colorful, conversational, catchy or unusual so it is memorable.
Metaphors are great, like “I am the Swiss Army knife of the small business world; I
offer A, B, C, D tools.” Try to use at least one descriptive, juicy, moving, good
emotion-triggering word.

Now go give this a try on your own using the worksheet on the next page as your guide.

If you would like to take your networking skills to the next level and overcome obstacles or even a
dislike of networking, go to www.howtolovenetworking.com and see the “How to Love Networking”
CD. It offers 20 tips to help you network more authentically and holistically, an introduction to the
one-line elevator speech and a taste of how to network the way you read a book! You can also
book a private session to learn this material and get customized help! Email Gail to book your
telephone session at gail@inspiredchoice.com.
Elevator Speech -- Worksheet

“Airline” High-level One-line Elevator Speech:
I work with ________senior executives and emerging women leaders_______ (target, your WHO) to help/teach them _______how to love marketing their skills and overcome obstacles with ease______ (niche, your WHAT, the outcome).

OR

I work with ________senior executives and emerging women leaders_______ (target, your WHO) who are/have _______feeling overwhelmed and stuck in finding a job or advancing their career_______ (describe their problem) so they can _______learn how to love marketing their skills and overcome obstacles with ease______ (your solution).

Mini Elevator Speech (4-lines, 30-seconds):
I work with ________ (similar to above) ________ (target, your WHO)
who are ________ (describe ideal client characteristics) and want ________ (outcome).

I show/help them to ________ (niche, your WHAT)
so they can be/get ________ (solution/problem you solve).

I do this by ________ helping executives and emerging women leaders find their best marketing methods, develop a mission-driven non-sales selling approach, I help them get REALLY clear on what they TRULY want, overcome obstacles, make inspired choices and take action. (your HOW – your products, services, program).

Perhaps you can help me. I’m currently looking for ________women who want help growing their leadership and courage to show up, speak up and move up!____ (describe desired clients, companies, contacts).

Full Elevator Speech (Tell this like a story to engage listeners, 3-5 minutes):
You know how some ________people... describe your ideal client/customer) ________senior executives and emerging women leaders

Experience ________feel overwhelmed and stuck in finding a job or advancing their career business and don't like marketing

Which means that ________they are not sure how to promote themselves, don't like selling, lack confidence with networking online and off, are not disciplined, have no accountability and keep unhappy with results as time ticks by.

Well, what I do is offer ________your job/product/service/program) _______a 5-phased program that offers a plan to identify skills, values and a mission, design a supportive work environment, develop a personalized courageous marketing plan and take motivated action to reach their goals with lovingly firm support.

Which means that ________the solution you provide) _______they feel an immediate sense of relief to have support, a mission, direction, motivation, and can see progress and results.

The benefit of which is ________executives and women who move past obstacles, achieve greater success, and feel a personal sense of purpose and joy.

Would you like to know more?