

Clearly communicating complex ideas is a key aspect of being a successful researcher.

The general goal of an elevator pitch is to create a memorable and positive impression. First, you would like to be remembered as the person who researches [YOUR TOPIC HERE]. Second, you hope to open the door to further conversation. Give them a hook to capture their attention and encourage questions about your research. Because your goal is to create a memorable impression on the person to whom you are pitching, the elevator pitch is really all about that quality human interaction.

First, respond to the following points, A-D:

A. Who Are You?

Introduce yourself (as you would to someone who doesn't know you personally) by sharing your name and school, and place yourself in context by identifying the basic discipline of your research study. What is the general topic of your research?

B. What Is Your Motivation?

Explain what personal interest(s) drew you to your research study. You can also mention any unique qualities you possess or accomplishments that are relevant to the focus of your research.

C. What Is Your Research Question?

This is just your full research question (as it currently stands on the date of your pitch).

D. What Are the Goals of Your Research Study?

This lets your audience know what you are attempting to accomplish with your study. Explain the purpose of your research, directing your words as you would to the Pinellas County Schools Institutional Review Board. What is the problem, issue, or question that you are asking and addressing in your research? We know that academia is about delving deeper into the topic, so what is the core question you want to answer?

E. What Makes It Special?

How are you uniquely addressing this problem, issue, or question? Why is that problem interesting and important? How does your work connect with a broader conversation about this topic/problem in your discipline and related fields, and what does it add to that conversation?

F. Why Does Any of This Even Matter?

This is a basic "hook" ... a sentence or two that you'll use to get your audience's attention and draw their interest. You really don't want your audience to be thinking, "So what?" This could be a question or a statement that introduces the topic and its importance. Here are some sample hooks:

- *"Have you ever gone swimming in Tampa Bay? Did you know that the ever-changing interactions between bacteria and viruses in the bay determine how safe it is to swim?"*
- *"The University of South Florida Tampa is one of the few places in the world with a microscope that can 'see' individual atoms. I know, because I've used it."*
- *"On an average night in St. Petersburg, 5000 people experiencing homelessness sleep outside, including many women who are particularly vulnerable to violence."*

Next, use your responses to points A-D to create your elevator pitch.

Try the frame below if you get stuck:

(F)_____. Hello, my name is (A)_____ and I am currently (A)_____. I believe that my (B)_____ makes me uniquely qualified in my pursuit of understanding (C)_____. My goal(s) is/are to understand (D)_____ by (E)_____."

Here are some sample elevator pitches from graduate students in *literal* elevators:

- https://youtu.be/Z_qvFjAT5vY
- <https://youtu.be/Ek3HUNNiTyU>
- <https://youtu.be/NBa0cnsRMUQ>
- https://youtu.be/WL_87TdersA

Finally ... revise, refine, and rehearse.

Smooth out the wording so that it sounds natural, and get it down to under a minute. You can rework it in any way you like as long as it contains the core components (points A-D) while remaining engaging, memorable, and brief (30-60 seconds).

For some more detailed guidance, check out the University of Notre Dame's guide here: <http://goo.gl/zrxwsd>.