Networking Intro

The Basics

An introduction or an “elevator speech” is a short summary used to quickly and simply define a person, product, service or organization and its promise of value to be delivered.

It is important to practice the skill of introducing yourself. This is useful in many circumstances including employer networking and information sessions, career fairs and throughout your career.

5 Things to Consider

✔ Where you are: Are you at an employer info session, on Twitter, Facebook or LinkedIn, or in front of your computer writing your resume and cover letter, sending an email to an employer or prepping for a job interview? The context is very important when preparing your pitch. What is your goal? (e.g. interview, business card, referral, etc.)

✔ Who you are: Are you someone with a background in medicine or law, a young entrepreneur, an aspiring healthcare administrator? Describe what motivates you, and your skills and/or experiences.

✔ What you want: Are you looking for work experience, are you seeking tips and advice on how to enter a specific industry, do you want to find out more about the organization or type of job, or are you interested in the person’s research/expertise?

✔ Who you are speaking to: You might need to introduce yourself differently depending on whether you are talking to a recruiter, a colleague, or a researcher, etc.

✔ What you have to offer: This is about your unique selling point. What is your proposition? What skills/abilities do you bring to the table? Why should they give you their time?
Telling Your Story

Begin the outline of your Elevator Speech by thinking through these details:

Who am I?

What do I offer?

What problem is solved?

What are the main contributions I can make?

What should the listener do as a result of hearing this?

Examples

Currently working or has a previous employment experience:
“Hi, I’m a [functional identity/position title] currently/most recently with [company name], working on an [degree title] at the University of Michigan. Going forward, I’m looking to take my skills in [unique selling points/value proposition], along with my interest in [interest/passion], to [function/role] or [function/role] in [industry options]. What skills are most important in your current position?

Current Student:
“Hello, my name is _______ and I am a _______ year _______ (degree) student at the University of Michigan. I am interested in a career in the _______ industry as a _______. During my time at Michigan, I have been involved in _______ (societies, projects, interests etc.) and developed skills in _______. I have also had an internship position / work experience as a _______ with _______ and discovered that I really enjoy _______. Could you tell me more about _______?”

Second Years:
“Hi, I recently completed a/an [functional area] internship with [company name], and will be completing my [degree title] in [expected graduation date: month/year]. Going forward, I’m looking to take my skills in [unique selling points/value proposition], along with my interest in [interest/passion], to [function/role] or [function/role] in [industry options]. What advice do you have for a soon-to-be grad student who is interested in [their company/industry]?”

First Years:
“Hello, I am currently in the [degree title] at the UM SPH, with plans to graduate in [expected graduation date: month/year]. Going forward, I’m looking to take my skills in [unique selling points/value proposition], along with my interest in [interest/passion] to [career goal/objective]. I am most interested in [function/role] in [industry options]. What do you enjoy about your current position?”

What does your 30-second elevator speech sound like?