

# THE ELEVATOR PITCH

Presenting Your Research in Conversation

# TALKING ABOUT YOUR RESEARCH

In the coming week you will have many opportunities to tell others what you do...

How do you react?

What do you say?

In the **time it takes to ride the elevator, what do you tell** someone about you and your work?



**SO WHAT'S YOUR  
ELEVATOR PITCH?**

# WHAT IS AN ELEVATOR PITCH?

A **concise** statement about you and your research interests and experience to be shared informally and verbally in various professional contexts:

- at a conference, during coffee breaks or a conference dinner,
- during an introduction to a guest speaker before/after their talk,
- during an actual elevator ride with another researcher.



# WHAT IS THE GOAL?

Create a memorable positive impression

Get feedback on your ideas

Learn about other's work

Open the door to further conversation



# WHAT QUESTIONS SHOULD YOUR PITCH ANSWER?

**What** is the **topic** of your research?

**What** is the **specific question or problem** that you are asking or addressing?

**Why** is the problem **interesting and important**?

**How** are you solving the problem in an original way?

**How** does your work connect with the **broader context**?

## JUST STARTED YOUR PHD? WONDERING WHAT TO SAY?

Say what topics you have been **reading** about, what you find **exciting**, what **ideas** you have.

**Do not worry** if you do not have results yet, say where in the process you are.

Use the opportunity to start a deeper conversation, **learn, get feedback**.

Every famous researchers has been a first-year PhD student once!

# DELIVERY

Be **concise**, you have 30 to 60 seconds.

Maintain **eye contact** and read your listener

Be **enthusiastic!**





# PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE!

**Rehearse** with a friend or in front of a mirror.

The important thing is to **practice it out loud**.

**Get comfortable** with what you have to say, so

you can breeze through it when the time comes.



## HANDS-ON EXERCISE

1. Split in groups, one senior researcher per group
2. Think about and then practice your elevator pitch
3. Get feedback from other members in your group

Apply what you have learned during the lunch break!

(And continue practicing during breaks, lunches and dinners throughout CAV.)

# HANDS-ON EXERCISE

## QUESTIONS FOR THE PERSON GIVING A PITCH

1. Did you get all your key points across?
2. Did you get asked what you expected to be asked?

## HANDS ON EXERCISE

### QUESTIONS FOR THE LISTENERS

What words or phrases stuck out to you as the most **important**? What **intrigued** you?

Were you **confused** at any point?

What might the speaker have **emphasized more/less**?

Did they **respond appropriately** to your verbal or physical cues?

## ACTION PLAN FOR ATTENDING CAV

1. **Practice** your elevator pitch: **talk to at least 3 people** that (you think) are famous.
2. If you are giving a talk, do not forget to **advertise** it.
3. Talks are important, but make sure you **spend time meeting people in the hallway**.
4. **Get out of your comfort zone!** Talk to people you have not met before.

## ACTION PLAN FOR ATTENDING CAV

5. **Show interest** in other people's work. **Ask questions. It's OK to not know things!**
6. **Be inclusive** and **make people feel comfortable** around you. Do not isolate others.
7. **Don't forget to follow up** after the conference with people with whom you had interesting and fruitful discussions (this is how collaborations are born).

# TIME TO PREPARE YOUR PITCH

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