



30-Second Elevator Pitch

The elevator pitch is a concise presentation of career goals, generally delivered in **approximately 30 seconds**. Focus on skills, knowledge, and experience you can bring to the employer. The elevator pitch may follow the framework of Past, Present, and Future: what did you do in the past, what are you doing right now, what are your plans and goals for the future.

Possible Components of the Elevator Pitch

1. Brief personal background information, *only if applicable*. Avoid illegal topics (see below).
2. Educational experience: university attended, major and minor, expected graduation date, any relevant courses taken.
3. Related work, including internship, organizational, or volunteer experience.
4. Top relevant skills/qualities that you will bring to the organization.
5. Why you are interested in the position.
6. Why they should hire you, according to components 1-4.

Do not memorize a script. Create a list of words or phrases that will jog your memory and then practice presenting different versions of the elevator pitch. You want to sound intelligent and confident. Keep in mind that conversations are organic and no two will be exactly the same.

How to Answer the “Tell me about yourself” Interview Prompt

From the interviewer’s point of view, the purpose of this question is to break the ice and get the candidate to talk. As the candidate, this is your opportunity to choose what you want the prospective employer to know about you. The answer should last about **60 to 90 seconds**. Use this question to guide the interview, so the follow-up questions focus on information that you, the candidate, would like the interviewer to know.

Remember, answering this question does not require giving a full biography of yourself. Select information that is relevant to the job and company and that you **want** the employer to know. Do not repeat your resume! The anatomy of the pitch includes who you are, what you do, what problems you solve, how you fixed the problem, and the impact of your solution.

Be careful of questions from the illegal category; once you have provided that information, the interviewer is allowed to ask more questions. Illegal questions include questions about age, ancestry, credit history, criminal record, disability, ethnicity, family and marital status, gender, military discharge, and religion.

Components of the Answer

1. Brief personal background information, *if applicable*. Avoid illegal topics listed above.
2. Educational experience: university attended, major, graduation date, any pertinent courses taken.
3. Related work, including internships, organizations, or volunteer experience.
4. Top relevant skills/qualities that you will bring to the organization.
5. What are your goals?

Craft Your Answer

Practice answering the question and time yourself to make sure it is within the 60- to 90-second limit. Do NOT memorize a script! It is better to create a list of words or phrases to jog your memory rather than memorize a scripted answer to this question.