

You've probably heard of the "elevator pitch", a speech you would make to someone about yourself if you happened to share a 20-30 second elevator ride with him. Most people never expect to find themselves in an elevator with the CEO, so they never bother to create this short sales pitch for themselves as a job candidate. However, doing so can be very helpful to you during your job search.

SO TELL ME ABOUT YOURSELF

Many hiring managers start off interviews by saying, "So, tell me a little about yourself." This moment is your time to shine, but if you're not prepared, this simple question can be fairly nerve-wracking. What does the other person want to know? Where you went to school? Where you're from? How many kids you have? If you don't prepare an answer ahead of time, you may end up providing the interviewer with a lot of information he doesn't need, while omitting things that would be helpful for him to know. Hint: keep it professional and about your career progression; don't get sucked into the trap of talking about your personal life.

HELLO MY NAME IS...

Your elevator pitch will depend on where you are in your career and where you're trying to go. Just like your resume, it needs to take into account the audience who will be hearing it. If you're introducing yourself to someone at a networking event, you should offer them a brief snapshot of who you are as a professional, today. For instance, "Hi, my name is Joe Smith. I'm a technology consultant who has spent most of my career designing Web sites and networks for private and public sector companies."

for you to communicate it in as short a period of time as possible, say as a co-traveller with a VC in an elevator. Imagine yourself in an elevator with a potential investor. And both of you are together till the elevator reaches the building's tenth floor. This elevator ride is a perfect opportunity for you to get the VC's attention without getting disturbed by anyone. The elevator pitch would be perfect for such occasions when during a short, unscheduled meeting you have an opportunity to make a funding case for your venture. The opportunity may come through industry fo-