



Exploring Leadership

COMMUNICATION: PUBLIC SPEAKING

Public speaking isn't just for speeches or big events—it's a skill you'll use every day. Whether you're answering a question in class, introducing yourself, or sharing an idea, how you communicate makes a difference. The good news? Anyone can become a confident speaker with practice. Learning to express yourself clearly helps you connect with others, make a strong impression, and create new opportunities.

CONVERSATION STARTER:

Have you ever shared an elevator with a stranger and felt like those 30 seconds lasted forever? In this public speaking activity, you'll wish you had even more time!

An elevator speech is a short, persuasive message that helps you make a strong first impression. In just 30 seconds, you introduce yourself, share your idea, and make a request—all while keeping the listener engaged. The key is to be clear, confident, and concise. With practice, you'll feel more prepared for future conversations, interviews, and opportunities.

EXPLORATION ACTIVITY:

Make every second count! This challenge will help you sharpen your public speaking skills by delivering a clear, confident message in just 30 seconds.

FACILITATOR TIPS:

- Encourage participants to have fun, but remind them to legitimately try to deliver an effective 30-second presentation that illustrates Public Speaking.
- Optional: Give an example of an elevator speech, so they see how it's done.

KEY OBJECTIVES:

- Understand the key elements of persuasive public speaking and why it matters.
- Deliver a short, impromptu speech.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- Copies of the "Elevator Speech Instructions" (see Appendix)
- Timer or stopwatch

- Pass out the "Elevator Speech Instructions" (see Appendix) and review the Elevator Speech Guide as a group.
- Pair up with a partner and stand side by side as if you're in an elevator.
- Listen to the scenario read aloud by the facilitator. Decide who your audience is and what you want to achieve.
- Take 3–5 minutes to mentally plan your speech—no writing! Focus on grabbing attention, making your case, and leaving a strong impression.
- Set a timer for 30 seconds. When it's your turn, deliver your speech with confidence, good posture, and a strong voice.
- Switch roles so your partner gets a turn.



REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- What was the most difficult part of giving your elevator speech? How did you handle it?
- What are the most important elements of a good public speech? Why do they make a difference?
- What makes a speech convincing? Think about the most persuasive one you heard—what made it stand out?
- What qualities make someone a strong public speaker? How can you start developing those skills?

APPLICATION DISCUSSION:

- When might you need to speak in front of people you don't know well? How can today's activity help you prepare?
- What strategies can help you feel more confident when speaking in front of a group?
- How can overcoming the fear of public speaking help you in other areas of life, such as making new friends, job interviews, or advocating for yourself?
- If you had to choose, would you rather give a long, planned speech or a short, impromptu one? Why?



CONCLUSION:

Public speaking is a skill you'll use for a lifetime. The ability to speak clearly and confidently will help you in school, work, and everyday interactions. Like any skill, it gets easier with practice. Challenge yourself to step up, speak out, and improve a little each time. With preparation and confidence, you can make your voice heard and your message remembered. Your words have power—use them well!

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REFERENCES

- How To Create Your 30-Second Elevator Pitch! | The Intern Queen: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lb0Yz_5ZYzI (6:09 minutes)
- <https://elevatorpitchgenerator.com/>



APPENDIX:

ELEVATOR SPEECH INSTRUCTIONS

ELEVATOR SPEECH GUIDE

A great elevator speech should include:

- **Introduce yourself** – Who are you, and how do you know or relate to this person?
 - **Grab their interest** – Share a quick fact, experience, or story that makes your request personal and relatable.
 - **Make it matter** – Explain how saying "yes" benefits them.
 - **Be clear** – Politely state what you're asking for in a confident, direct way.
 - **Leave a strong impression** – Thank them for their time and end with confidence. If appropriate, offer a handshake or another friendly gesture.
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ELEVATOR SPEECH SCENARIO

You step into an elevator, press the button for the 11th floor, and just before the doors close, someone else steps in. They press 10—meaning you have about 30 seconds to make your case. When you glance over, you realize this person could be:

- **Your teacher**—and you want to persuade them to give you a chance to improve your grade.
- **A store owner**—and you're hoping to land a summer job.
- **The parent of your biggest crush**—and you've never spoken to them before.
- **The pool manager**—and you want to convince them to lower the water temperature.
- **Your crush**—and this might be your chance to finally start a conversation!

This is your moment—what do you say? You won't have time to write it down, so quickly think through your approach. Be clear, confident, and persuasive!