

SIXTEEN SECONDS TO SUCCESS: How Your 'Elevator' Speech Opens the Doors of Membership to Strangers!

By Craig Harrison

Perhaps the most critical skill that members can develop for club building, as well as for their own professional and personal advancement:

their sixteen-second 'elevator' speech!

Sixteen seconds is the average time one spends riding in an elevator. It's also all the time you need to tell an uninitiated Toastmaster about the wonders of membership. Within Sixteen seconds you can explain what Toastmasters is, what it has done for you, and by extension, what it can do for them, and invite your conversational partner to visit. It's that simple, and oh, so effective.

Brochures and flyers help. Newsletters and web sites are useful. But nothing is more powerful than the word of mouth salesmanship of a member telling a prospective member about the benefits of Toastmasters.

Your enthusiasm is contagious, your own presentation skills are an endorsement, and your accessibility establishes a stronger bond than any handout, web site or toll free phone number.

Imagine yourself alone in an elevator when it stops on the second floor. A stranger enters and you smile. You're wearing your Toastmasters pin, and the stranger compliments you on it. That's your opening:

"I received this pin from Toastmasters,
the public speaking organization."

"Oh, public speaking...that scares me more than death!"
they reply.

"That's how I once felt. In fact, that's why I joined
Toastmasters. They've helped me improve my ability
to think, listen and speak on my feet, and in a supportive
environment too. It's actually fun! Guests are always welcome
and there's no pressure to speak. Won't you come visit?
Here's our club's card."

SIXTEEN SECONDS TO SUCCESS (*Con't*)

Congratulations. You've just given your first elevator speech. You smiled, gave good eye contact, and were personable, all skills you learned in your club. You also shared your success with others. And we know from experience that success is contagious. Lastly, you've planted the seed with this stranger, offering them your visual aid — in this case a club business card. In closing you've left the door open for them to follow suit into your club.

The beauty of elevator speeches is that they can be given anywhere you have sixteen seconds and a stranger: at conferences and conventions, on sidewalks, in hallways, at parties or on public transit. I've even delivered one on an escalator!

Elevator speeches are not only valuable for membership building, but for professional and social networking as well. My elevator speech for my home club comes out a little differently each time, but that's actually more effective since it sounds more natural and off-the-cuff.

Suppose someone sees me hurrying along on the sidewalk and comments on my sense of urgency.

"Oh, I'm headed to my weekly Toastmasters meeting! It's where professionals meet to improve our communication skills in a fun-filled format. We practice giving prepared speeches, speak extemporaneously and sharpen our evaluation skills too. Come visit next week as my guest and experience the magic. Here's our flyer."

Walk your talk! Use short interchanges to introduce others to your Toastmasters club. You'll be amazed how many people have heard of us, been curious, or even looking for the impetus to finally visit a club. You're that spark. You're going up and they can too.

As Toastmasters we pride ourselves on time management. We are skilled at giving speeches of 5-7 minutes, fluent at presenting evaluations of 2-3 minutes, and adept at speaking extemporaneously for 1-2 minutes. Yet in the real world, sometimes all you get is sixteen seconds to capture someone's attention and get your message across. As skilled Toastmasters sixteen seconds is all the time you need to deliver your 'elevator' speech.

I encourage you to practice yours with fellow club members, friends and even on your own answering machine and in front of a mirror, where you can study how you sound and look. Soon you'll master this "short form" of oral communication.

SIXTEEN SECONDS TO SUCCESS (*Con't*)

When you push the right buttons with your elevator speech your club's membership will be going up, in as few as sixteen seconds!

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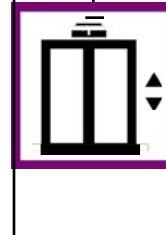
To purchase your copy of Craig's
28-page tips booklet on Elevator Speeches:

http://www.expressionsofexcellence.com/prod_sales.html#Your%20Sixteen%20Second%20Success:%20Ride%20Your%20Elevator%20Speech%20to%200Top

RIDING YOUR ELEVATOR SPEECH TO THE TOP



YOUR
16 SECOND
SUCCESS



Meet Strangers...Network Professionally...
Position Yourself...Extend Your Sphere of Influence...
all in the time it takes to ride an elevator!

Sixteen seconds is all the time it takes — and often all the time you get — to make a favorable first impression. That's the average time spent with a stranger in an elevator.

Learn how to develop your 'elevator' speech to effectively introduce yourself and your business, products and services to prospects. Develop your sixteen-second sound bite for use indoors and out, in work, social or interpersonal settings!

In a world in which we're all competing for peoples' attention, an elevator speech can whet strangers' appetites, showcase your unique selling propositions and let the listener know of your relevance to them. Let yours be an expression of you!



Push All
The Right
Buttons!

Learning Objectives

- ▶ Understanding Image and Presentation Skills
- ▶ How to Speak the Language of Benefits to Others
- ▶ Recasting Your Occupation's Title for Maximum Effect
- ▶ Qualifying Your Listeners Through Asking Questions
- ▶ Identifying Your Uniqueness/Competitive Advantage

How the Presentation is Delivered

Participants de-construct effective elevator speeches before constructing their own. They identify what makes their product, service or affiliation unique and learn to cast their profession or job title to emphasize their special qualities. Next they *sell themselves in sixteen seconds*, presenting their elevator speeches to a variety of others...as the clock ticks.

About Your Presenter

Communications expert Craig Harrison has helped thousands express their excellence. A past president of the NATIONAL SPEAKERS ASSOCIATION for Northern California, Craig currently trains executives, entrepreneurs, consultants, sales and marketing staffs and others to effectively bask in their sixteen seconds of fame. Even BUSINESS WEEK magazine recognizes Craig Harrison as the expert on elevator speeches!



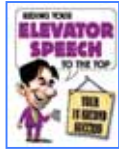
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Craig Harrison's Popular Sales Presentations



• Speaker • Trainer
• Consultant



Your Sixteen Second Success...The Elevator Speech!

Break the ice, build rapport, uncover needs and sell your products or service in the time it takes to ride an elevator with a stranger...with your **Elevator Speech**. Get asked questions, position yourself and extend your sphere of influence with your elevator speech.

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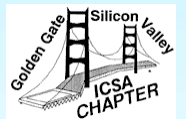
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