

Elevator Pitches

ESMI 2022

“Tell me about yourself”

This is a common question

- When you're talking to recruiters to get a job
- At networking events
- During an interview
- On social media (like LinkedIn)
- In any case where you meet another academic in ANY setting

Creating a meaningful elevator pitch

You pitch should

- Be tailored to whoever you are talking to
- NOT go into too much detail
- Not use jargon or industry language
- Be 30 seconds to 2 minutes long
- BE MEMORABLE

Which sounds better?

- “I’ve been working in drug discovery at Smith Pharmaceuticals for 12 years.”
- “I helped discover and patent a billion-dollar diabetes medication during my time in the pharmaceutical industry.”

People care about what you achieved, not how long you’ve been working

Crafting your own elevator pitch

- You should start by introducing yourself
 - “It’s nice to meet you! I’m _____ and I am a _____ year undergraduate student at Cornell University studying/majoring in _____”
- Summarize your current project and your specific contributions
 - Topic of your research
 - Problem you are addressing in your research
 - Why is the problem interesting/important and how does it relate to broader problems
- Optional: finish with your future goals
 - “I would like to be a PhD student”
 - “The ESMI course has gotten me very excited about research in networks and I’d love to talk to anyone here that might also be doing research in this field”
 - If you’re talking to a recruiter: “I would love to hear more about X at your company, Y”

Take 5 minutes to craft your own elevator pitch and practice it on your own.

Activity: share your pitches with each other

Pair up and practice your elevator pitch with someone else. Make sure to keep eye contact and be enthusiastic! Give your partner feedback too!! Tell your partner:

- What stuck out to you as the most important thing?
- Were you confused?
- Did they keep eye contact?
- What could the speaker have said differently?

Activity: share your pitch with the class!