

Writing an Elevator Speech



**SPEAK UP AND
SPEAK OUT**
summit



Thank you!



Knowledge Check: Pre-module Questions

1. Do you know what an elevator speech is?
2. Do you know why elevator speeches are important when speaking with elected officials?
3. Do you know how long an elevator speech should be?
4. Do you know what information you should make sure to include in an elevator speech?



Advocacy

Definition of Advocacy

- Advocacy is when an individual or group aims to influence decisions within political, economic and social systems and institutions.
- Advocacy can be defined as public support for or recommendation of a particular cause or policy."



What is an Elevator Speech?

- **“Short and sweet”** – 30 seconds to 2 minutes
- Focused on one issue
- Can be written as a letter or a memorized speech
- Remember, it is always good to communicate with your legislators



Writing an Elevator Speech - Beginning

Beginning: Who are you?

- Your first and last name
- Where you live and that you are a constituent
- Mention if you belong to a self-advocacy group or organization

Example:

My name is Joey. I am 26 years old and have lived in your district for most of my life. I am part of Going Home Coalition, a self-advocacy group that advocates for expanding community living opportunities and transitioning away from institutional living.



Writing an Elevator Speech - Middle

Middle: What issue are you talking about?

- What is the problem or issue you want to talk to them about?
- How does this issue personally affect you and other people with disabilities?



Writing an Elevator Speech - Middle

Example:

I really want to work with computers because I have skills with technology. However, I am worried about what would happen to me if I did get a job because I currently receive SSI. I am concerned I would lose my benefits if I got a job. If I did lose my SSI, then I would also lose my Medicaid waiver, which allows me to live in a community integrated living arrangement (CILA). I would have to move back in with my parents and I would lose a lot of my independence.



Writing an Elevator Speech - End

End: Sum it all up

- What is the answer to solving the issue?
- What can your elected official do to solve the issue?

Your support of Bill number ---- would assure that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities are able to keep their SSI payments without risk of losing their waiver funding even when they also have a job.



Writing an Elevator Speech - End

End: Sum it all up

- How can you offer to help?
- Say thank you!

Please let me know if there is any other information I can share with you about this issue. Thank you so much for your time today!



Helpful Tips

- Keep it short!
- Avoid using acronyms
- Consider including facts or statistics to support your story
- Practice, practice, practice!
- Say thank you and follow up afterwards with a thank you note



Helpful Tips

- Be respectful, honest, and kind
- Be confident, dress for success
- Pay attention to your body language
- Speak clearly and show emotion appropriately
- Ask if they have any follow up questions, don't interrupt
- Seek opportunities
- Build relationships
- Follow up, follow up, follow up



Knowledge Check: Post-module Questions

What is an elevator speech?



Knowledge Check: Post-module Questions

What is an elevator speech?

- An elevator speech is a short speech you can give to an elected official when you don't have a lot of time to speak with them.



Knowledge Check: Post-module Questions

Why are elevator speeches important?



Knowledge Check: Post-module Questions

Why are elevator speeches important?

- Elevator speeches are important because they allow you to quickly share about an issue that is important to you. Elevator speeches make it easy for your legislators to listen to you and understand the issue you are concerned about, especially if the legislator only has a small amount of time to speak with you.



Knowledge Check: Post-module Questions

How long should an elevator speech be?



Knowledge Check: Post-module Questions

How long should an elevator speech be?

- Elevator speeches should be between 30 seconds and 2 minutes.



Knowledge Check: Post-module Questions

What information should you make sure to include in an elevator speech?



Knowledge Check: Post-module Questions

What information should you make sure to include in an elevator speech?

- Your full name
- Where you live (mention that you are a constituent!)
- If you are involved in any self-advocacy organizations
- The problem or issue you are concerned about and how it affects you
- The solution to your problem, or what your legislator can do for you



Speak Up and Speak Out!

Welcome to our advocacy initiative – where self-advocates are empowered to make their voices heard

Our goal is to facilitate meetings between self-advocates and legislators – because **your voice matters** and **advocacy drives change**.

Feeling ready to set up a meeting with your legislator? Reach out to me:

Sabrina Wyman, Legislative Advocacy Coordinator, The Arc of Illinois

Sabrina@thearcofil.org or **815-464-1832 ext 1016**



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Thank you!



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Thank You!

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