



Skills for Work. Confidence for Life.

StreetWise Partners Winter 2020

Session 4 Module: Elevator Pitch and Informational Interviews



Elevator Pitch and Informational Interviews

Developing Your Elevator Pitch

Who are you?

1. Introduce yourself – tell people your name and what you do. You can also use your title or a descriptive phrase.
 - My name is _____
 - and I am a(n) _____

What do you do?

1. Tell people exactly what it is that you do, and be specific. The key is to leave nothing to the imagination.
2. For example: I am a(n) _____ working in the industry, specializing in _____ or I am a student studying _____ and interested in _____

What are your strengths/distinctive experiences?

1. What are you the best at in your field?
2. Make sure people know you're the best at what you do, so you become the go-to person for that task.
 - I have demonstrated expertise in _____
 - Give an example of your school, volunteer, or business-related work that will get people's attention (e.g. I managed a team of 50 people in my role as supervisor)

How can the person you are talking to help you?

1. Let people know what you want them to do
2. Provide them with a way to act (e.g. by visiting your website).
3. Explain the opportunity you are looking for (e.g., "Currently I'm looking for a part time job as a personal assistant")
4. Ask them if they can connect you to someone else who can help (e.g. "After hearing about my interests, is there anyone else you can connect me to for informational interviews?").

Elevator Pitch and Informational Interviews

Informational Interviews

What does it mean to conduct an informational interview? It means reaching into your network, finding connections (friends, friends-of-friends, friends-of-your-relatives'-friends, etc.) that are in your target field of work, and asking them out for a cup of coffee or a phone call to pick their brain.

This not only helps you clarify your career goals and eliminate options, but it can also help open doors to your next role.

Below are 5 practical tips to help you master the informational interview:

1. Come prepared with a copy of your resume, a pen and a pad of paper, and a list of questions.
2. Remember: you're *not* asking for a job in these meetings. Your goal is to learn more about the industry, find a job within that line of work (including websites, other resources to use, and common hiring processes), and career options available for someone with your background and skill set.
3. You want to ask each person for their story – what did they want to do when they first graduated, how did they find their first job, how did they end up in their current job, and what do they like or dislike about their work. Don't feel as though you are pestering this person or begging for anything – most people like to talk about themselves and many want to offer their 'pearls of wisdom' to an earnest job seeker.
4. You'll naturally end up sharing your experience and interests during this conversation as well. Take this time to explain what you love about this line of work (show your passion!). Your goal is to walk away from each informational interview with a more refined list of career options and resources. Ideally, you also want an introduction to another person in the field so you can continue setting up new informational interviews.
5. Don't be afraid to give back. When you're in the job hunt, you become immersed in industry news, career resources, and job listings. You'll end up joining new and interesting groups associated with your targeted industry or line of work. You can offer up tidbits of information that may be of interest to the other person. This way, you're also providing value in the conversation.

Contributed by [Amanda Augustine](#), [TheLadders](#)

Elevator Pitch and Informational Interviews

Informational Interview Questions

- How long have you been in your current position?
- What are the day-to-day duties/responsibilities of someone in your position?
- Can you tell me about your professional journey? How did you get to where you are now?
- What are the current trends in your industry? How does that affect your job/company?
- What advice do you have for someone interested in starting a career in your position/industry?
- What tips/advice do you have for job seekers in your field? Are there any websites, professional associations, etc. that you recommend?
- What (if any) other industries have you worked in? How are they different from where you work now?
- Can you tell me about your company culture?
- Given what we've discussed and my interests, is there anyone that you can refer me to for additional informational interviews?

Drafting Additional Questions for Information Interviews

Based on what you know about the industry, what additional industry-specific questions can you use when conducting informational interviews?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Elevator Pitch and Informational Interviews

Informational Interview Checklist

- Dress professionally
- Do your research
- Be punctual
- Use your opening statement—elevator pitch!
- Be prepared to answer questions about yourself and your career interests
- Ask follow up questions, but keep it conversational
- Take notes
- Be attentive and maintain eye contact
- Ask for a business card so that you can follow up
- Send a thank you email to the person you interviewed
- Do not ask for a job!



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Sample Informational Interview Outreach Email

Dear Ms. Smith,

I hope you are well. I was referred to you by your colleague Jim Jones, who is my mentor in StreetWise Partners' program. While I currently work as a sales associate, I am also studying for my Associate's Degree in business and finance and would like to transition to the finance industry after graduation. I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to speak with you about your experience in the finance industry and learn more about your career path.

Please let me know if you would be available to set up a brief meeting this week or next to discuss your career journey. I look forward to speaking with you!

