

# CREATE YOUR “ELEVATOR PITCH”

---

As you progress in the professional world, you should be able to tell a **crisp, clear, interesting story about yourself and your experience**. By having this information prepared, you will be able to create a positive and lasting impression and you may open doors for future conversations or opportunities. The goal is to have people think positively of you if you are pursuing a professional opportunity or to keep you in mind when they hear of an opportunity that matches your skills and interests.

The “Elevator Pitch” is your introduction to someone in *any professional situation* and can contain different information depending on the situation in which you are meeting with someone (e.g., shadowing a Grinnell alum, introductions before a meeting or interview, encounter with a scholar in your field at a conference, conversation at a reception for a speaker, an actual elevator ride with a professional whose work you’re interested in, etc.). Imagine yourself in an elevator with the head of a top-notch organization in your field of interest. You have 30-60 seconds to impress them by describing your research and sharing the skills you’ve gained related to your field of interest.

---

## Where do you begin (after the handshake)?

Tailor your pitch to the situation, but include these basic points in those 30-60 seconds:

- Who you are (name, major, class year)
- Relevant work experience
- Relevant extracurricular activities/accomplishments
- Area of interest, type of experience you are looking for
- Leading question about the company, position, next steps

**Name, Major, Class Year** (e.g., “Hi, my name is Avery Smith and I am a Sociology major at Grinnell College. I’ll be graduating in May 2024).

**Your relevant work experience** (e.g., Last summer I volunteered for a nonprofit organization where I supported the needs of recent U.S. immigrants by communicating with them in both English and Spanish, organized materials to highlight appropriate resources, and collaborated with my supervisor to plan a fundraising campaign.)

**Relevant extracurricular activities/accomplishments** (e.g., In addition to my past experience and my coursework at Grinnell, I have been very involved in the African and Caribbean Student Union on campus.)

**Area of interest, type of experience you are looking for** (e.g., Since my nonprofit volunteer experience this summer, I have had an interest in exploring how other nonprofit organizations cater to communities in ways that support their needs without imposing colonialist viewpoints, and I have heard that your organization provides opportunities to do this for undergraduate students.)

**Leading question about the company, position, next steps** (keeps the conversation going) (e.g., What skills would you like to see students demonstrate before applying for these opportunities?)