*What exactly is an elevator pitch?*

Imagine you meet someone in an elevator, and you have the length of the elevator ride to “pitch” an idea to him or her. That’s ~30-60 seconds. If your pitch intrigues them, the conversation will be continued afterwards. Hence the term “elevator pitch.”

*Why do I need an elevator pitch?*

You’re attending a conference for your field and a fellow attendee strikes up a conversation with you. After introducing yourselves, the first question you’re asked is “what are you working on?” Can you give a quick summary of your research on the spot? It’s harder than it sounds.

*So What About the Elevator Pitch Competition on Friday?*

You’ll have 60 seconds to pitch your research to a panel of judges and audience members. (If you don’t have a current research project, you can talk about what you would like to do for your research instead).

No PowerPoint slides or computers/ tablets. We’re going old school.

Judges will be given time to reach a consensus on the top contestants. If necessary, a second round will be held.

The place winners will be announced later that afternoon during the Research Mixer.

*Tips:*

* Rehearse your pitch ahead of time!
* Who is your audience?
* Make your pitch appealing to your audience- What’s in it for them? Why should they care about your research?
* Avoid using a lot of jargon. You’re having a casual conversation, not giving a lecture.
* Speak clearly and concisely.
* Tell a story- create a visual image in your listeners mind.
* What is your desired outcome from the pitch? ie Do you want their business card? A meeting?
* Keep it short!

More tips below from <https://dynamicecology.wordpress.com/2014/08/05/perfecting-the-elevator-pitch/>

* **Introduction** – Explain who you are.
* **Hook** – What is the major question/problem you study? You can also start with an observation (e.g. I noticed this pattern in communities with more predators and I thought that predation could be driving dynamics).
* **Solution** – How are you answering this question? For example, you could describe your use of field surveys, experiments or modelling. You may also talk about why you use a particular system.
* **Summary and benefits of this knowledge** – What have you found? Why is this work useful? What are you looking into next? Try to draw it back to your hook.
* **The stage of your career (optional).** For example: “I’ll be finishing my PhD this spring and will be looking for a postdoc position.” This can be useful if you are about to transition to a new stage in your career; the listener may be a potential advisor or collaborator.

There are many online resources for elevator pitches, but here are a few sites to check out. Look them over and others. Decide what strategy works best for you.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tq0tan49rmc>

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/nextavenue/2013/02/04/the-perfect-elevator-pitch-to-land-a-job/>

<https://www.cirm.ca.gov/our-funding/stem-cell-elevator-pitch-challenge> <http://www.nature.com/naturejobs/science/articles/10.1038/nj7435-137a>