Thank you,
John Anybody

—

John Anybody
Associate Degree Candidate at ABC College
john.anybody@gmail.com
123-456-7890

Elevator Pitch and Informational Interviews

Informational Interview Outreach Email Checklist

Presentation

- Appropriate salutation (Dear Mr./Ms.)
- No longer than 1-2 paragraphs
- Spelling, grammar, and capitalization

Content/Body of Letter

- Reference your shared connection (referral from another contact, shared alma mater, etc.)
- Include a brief description of yourself and your career goals (your elevator pitch)
- Request a brief in-person meeting to learn more about _____

Closing

- Appropriate sign-off (Sincerely, Warm Regards)
- Include your full name
- Signature block with contact information below sign-off (email and phone)



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Sample Informational Interview Thank You Email

Dear Mr. Jones,

Thank you for following up regarding the additional questions I sent after our informational interview last week. I appreciate your thoughtful answers and helpful advice, particularly the experiences you shared from your time as an investment banker, as that is a career path I am interested in pursuing.

I look forward to continuing our conversation in the future.

Thank you,
John Anybody

—
John Anybody
Associate Degree Candidate at ABC College
john.anybody@gmail.com
123-456-7890



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Informational Interview Summary Template

Mentee Name: _____

Date of Informational Interview: _____

Contact Name, Title, and Company:

Brief Summary of Conversation:

Lessons Learned:

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Final Presentation

The Final Presentation is a polished presentation that summarizes your experience in StreetWise Partners' program and gives you the opportunity to creatively communicate your background and career goals.

Presentation Details for All Final Presentations:

- **Audience:** Other mentees/mentors/officers from the program, as well as program staff
- **Length:** 3 - 5 minutes (you will be timed and flagged!)
- Additional 2 minutes of questions and group feedback
- **Presentation Medium:** Your presentation **MUST** be a PowerPoint deck. It cannot be any other presentation medium such as Prezi.

Your Presentation Must Include:

- 5 - 10 slides
- Your background, personal and professional
- What brought you to StreetWise Partners?
- How has the StreetWise Partners' program helped you grow personally and/or professionally?

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Final Presentation

Option 1: Your Journey

“Your Journey” is an opportunity for you to show your professional growth through StreetWise Partners’ program. Highlight the most important and successful aspects of the program for you and how you intend to continue your growth.

Choose 3 of the Topics Below:

- Compare your career goals when you entered the program to your career goals now.
- What have you learned about yourself during the program?
- Share three ways you are more prepared for your job search now compared to when you started the program.
- What is the best advice you received from a mentor, volunteer, lead volunteer, or fellow mentee during the program?
- Highlight your major accomplishments during the program.
- What are your next steps over the next six months and one year?

This presentation is about YOU and sharing YOUR journey through the StreetWise Partners program. This presentation is an opportunity to tell YOUR story, so make sure you tell your story in an exciting and compelling way:

- Put the audience first - what is the best way for you to engage them in your story?
- Have a single message - make sure your full story is tied together by the single theme of your growth
- Build dramatic tension - keep the audience engaged and interested, let them know your story is headed to an exciting conclusion
- Make it personal - your story will be more authentic and credible when it feels real, make it as personal as you are comfortable sharing

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Final Presentation

Option 2: Industry Deep Dive

“Industry Deep Dive” is an opportunity for you to continue your professional development and growth through learning about your preferred industry. Explore the positives and negatives, and discover if your industry of choice is a good fit for you.

Industry Deep Dive Needs to Include:

- Industry of choice when you entered the program and your knowledge of that industry
- Different positions within your industry of choice and a description of the positions. Which position are you most interested in?
- Education and experience needed to work in your industry of choice and in your preferred position
- Top companies within your industry of choice and their hiring criteria/practices for your preferred position
- Non-traditional positions for your industry/cross-related industries
- How has the information you found during your research influenced your perception of the industry?
- Has the information changed your SMART Goals? If so, how? If not, how can you use the information to strengthen your goals?

You may also add other slides as you see fit, but no audio is permitted. Be creative! This is your time to shine.

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Final Presentation

Tips for a Successful Presentation

- Your name is on the presentation
- Use the slides as talking points and elaborate. We want to hear you speak, not watch you read.
- Slides are clearly laid out and easy to follow along
- Slides are free of grammatical errors
- Slides convey your message without writing full sentences
- Slides are on topic
- Add fun pictures, graphs, art
- Keep the presentation to the 3 -5 minute time allotment
- Practice, Practice, Practice!!