

## Elevator Speeches

These are 30-second presentations about a person or organization, so called because they can be delivered in a short elevator ride—about 30 seconds.

A good elevator speech provides answers to five critical questions within one half of a minute, according to the [University of California](#):

1. 30 second limit
2. Who am I?
3. What business am I in?
4. What group of people do I service?
5. What is my USP (Unique Selling Proposition)?
6. What benefits do my customers derive from my services?

When modifying this for use with public service and similar causes, [Lawrese Brown](#) distilled it even further:

1. It should be 30 seconds or less.
2. Provide a clear benefit for the audience.
3. Ask for what you want.

As Toastmasters, we know 30 seconds comprise no more than 75 words. We also know we have two possible audiences: prospective members and prospective corporate club sponsors. Based on the above guidelines, here are two examples, one for each audience. Note: these are examples only; each person should develop his or her own version.

**Sample for a prospective member** (60 words plus up to 15 for meeting time and place):

*I belong to Toastmasters. Our clubs provide a mutually supportive and positive learning environment in which every individual member can develop oral communication and leadership skills, or further develop existing skills. These skills in turn foster self-confidence as well as career and personal growth. We meet (provide time and location). What would be a convenient date for you to visit and see for yourself?*

**Sample for prospective corporate sponsor** (67 words):

*I belong to the nonprofit Toastmasters organization. Our corporate clubs provide a supportive and positive learning environment in which every member can develop oral communication and leadership skills, or further develop existing skills. As staff members gain effectiveness in these areas, organizational performance can improve significantly. Whom should I contact to arrange an on-site demonstration for your staff? Or would you prefer to visit an established club?*

These samples should seem familiar, they are based on the Toastmasters club mission statement. There are many web sites about elevator speeches, now often called *elevator pitches*, but, like Ralph Smedley's original idea, the core is historically successful and fundamentally unchanged.

There are no "official" Toastmaster elevator speeches. These samples are just that; they are not scripts. Use them if you wish, but it is better to develop your own. Like any speech, it has to come from you. You are the one on the elevator, or in line at Starbucks, or wherever the opportunity arises.