RESEARCH SKILLS FALL WORKSHOP EXERCISE

THE ELEVATOR SPEECH (Your Personal Commercial)

What Is It?

What if you found yourself on an elevator with a recruiter that you wanted to impress, and he/she was getting off at the seventh floor? What is the most impressive thing you could say in 90 seconds? Essentially, the elevator speech is a ninety-second-or-less mini-commercial where you are selling yourself.

While this personal sales pitch derives its name from the chance elevator encounter scenario, this tool can be used anywhere you have the opportunity to meet contacts in your desired field. It can provide an overview of who you are, what you have done, and what you are seeking.

Elevator Talk for an Academic Audience

Addresses the need to simplify research topics and projects so that a person outside the field can understand the basic goals and application of the research during a very brief conversation.

Should have concise, easy to understand answers to the following questions:

- What is your current research project?
- What is your motivation for your research project?
- What are some of the important (current) trends in your field?
- How does your work fit into those trends?

Basic Tips

- Don’t forget to include your name when you introduce yourself.
- If appropriate, refer to your research lab or major (provides context).
- Make your speech engaging.
- Make eye contact.
- Make sure to include one or two details you want the person to take away.
- Make sure your speech is ninety seconds or less, depending on the situation and audience. Adjust as appropriate.
- Communicate in a style that reflects and suits your personality.
- Be careful not to come across as too pushy.