



YOUR ELEVATOR SPEECH

One of the most important aspects of your job search is the ability to quickly provide highlights of your qualifications and experience. The emphasis here is upon quick and relevant highlights, not your entire life experience. The intent of an elevator speech is to generate interest in you as a potential job candidate, not to get a job after this short encounter. When done properly, the elevator speech should result in another opportunity to sell yourself to a potential employer. This follow-up opportunity could range from another short conversation where you expand upon qualifications and experience up to a formal interview. Regardless, you should always be ready to provide a short pitch about yourself which is aligned to a specific position or opportunity. One of the more difficult aspects of delivering an effective elevator speech is your ability to quickly align yourself with the opportunity. The key is to identify relevant topics that highlight your value. Over the years, I've been on the receiving end of countless elevator speeches. Some of these were tailored to be relevant and some were too generalized or lacked any level of relevance. The length of an elevator speech is important since



you don't want to go overboard or under-deliver your qualifications and experience. We advise candidates that 30-40 seconds is the target length and you should include your first and last name. When practiced, this is ample time to deliver a strong "e-speech" and begin to make a connection. In most cases, you'll know when you've been successful by the individual's response. If your target audience only provides a short reply like "nice to meet you" and are quickly distracted or pay limited attention to you, then you're probably not hitting the mark. This might not be your fault, however, the bottom line is that you weren't able to highlight your relevance or potential value. On the other hand, if they respond with anything that implies they'd like additional information such as "nice to meet you (name), can you tell me a



little more about your customer representative experience....." then your speech could be working. It's also important to mention that elevator speeches aren't just for use on elevators; they're used anytime you introduce yourself to a potential employer. Examples of when you'll need to use a strong elevator speech are at career fairs, parties, sporting events, church events, airports and other situations (like elevators) when you might encounter a potential employer. At our seminar, we discuss the elevator speech, how to develop a positive speech, and aligning this to the opportunity. In addition, we'll conduct exercises to improve your delivery so that you'll be more comfortable the next time you get the chance to meet with a potential employer. Lastly, we'll provide specific examples of how to maximize the effectiveness of your elevator speech when competing against numerous other candidates at a job fair.

TAKING A STRATEGIC PAUSE

In a previous newsletter, we addressed a concern regarding job seekers that begin speaking as soon as a question is asked. Unfortunately, they incorrectly believe that answering quickly is more important than providing an accurate response. In this situation, candidates begin talking in hopes they'll eventually say something that relates to the interview question. In my experience as a hiring manager, I've seen this many times and believe it indicates a lack of preparation, confidence, nervousness, or anxiety. The best way to resolve this is through preparation which includes self reflection about strengths, weaknesses, goals and many other topics we'll cover at our seminar. However, before jumping into a question, we recommend that you pause to collect your thoughts. We suggest a short (2-3 second) pause during which you can align your response to ensure you address the question as best possible. If you need more than 2-3 seconds and don't want to create an extended period of awkward silence, you can write a brief note, adjust in your chair, or get a drink of water. We highly encourage you to take a short note especially when asked a multi-part question to ensure you don't skip over any part of the question. The point is, a brief pause allows you to think before answering to ensure a more comprehensive response versus simply providing the first thing that comes to mind. This short pause demonstrates to the hiring manager that you're able to think before speaking and further enables the use of a structured approach to formulate a more complete response. In the end, a brief pause will help you cover the issue(s) they're trying to address in a particular question. This is another topic we'll teach you in our seminar along with using a structured approach to answer interview questions. The combination of these will truly help you "get an edge in today's job market".



ask the hiring manager

Is it acceptable to use my current work email or phone number on my resume?

Answer: This is a great question, however the answer depends upon several factors. The concern with providing a current employer's email or phone number is that you may appear to be disloyal or even dishonest by using a current employer's resources to pursue different employment. It's also risky since employers usually have the right to monitor your "at work" communications and this might lead to a difficult situation or possibly termination. It may also lead to an unusual situation if a potential employer calls or emails while co-workers or your boss are in close proximity. Because of this, we generally recommend not using an employer's resources while searching for another job. The only time we feel this to be acceptable is when you're being let go for reasons that are beyond your control (for example during a restructuring or downsizing). This is more common in today's fiscal environment and often allowed and encouraged by these employers. In this case, a future employer should understand and not penalize you for taking this approach. Regardless of your motivation for interacting with potential employers while still working for another organization, there are resources that can be used to reduce concerns and avoid conflicts of interest. At our seminar, we'll discuss this situation and highlight resources that can be used.

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UPCOMING SEMINARS

Our team is currently working on the fall 2013 schedule. At present, we plan to be at several locations in the Ohio region:

- University of Cincinnati / Xavier University
- Wright-State University / Wright Patterson AFB area
- Miami University
- The Ohio State University
- Bowling Green State University
- Kent State University
- Ohio University
- The University of Toledo
- University of Akron

Specific dates/times are TBD as of the publishing of this newsletter and we'll update the website when specifics have been confirmed.

Please email us at service@interviewskills101.com if you have questions regarding the upcoming schedule. We hope to see you at one of our seminars with the goal of preparing you for the most important day of your career, the interview day...because without a successful interview, you won't get your ideal job.

