**The Elevator Pitch: Student Guide**

**Elevator Pitch definition:** An elevator pitch is a brief verbal communication given to employers intended to focus on the candidate’s education, skill set, background and interests. It should last no longer than an elevator ride (hence the name) and should fall somewhere between 30 seconds to 1 minute in length. Pharmacy students can use the elevator pitch as a way of introducing themselves to employers at career fairs, national conferences, professional receptions, and other social gatherings. It provides students with a more structured method for presenting themselves to potential employers and minimizes engagement in more awkward casual conversation with recruiters.

**These are things that an employer looks for in an elevator pitch:**

**Content:**

1. Student’s Name
2. Explanation of student’s current status (year and program of study)
3. Short review of student’s education, skills, and interests as well as key strengths, experience, and other positive qualities
4. Explanation of why the student is interested in this *particular* company or position
5. A strong closing that either ends with the exchange of business cards or the student asking about how to follow-up with the company

**Non-verbal cues:**

1. Eye contact – this should be maintained but is not a staring contest.
2. Handshake – this should be firm and reflect confidence. No “limp fish” or “death grips”.
3. Smile – the student should exhibit a pleasant demeanor and smile so as to appear friendly.

**Verbal cues:**

1. Fluent & Conversational – the student’s goal should be to hold a conversation with ease.
2. Disfluencies (um, uh, like, etc.) – the student should try to avoid an excessive amount that might distract the employer from the content of the pitch.

**Questions to consider when putting together an elevator pitch:**

- How do your interests and experiences relate to the career field? Try to remember valid information from classes, as well as your own research on the company.
- What are five strengths you can use to sell yourself? Keep in mind how you have demonstrated key skill sets appropriate for your career field.
- What would be the benefits for the company if they were to hire you? What is in it for them? Think of what you plan to bring to the employer. Try to draw from experiences such as internships and relevant course projects.
- What should the company do about this information? Why are you speaking with this person? You might want to finish by explaining what you want from the audience. For example, would you like to schedule an interview, informational meeting, or job shadow? Always ask for a business card so you can follow up.

**Example of a weak pitch:**

Hi, I’m Purdue Pete and I am a student at Purdue. I’m studying pharmacy and I would like to work in a hospital when I graduate. What does your company do?

**Example of a strong pitch:**

Hello my name is Purdue Pete and I’m currently in my first year of the PharmD Program at Purdue University. I am interested in expanding my knowledge of community pharmacy practice through an internship with CVS. I have had the opportunity to job shadow at Wal-Mart and Walgreens and I really enjoyed learning about the operational setup as well as how different pharmacists counsel patients differently. I have also worked a few summers as a receptionist in a physician’s office so I know the importance of meeting the needs of patients and responding to inquiries accurately and promptly. May I have your business card to follow up about possible opportunities with your company?
## Elevator Pitch Worksheet

**Target Company:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction/Background Information:</th>
<th><strong>Hint:</strong> Include your name, college, and major. Consider including your academic year/level if you believe there is a reason it is relevant in this pitch.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective:</td>
<td><strong>Hint:</strong> Why are you interested? What are you looking for from this company? Why do you want to talk to a representative?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengths:</td>
<td><strong>Hint:</strong> Brainstorm five words or phrases that are unique descriptors for your background. What do you want this employer to know about you? Make sure you can speak to each descriptor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiences/Background Knowledge of Company:</td>
<td><strong>Hint:</strong> What experiences have you had that will be valuable to this company? Be specific; this is more than I worked as a pharmacy technician. What was unique about your experiences that will help you stand out?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closing:</td>
<td><strong>Hint:</strong> What do you want to happen after you leave today? How will you follow up? Communicate that to the representative. Always ask for a business card and use it to reconnect.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Prepared Pitch (who you are, why you are interested, why you are qualified, what you can do for them):**

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**Remember:** You may not use all the information you list here. This is your starting point. It is designed to help you think about things you might want to include. Every pitch will be different depending on the company or representative. There are prepared pitches for events such as career fairs and there are impromptu pitches for a variety of other settings (waiting in line at a restaurant, sitting next to someone on a plane, or sharing an elevator!).

**What will you say to win the employer over?**

*Created by Brooke Linn, Purdue University, 7/31/15*