

Elevator Pitch – Role Play¹

Purpose: Construct a statement that captures the team’s reason-for-being in just a few sentences.

Benefit: Having an elevator pitch helps the team to establish a shared team identity and communicate a shared purpose to external stakeholders.

Overview: An elevator pitch is a brief, convincing speech used to relay quickly what your organization, group, or team does. The notion of the elevator implies that if you were to step onto an elevator and someone asked you what your team is all about, you should be prepared to deliver a compelling and succinct pitch no more than 20-30 seconds (a short elevator ride). Elevator pitches should be interesting, memorable, and concise. They also need to explain what makes you – or your organization, product, or idea – unique.

Materials/Setup:

- Paper, pens, whiteboard, butcher paper or flip chart paper, tape

Process:

1. Introduce the concept of an elevator pitch to the group.
2. Pair up team members into groups of two or three.
3. Allow 5 to 10 minutes for the smaller teams to craft and document an elevator speech that represents the larger team’s purpose or mission.
4. Ask for two volunteers from each team to participate in the role play. Participant 1 will play the part of the executive already on the elevator and Participant 2 will play the part of the team member stepping into the elevator.
5. Have the two participants stand in front of the room with Participant 1 standing in a space designated as the elevator and Participant 2 waiting for the doors to open.
6. Follow a script akin to the following:
 - a. *Facilitator:* “Bing” [sound of an elevator bell]. Doors open up.
 - b. *Participant 1:* “Hello {name}; how are you? You know, I haven’t heard what your group is up to; what is it, exactly, that you do?”
 - c. *Participant 2:* 30 seconds to relay the elevator pitch.
7. Repeat this scenario for each of the small teams.
8. Once every team has participated in the role play, bring them back together as a larger group to discuss which pitch best represents the team’s purpose, concept, mission, and vision.
9. [Optional] – Have each team member cast a vote for the top pitch. You might consider writing them on a whiteboard or large pieces of paper so the group can review them as a collection.
10. Identify a winner. If necessary, work together to further refine the pitch that best represents the team and its purpose. Document the pitch.

¹ Adapted from information provided at *Mindtools*: <http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/elevator-pitch.htm>