

Substance Use Prevention Day

February 27, 2025



Crafting an Elevator Speech

An elevator speech is a brief speech that outlines an idea for a product, service, or project. A good rule of thumb is that an elevator speech should be approximately 30 seconds long, with a maximum of 60 seconds.

An elevator speech for nonprofits can be broken down into three sections: the hook, the body, and the wrap-up. Then, you must bring all the content to life with your delivery.

The Hook

In a perfect world, your hook should only be about 10 to 15 seconds. You need to grab their attention, so don't waste time with small talk. Just dive right in.

The Body

After the hook comes the meat of your pitch, and it should only take up about 30 to 60 seconds. At this phase, you need to describe things like the specific impact you bring to the communities you serve. You've mentioned your value in the hook, now it's time to prove it.

The Wrap-Up

To wrap it all up, you only need 15 to 20 seconds. Bring everything home with a very specific ask. It's a good strategy to know exactly where your pitch is heading before you ever write it.

Hook:

"We help low-income families become more financially stable with free classes and professional advice."

In one sentence, we know who you serve, how you help, and what impact you make.

Body:

The body isn't "we do this." It's "this is what we do for the people we serve, and this is how you can be a part of that important work."

Wrap-up:

Take the time to think about what outcome you would want from your encounter. For example, do you want someone to:

- Join your local coalition.
- Attend an event.
- Allow you to send them information on the issue you want to address.
- Agree to meet with you at a more convenient time.

Regardless of what your ask is, it can shape your entire pitch. It may even show that you need to create multiple pitches depending on your audience.

