Lesson Plan: Elevator Pitch

INVESTIGATE: GETTING THE WORD OUT: ELEVATOR PITCH

Adapted by San Francisco Peer Resources – 60 minutes

**OBJECTIVES**

* To form script for elevator pitches
* To practice elevator pitches when it is unexpected

**MATERIALS**

* “Elevator Pitch” handout (1 per participant)

**WARM UP**

Have you ever done a pitch before?  What was that experience like?  When are times we might want to get attention for our project?

**EXPERIENCE**

Today we will practice reaching out to others. What is an elevator pitch? Imagine you get into an elevator and only have the time in the elevator to explain your project and why you are doing it. There are times when we know we are going to give pitches and times when it happens unexpectedly. We will practice both circumstances. Break out into pairs. In each, you will need one volunteer to play the person listening to the pitch and one volunteer to play the person delivering the pitch. The listener should respond as they normally would in that situation.

**REFLECT**

After each situation ask the following reflection questions:

* What worked?
* What could be improved?
* What should they have done?

**SUMMARIZE**

Keep in mind these three principles:

1. Have a quick and easy explanation (1-2 sentences)
2. Be enthusiastic and interesting (but not overly enthusiastic)
   * Use a hook that feels natural
3. Tell them how they can help – have a call to action

You have their attention – use it to get what you need.

There are many times we might want to do an elevator pitch:

* When we are trying to build a movement – we don’t want to be the only people who care about this issue or the only ones who are trying to change it.
* When we might want people to write a letter, to talk to their friends, to attend a meeting, or to join/support our cause in some other way.

**DEMONSTRATE**

Break into groups of 3-4. Each group will get an “Elevator Pitch” worksheet and brainstorm ideas for each situation. Groups should be prepared to demonstrate any of their examples:

* Talking to a teacher about doing a presentation in a classroom
* Talking to a student you don’t know about an upcoming meeting
* Talking to a friend about attending a rally at school
* Talking to someone in administration (dean, assistant principal, principal) about signing a petition

After they have completed their brainstorm, have each group come up and demonstrate one situation.

We don’t always have the time to prepare what we are going to say. Sometimes people ask us or the opportunity strikes, so you have to be ready to talk on the spot about your project and what you need.

After the activity, ask the following reflection questions:

* What was challenging?
* What is one thing you did well?
* What is one thing you saw someone else do that you would like to try?
* On a thumbs-up, thumbs-down scale,
  + How awkward is it to do pitches?
  + What will help you to feel confident in doing this?