

Networking: How to Introduce Yourself

A networking introduction or “elevator pitch” succinctly defines you and your background and interests. It can be used at career fairs, conferences and networking events. The elevator pitch is a short summary given in the time span of an elevator ride (approximately 30 seconds to two minutes). The goal is to introduce yourself, engage your audience and to start a conversation.

An elevator pitch needs to quickly convey important information. Here are some steps to assist in crafting a great pitch:

Introduce yourself

There is a lot of flexibility in the introduction. It should include something unique about yourself such as, area of study, degree, internships, experience, research, projects or military service. You can mention possible connections such as individuals in the same department, similar backgrounds and alumni.

Identify your goal/purpose

It may help the person you are speaking to point you in the right direction for further assistance. Be succinct. If your goals aren't clear, they won't be able to effectively assist you.

Describe your relevant experience

Give 1-2 solid examples of your experience that relate directly to that organization or position. As with your introduction, you can discuss major, degree, service or anything else that makes you stand out. You can also briefly discuss research, awards or presentations you've given. Don't repeat anything you mentioned in your introduction.

Wrap it up

Pull everything together in a brief but interesting concluding sentence. This will reaffirm what you want and how they can help you.

Engage with a question

Be curious. People enjoy sharing their own interests. Ask questions, such as:

- What do you do? • How did you get involved in this field? • What do you like or not like about it?
- What advice would you give someone entering this field?

Follow up

While still in conversation, explore possible opportunities for continuing the conversation, for example:

- Perhaps we could meet and discuss _____ opportunities in your organization? • What is the process for applying for internships/jobs at your company? • For following up, is there a particular person I should contact? • Can I connect with you on LinkedIn? • May I have your business card?
- Can I give/send you my resume or business card?

Practice, practice, practice

Put it on paper! Write out a script or talking points, then craft your pitch and practice. Use focused terminology that highlights your experience in an area, but make sure not to use industry jargon or acronyms that average people won't understand. Practice until you can smoothly give your pitch.

Networking: Example Pitch Templates

Here are example templates you can use:

Template 1

Hello,

My name is _____, and I'm a senior completing a bachelor's degree in _____ with a minor in _____ at UC Davis. I'm interested in a career (or internship) in _____ in the _____ field. During college I was involved in _____ and _____ where I developed skills in _____. I also interned at _____ where I discovered that I really enjoy _____.

I'd love to learn more about opportunities in _____. Would it be possible to set up a meeting to discuss more about _____, or could you refer me to the person in charge of recruitment?

Hello,

My name is *Alex Aggie*, and I'm a junior completing a bachelor's degree in *Managerial Economics* with a minor in *Communications* at UC Davis. I'm interested in an internship in *marketing* in the *retail* field. During college, I was involved in the *Marketing and Finance club* and *intramural sports* where I developed skills in *leadership*. I also interned at the *state capitol* where I discovered that I really enjoy *connecting with people on different levels, particularly within social media*.

I'd love to learn more about opportunities in *Dream-Job Organization*. Would it be possible to set up a meeting to discuss more about *internship opportunities*, or could you refer me to the person in charge of recruitment?

Template 2

Hello,

I am *Christina College* and I am a *civil and environmental engineer* graduating this June. Last summer, I interned with *Build It Construction company*. Through this, I learned *how to work in a team* and *apply my academic knowledge in real life situations*. I enjoyed this internship and look forward to doing a similar position in my career. Are there any entry level positions or opportunities at your organization?