

Exploring Leadership

COMMUNICATION: PUBLIC SPEAKING

Public speaking is named as one of the most important skills by graduates of business college. In life as well as business, you often need to make your point clearly to an audience of people you may not know. This can range from presentation in a classroom to a speech to an auditorium full of other students at a graduation ceremony or even a 30-second pitch to a stranger on an elevator ride, which is what you'll be delivering today. Regardless of the context, there are certain elements of Public Speaking that you should always keep in mind so that your speech will have the intended impact.

CONVERSATION STARTER:

Have you ever been in an elevator with someone you don't know? Doesn't that awkward thirty seconds seem like an hour, while you wait to reach your floor? Well, in this public speaking activity, you'll wish you had more time!

Note: You do not have to do the power pose publicly or during the situation that causes you stress. You can do it privately before the situation. (But today, we're doin' 'em in public!)
(See Appendix for well-known power poses.)

KEY OBJECTIVES:

- To understand the elements of persuasive public speaking.
- Practice a short, impromptu public speech.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- Copies of the Elevator Speech outline (See Appendix.)
- Timer/Stopwatch

EXPLORATION ACTIVITY:

Divide the participants into pairs and hand out the Elevator Speech instructions (Appendix). Read the scenario aloud and let participants decide on the audience for their speech. Give them 3-5 minutes to mentally prepare what they are going to say and to "rehearse."

Each pair of participants stands side-by-side (as though in an elevator).

- Set the timer for 30 seconds.
- Have participants set aside their outline papers. (without reading it)
- Remind them that they should present as though they are trying to convince the person, so they should exhibit appropriate body language and tone of voice.
- Participants take turns making their elevator speech to their partner.

FACILITATOR TIP:

This should be a fun activity, but remind participants to legitimately try to deliver an effective 30-second presentation that illustrates powerful public speaking.



REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- What was the most challenging thing about making the elevator speech?
- What are the elements of good public speaking?
- Who had the most effective or persuasive case? Why?

APPLICATION DISCUSSION:

- What are some real life scenarios in which you might have to speak publicly to an audience you don't know well?
- What are some strategies for overcoming the fear of public speaking?
- Would it be easier for you to deliver a longer speech that you got to read rather than a short on-the-spot pitch? Why or why not?



CONCLUSION:

There are many opportunities to speak in public, and although it can be intimidating, it is a valuable skill to develop and practice because it will serve you well for the rest of your life.

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REFERENCES

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lb0Yz_5ZYzI
- <https://elevatorpitchgenerator.com/>



APPENDIX A: ELEVATOR SPEECH

Scenario: On your way to an appointment on the 11th floor, you step into an empty elevator and push the 11 button. Before the doors close, a person steps into the elevator next to you and pushes the 10 button, so you realize you are going to be sharing most of your ride. When you look over, you realize the person in the quiet elevator with you is one of these (you decide which):

- The teacher of the online class in which you have a B. You want to convince them to give you a chance to raise that grade before the term ends.
- The owner of a local store where you are hoping to get a summer job.
- The parent of the person on whom you have a massive crush but have never spoken to.
- The manager of the local pool where you like to swim and where the water is always too hot.
- The person on whom you have a massive crush but have never spoken to.

You are going to have about 30 seconds in the elevator with this person, during which you need to make your case. Your elevator speech should include the responses to these questions/issues:

- Who are you and how are you connected to the person?
- What background or experience do you have that might make the person believe or sympathize with your case?
- What will granting your request do for the person?
- Clearly state what you hope they will do for you.
- Close in a complimentary way.

You will not have time to write your speech down, but you can mentally run through the elements of it before you deliver it. Think fast! Speak clearly! Go!