

DELIVERING AN ELEVATOR SPEECH

As part of a graduate-level communication skills training course at the University of West Florida, I partnered with five classmates to design and facilitate a workshop on the techniques of creating and delivering an elevator speech.



What we did.

1. We worked with Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance (CBA), a non-profit environmental organization located in the northwest region of Florida.
2. We conducted a needs assessment of the organization and offered a proposal based on the challenges, goals, and opportunities identified by the key personnel of the organization. Based on our proposal, we presented a 90-minute workshop to facilitate the CBA team members in creating a promotional message about the initiatives and programs of CBA.

The Workshop.

1. The workshop opened with an overview of our purpose and objects, our introductions, and a scenario where an elevator speech would prove useful.
2. Training Session 1 | Theme Identification. Instructed participants how to identify key themes of their organization and individual roles.
3. Group Discussion 1. The participants worked through a questionnaire to foster discussion and exploration of organizational themes.
4. Training Session 2 | The Parts of an Elevator Speech. The participants learned to craft a speech using a stepped approach: opening; who (identify yourself); what (what you do); and why (show your accomplishments); and close with a call to action.
5. Training Session 3 | Elevator Speech Delivery. Participants learned delivery techniques and tips in presenting an impactful and memorable speech.
6. Group Discussion 2. The participants worked through a step by step process to create their speech.
7. Wrap up. Several participants shared their elevator speeches. The workshop concluded with a summary and reflection on the scenario at the beginning and how to apply the elevator speech in such situations.

Believe in yourself, believe in your mission, then your message is believable!

Learning Objective Achieved.

By completing the workshop, each participant developed a unique, concise, 30-60 second elevator speech, appropriate to his or her specific position.

Sub-objectives:

- Define and identify the structure of an elevator speech.
- Examine critical organizational themes to convey the mission to the public.
- Apply best-practices for speech delivery.

The Outcome.

The workshop produced positive and empowering results. 94% of the participants felt that the information was certainly valuable and applicable.

What the participants said they liked the best:

- *"Dedicating time with professionals to developing, thinking, and creating a much needed elevator speech."*
- *"Perfecting a defined approach to the 'so what do you do' question."*
- *"Thinking about how to promote what I do in an everyday setting."*
- *"I think the overall message of 'you never know who you'll come in contact with and your first impression' is so critical."*

