

# Do the Elevator Speech Math

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## Your 30 Second Elevator Speech

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Consultants who attend RPCN events are usually asked to provide the other participants with their “30 second elevator speech.” As facilitator of the Technical Forum, I have found that the “30 second” speeches take from 10 seconds to 2 minutes, depending on the person. Some people just offer who they are and what they do. Others, intentionally or not, often go on and on (blah, blah, blah?) about their businesses, etc., and finish long after the rest of the group has become bored and stops listening.

Several years ago, a member of RPCN presented the results of an actual scientific study of the effectiveness of “elevator” speeches. I found the results astounding and would like to share them with other consultants.

The results of this study are below. Note that they provide information on 15 second speeches instead of the usual 30 second speech. This is because the study showed that you actually have only 15 seconds for your elevator speech before the listener begins to lose interest.

Understanding this can be of great benefit to a consultant. It says that the real purpose of an elevator speech is to say almost nothing about your own business, but rather to ask questions about the other person’s business in order to find out if they have any problems that you can help solve. The message here: prospects don’t want to hear about your business nearly as much as they want to talk about their own business.

15 seconds -- that’s all you have and that’s all you should use for your elevator speech.

This is science talking, not just me.

Here are the facts:

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## Do the Elevator Speech Math!

- A normal speaking rate is about 125 words per minute.
- You have 15 seconds for your “elevator” speech.
- 15 seconds is  $\frac{1}{4}$  minute, so  $\frac{1}{4}$  of 125 words means you have **31 words for your ENTIRE elevator speech!**

Subtract 15 words to say your name and company. That leaves

**16 WORDS**

to describe what you do and ask about their business.



**15 SECONDS -- 31 WORDS**

Welcome to REALITY!