

## What the Heck is an "Elevator Speech"?

*A "30-Second Resume"; an "Elevator Speech"; a "Marketing Blurb"... what are they, and do I really need one?*

Imagine you walk into an office building for an appointment. You're looking sharp because you're on your way to a meeting with a recruiter on the 22nd floor. You step onto the elevator, and you notice someone that you used to live next door to in the past, but haven't seen in years. You say "Hi" to each other, and they ask what you're doing there. You say you're meeting a recruiter. They say "Oh, I didn't know you're looking for a job... how can I help? What are you looking for?"

You now have approximately 30 seconds to tell them what you're looking for, and give them some ideas of how they can help before the elevator door opens and either you, or they, have to step off and they're gone!

*Are you ready?*

What will you say?

Will you say it in a way that they'll get it?

Do you know how they might help?

Can you say it before your time is up?

ARRRGGGHH!!! PANIC!!!! Stutter & Sputter, then Ramble, and... and... they're gone!

It dawns on you that they are probably one of the most "Connected" people you know! They seem to know *everyone*, and probably know a number of people that you'd love to be able to get introduced to. That conversation, done right, might have taken months off of your job search!

That same scenario can happen on the street, at your kid's ballgame, at the grocery store, at your church, or anywhere else. A great "Elevator Speech" is one of the most important tools in your job search. It needs to be prepared, be polished, and come naturally to you... meaning it has to be practiced!

So what should your "30 Second Resume" say?

I don't know! It will be different depending on your field, your experience, your interests, and your style.

Here are some points to consider when you're putting it together:

- Name 2 or 3 things you've done that qualify you for the type of position you're looking for
- It should NOT be a full recital of your career history – no time, and not effective
- You MUST be able to give specific types of jobs you are seeking

- They can't help you if they're not clear on what you want
- Have 2 versions! One for someone who "gets" your field, and one for a "layman" (Almost no one outside of IT has any idea what a "UNIX Systems Engineer" does)
- It should NEVER include griping about how you got laid off / had a bad boss / hated your job / etc.
- Words must be chosen carefully to convey what they need to know in the fewest words you can
- IT SHOULD SOUND NATURAL! - A robotically recited speech gets you nowhere
- Never use someone else's speech. If it's not words in your speaking style, it will never sound natural
- Write it out! - The process of writing it will help you crystallize it better in your mind
- Be prepared with ways people can help you...
  - Do they have any contacts at a particular company you're pursuing?
  - Do they know other companies in your field?
  - Who else do they know that would be worthwhile for you to connect with?
  - Do they know good recruiters for your field?
  - If they were looking for a position, who would they talk to?
- DON'T ask them if they know of a job! - It's assumed, and it's too easy for them to just say 'No'- end of conversation.
- ALWAYS be upbeat and professional! Even a good friend will be reluctant to refer you to a business contact if they think you might complain or show up in jeans. Present your best.
- ALWAYS GIVE THEM A BUSINESS CARD! They may have an idea 5 minutes later and need to know how to get back in touch with you. No email or phone number = lost lead!

***Write it out. Know it. Practice it. Use it. Use it again. Improve it. Practice it. Use it. Use it again. Improve it. Practice it. Use it. Use it again. Use it again... Get it?***

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