

CRAFTING YOUR ADVOCACY MESSAGE

COMPONENTS OF AN ELEVATOR SPEECH:

Below you'll find the basic components of an elevator speech. Your story need not necessarily be presented in this order.

- **Introduction** – You need a way to grab people's attention (don't tell jokes unless you are good at it) and then tell the basics – share who you are what brings you to this work.
- **What is the problem?** What needs to be solved? Something is wrong that needs changing. Why you care it is important: also make it relevant to the audience or you will lose their attention.
- **Who are you? What is your story?** - What drives you to advocate for this issue? What shapes your values and view of the world? Don't recite your resume (personal or professional) – tell the audience how your story connects with the problem you're trying to fix, reflects your shared values, and why they should join you in addressing the problem.
- **What is your solution?** – Simply pointing out the problem is rarely sufficient. Making an impact is about driving people to act to create change. How do you intend to fix the problem? Giving the audience hope – a way to fix the problem – will help you connect.
- **The ask** – What do you want your audience to do? You need to ask them to take action – whether it is a vote, a contribution, writing a letter, talking to friends, or volunteering to join you.

ELEVATOR SPEECH WORKSHEET

Try using this worksheet to help organize your thoughts. This is NOT the order the speech should necessarily take – that is up to you. Practice the speech on a friend or advisor.

<p>Core message and values you wish to communicate</p> <p>What are the <u>one</u> or <u>two</u> impression(s) you want listeners to leave with – this relates to your core message and your specific issue.</p>	
<p>Introduction – how do you want to begin?</p> <p>You will want to be clear up front about your name and who you represent, but you also want to grab people's attention and get them focused.</p>	

Core rationale & Issues

What is the core problem or rationale that drives you to be an advocate for the arts?
What is it that you wish to change?
Remember: This isn't just about what you care about, but a point of connection with decision makers. You can name 1-3 facts or figures to help make your case. You can name 1-3 policy concerns or problems that connect to the audience and to you, and support your core message. You can use the interests of a decision maker to drive your message.

Relevant biographical information

Who are you? What brings you to this work?
Is there something in your background that made you want to address this problem? Did you hear or read about a second-hand story that made you want to act? Remember: This isn't reading a resume, but rather concise stories to show how your life or even the life of someone else pushed you to advocate.
Why did you want to travel all the way to Lansing to make your case?

Context:

Why is this issue relevant? What is the impact to the arts community? What is the impact to the state or country? What is the impact to your lawmaker and his district?
Why should they care?

Conclusion/Commitment

How will you wrap it up?
What will your ask be- a vote, money, volunteer, other?
Example: We are here to ask for your support to fund the MCACA at \$12.5 million in the FY 19 budget. Thank you for your consideration.