

Create Your 30-second Commercial

(Also known as the “Elevator Speech”)

Believe it or not, your “30-second commercial” can play a key role in your successful pursuit of a career. Think of it as an animated business card. This short, thirty-second speech holds all of the information that you believe is crucial in order for others to gain an understanding of who you are, what you're capable of and *why they should give you an interview*. When you finally have the opportunity (e.g., job fairs, beginning of interviews, conferences, networking events, etc.) to express what makes you *unique*, it is imperative that you take advantage of the situation. In the world of immediate communication, your ability to convey key facets of your background in a brief time period is vital.

“Creating your 30-second commercial is not just an option. It is an absolute necessity.”

- UC San Diego bioengineering student now working in industry.

Tips:

- ✓ **Make eye contact:** And always address the individual by his or her proper name. Old-fashioned manners can have a major impact from the beginning.
- ✓ **Know your audience:** Better yet, research them. Find out who they are, what their needs are, and how you meet them. Knowing that you have done your homework will make you stand out, effective and confident when the time comes to speak.
- ✓ **Emphasize key personality traits:** You know that you have many strengths. However, it is important to focus on *those that will appeal to this particular audience*.
- ✓ **Prepare an outline:** You may want to consider responding to the following questions when delivering your elevator pitch:
 - a. What are your key strengths and positive qualities?
 - b. What do you have to offer?
 - c. Why are you interested in this company or, more generally, this industry?
 - d. How do you work to meet the types of problems/challenges facing this industry or job?
 - e. What unique contributions will you make?
- ✓ **Perfect your pitch:** Finalize a cohesive pitch, ensuring it can be easily followed and flows smoothly.
- ✓ **Be prepared:** Answer any follow-up questions the listeners may have.
- ✓ **Keep in touch:** Provide the listener with contact information and ask for their card

Never underestimate the potential of networking. Starting off on the wrong foot can prevent you from achieving your goals. Don't ruin your chance for success. Although preparation is an important first step, the best way to guarantee an effective elevator pitch is through practice and feedback.

Samples

Weak

I have experience in market research. My internship has provided me with excellent leadership and communication skills. My objective is to work for a company in marketing. I graduate in 2010 from UC San Diego.

Strong

I am currently a senior at UC San Diego graduating with a degree in economics this June. I have two years of market research experience with expertise in research design, construction of analytical models, and data analysis. I have interned at my current company for nearly a year, and developed a new online research methodology using Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook that was adopted by the department and saves the company an estimated \$150,000 annually.

Undergraduate

I am a sophomore at UCSD studying urban studies and planning. I am currently involved on-campus with the Urban Studies Club, where I am the Professional Development Chair. I interact with industry professionals to coordinate mentor programs and job shadowing opportunities. Through this experience, I developed strong communication and program management skills by planning successful activities and organizing diverse resource for members in the club. I had the opportunity to participate in office tours of SANDAG and am currently being mentored by the executive director of the San Diego Housing Commission. Being involved has motivated me to pursue this career and deepened my commitment to serving under-privileged neighborhoods. I am interested in an internship with your organization where I can utilize my leadership skills and urban studies education. Are there any opportunities for me to get involved in your organization?

Graduate

I am completing my PhD in psychology and am looking for a position as a research coordinator in a mental health center. Besides my research, I scheduled time to take advantage of internships and volunteer opportunities outside my lab. I currently intern at the Interactive Media Institute conducting clinical research protocols and writing scientific articles. Last year, I interned for Psychological Products & Services as an editorial assistant, editing two books under development in the psychology field. During these experiences, I was acknowledged by my supervisors for my ability to work effectively within a diverse team environment, problem solve, and share information—both verbally and in writing. Are you looking for someone with these skills and abilities at your center?