**Perfecting the Elevator Pitch**

**Definition:** An elevator speech/pitch is a brief summary that succinctly defines a product, service, or organization and its value. The name comes from the idea that this summary should be delivered in the time span of a typical elevator ride—approximately 30 seconds to 3 minutes.

**Components & Tips:** Elevator speeches can vary a lot depending on the goal, audience, and circumstances but they should all contain the following elements.

* **Pertinent Facts**—The five W’s: who, what, where, why, how
* **Less is More** - Provide enough information to engage your listeners in conversation
* **Differentiation**—What makes your issue compelling or unique
* **Impact**—Statistics and stories that show results
* **Simplicity**—Jargon-free language that anyone can understand
* **Passion**—Show that you care about what you’re pitching
* **Flexibility**—Use a framework but adjust your speech to your audience
* **Preparation**—Practice your speech and ask for feedback
* **Buyer-Driven** - Focus on what THEY want or get when they work with you; the benefits and value to what they care about and their district constituents.

**Crafting the Pitch:** Answering the following questions will help you craft your own speech.

1. What are you trying to achieve? (i.e. recruit volunteers/clients, build new partnerships, inform others about your organization)
2. Who is your audience? (i.e. potential volunteers/clients, area schools/businesses, community members)
3. What is your position and your organization?
4. Why does your organization do what it does? (i.e. what need does it fill and why is this important to your audience?)
5. Where is your organization located? What population does it serve?
6. What does your organization do?
7. What makes your organization unique? What benefit do you deliver?
8. How does your organization do what it does?
9. Why are you passionate about this subject?
10. What is your “ask”? (i.e. How can people get involved or what could you do with additional support?)

**3-30-3 Exercise:** We can usually find plenty of things to say about what we do or who we work for. The hard part can be editing down our speeches, which is where the 3-30-3 exercise comes in. This exercise asks you to craft a three minute speech, a thirty second speech, and a three second speech. Give it a try!

**1. Say it in three minutes:** (Provides a more thorough explanation and includes impact stories)

**Example:** Educational Service Centers are local political subdivisions of the state that streamline educational and operational processes through a shared-services consortia based model that saves districts more than 30% compared to delivering the services themselves according to the Ohio Department of Education. ESCs deliver high-quality services designed to elevate teaching standards, optimize resource utilization, and ultimately enhance student outcomes. From professional development to personalized student support initiatives, ESCs are catalysts for educational efficiency at lower costs. In 2022, Ohio’s ESCs provided $2.2 billion in programs and services to Ohio’s schools and school districts and provided direct student services to nearly 20% of students many of whom are served through preschool programs, alternative schools, and in special education classrooms and adult transition services. ESCs also partnered with the state of Ohio in deploying professional learning supports and coaching around high-quality instructional materials, literacy and the Science of Reading, alternative math pathways, school threat assessment training, chronic absenteeism and attendance recovery and more. By utilizing the ESC network, the state ensures every student has access to well-trained teachers and are poised for success regardless of where they live and attend school.

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**2. Say it in thirty seconds:** (Provides a succinct overview with a hook to spur further conversation)

**Example:** Ohio’s ESCs redefine efficiency in education, providing schools with top-tier streamlined services for improved student outcomes. ESCs are catalysts for educational excellence, offering targeted solutions that maximize efficiency in every aspect of school operations at nearly 30% less than the cost of districts providing the services themselves or through another third-party provider.

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**3. Say it in three seconds:** (An interesting phrase or short sentence that captures what you do)

**Example:** ESCs are low-cost, high-quality educational service providers that support educators, students and families and improve academic outcomes for all learners.

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**EXAMPLE 2**

**1. Say it in three minutes:** (Provides a more thorough explanation and includes impact stories)

**Example:** My name is Krista and I am an AmeriCorps\*VISTA volunteer coordinator for the East Side Learning Center, a children’s literacy nonprofit in St. Paul. 75% of kids who don’t read at grade level by the end of 3rd grade continue to struggle in school and beyond. An estimated 6,000 children in St. Paul need extra reading support but many families can’t afford private tutors. The ESLC provides free one-on-one tutoring in reading for low-income Kindergarten to 4th grade children who don’t read at grade level. Each child in our program receives personalized lesson plans written for them by licensed teachers and tutoring three to four days per week with a trained volunteer or professional tutor. With the help of 220 volunteers we served 214 children at three school sites last year, providing over 12,000 hours of tutoring! I love seeing the kids in our program discover a passion for reading. One boy in our program really struggled with reading but last spring, thanks to the support of his tutors, he is now reading beyond grade level and enjoys bringing books home! The ESLC has expanded to five schools this year but in order to continue changing children’s lives, we are looking for more volunteers. Have you ever considered tutoring?

**2. Say it in thirty seconds:** (Provides a succinct overview with a hook to spur further conversation)

**Example:** I’m an AmeriCorps\*VISTA volunteer coordinator for a children’s literacy nonprofit in St. Paul. An estimated 6,000 children in St. Paul need extra reading support but many families can’t afford private tutors. The East Side Learning Center provides free one-on-one tutoring in reading for low-income Kindergarten to 4th grade children who don’t read at grade level. Each child in our program receives personalized lesson plans written for them by licensed teachers and tutoring three to four days per week with a trained volunteer or professional tutor. Last year we provided over 12,000 hours of tutoring to 214 children at three school sites with the help of 220 volunteers! Here’s my card. If you’d like to see what we do, check out our website.

**3. Say it in three seconds:** (An interesting phrase or short sentence that captures what you do)

**Example:** The East Side Learning Center changes children’s lives one book at a time.