

Chris Westfall

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SUMMARY KEYWORDS

elevator pitch, story, students, person, people, empty chair, listener, conversation, presentation, create, message, question, phrase, career, unique, chris, provide, share, persuasive, prospective employer



00:14

Welcome to the student Career Speaker Series. This series will bring to you the nation's top career authors to help you develop a successful career strategy. Our presenter today is Chris Westfall. Chris is the author of the book The new elevator pitch.



00:40

We encourage you to ask questions during today's presentation, simply click on the Ask a Question tab and type it in. And at the end of presentation today, we'll present as many questions as we can. With the time that is left. Let me share a little background on chris chris Westfall is the National elevator pitch champion, and author and award winning business consultant. The elevator pitch for the new economy requires that you can stand and deliver in a way that's compelling, authentic and relevant. No matter what your profession we all have to influence others on a daily basis, providing the kind of communication that inspires others to take action. As one of the most for most sales consultants in the market today. Chris Westfall has appeared on CNN, ABC, NBC and is written for a variety of magazines and newspapers.



01:45

Chris, welcome today. We're glad that you're with us. Chris, just double checking. Are you with us? I sure am. Can you hear me? All right? Yep, we can hear you. Great. Terrific. Well, Chris, we're gonna set up the slides so that you can take us away, we're very excited about the information that you have to share with us today. And this is an area for students that

I think will be very, very important for them to begin to share with those individuals that they meet. If you click on your slide, you'll be able to take over. Thank you, Don, thank you very much. And I want to welcome everyone to this call today. Students, Career Services professionals, the folks that have joined us from across the country, I'm thrilled to be here with you. And I think that what Don said is really true, there's never a good time to make a bad presentation. And that's especially true when it comes time to managing your career. You know, whether you want to get a job, get a raise or get a date, you've got to have a strong elevator pitch, a way that you can introduce yourself and your unique value proposition. So that people listening to you say, Tell me more. As we go through the presentation today, I want to encourage you and reinforce what Dan just said, I want to encourage you to ask questions. And I want to start off with a question. And I think it's very important that you see it here on the screen as you're following along. And that question is why? Why do you need an elevator pitch? Well, an elevator pitch is a short persuasive speech. It's a way to introduce a person, a product or an idea. And it's the classic answer to the question, why should I hire you? You know, I have two kids. And anytime I say anything to either one of them, the first word out of their mouth is why. And that's what employers want to know. In fact, people want to know you. They want to know what's unique about you, and what's special about you beyond your Facebook status and your latest updates. They want to know what it is that makes them special. But maybe, maybe you feel like this guy here in this slide. He's special, he's unique. But how can he create a message that shares how his uniqueness is meaningful or compelling? Can you relate to that? I mean, do you feel like when you go into a job interview that maybe you're trying to present or sell something that you're just not sure if anybody wants it? I mean, isn't that the classic challenge that everyone has is how do I take my experience and make it meaningful? When the course of our conversation today, I'm going to share with you how you can get clear on your personal brand, how you can take command of your personal message and deliver that message and that story in a way that makes a prospective employer say tell me more, I'm going to reveal to you the secrets of the new New elevator pitch. It's no secret that the way we communicate today Well, the elevator platform has been replaced with the social platform, right? We comment and like one another, we tweet. But when it comes time to get down to business, when it comes time to get face to face, we have to be able to be persuasive in a way that makes sure that our avatar is in sync with the way we communicate in real life so that our URL matches up with IRL. And I want to show you how to do that with a modern message, a message that's updated. And that gives you the confidence you need to tell your story across a variety of platforms, whether it's electronic or in person, your message not only has to be strong, but it has to be consistent and authentic. If you want to be heard above the noise, there are millions of messages that bombard us every day. But how can we make your message special? You see, on this slide here, you can take a quick look at the challenge that we face. Right now we've got more ways than ever to connect. But my question to

everyone on this call is, are you able to make real connections, it's easy to text. That's why we do it so much. Right, we can control the conversation, we know what's coming next, because it's not going to come out until we type it in. But when you're meeting with a prospective employer, you've got to go beyond the communication that's comfortable, to a communication that's meaningful. Anything that's meaningful happens face to face, there has to be that face to face connection, so that you can build the career of your dreams. And that's what we're here to do. So



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let's think about what makes a great elevator pitch. And let me share with you some secrets that will make a difference in the way that you communicate. The first secret of the new elevator pitch is that it's not a pitch at all. It's a conversation, a conversation. And we have conversations every day, sometimes with our thumb, sometimes with our mouth, when we have conversations every day. The new elevator pitch, however, is a persuasive conversation, a conversation that creates an outcome. So as you begin to think about your new elevator pitch, think about the outcome that you would like to create with your most important person. Think about your most important person. Now typically, when I ask that question, people instantly think about their, their parents, their loved ones, boyfriends and girlfriends, that sort of thing. But what about in terms of your career? I'm speaking specifically to the students, the folks that are that are out there looking for internships and jobs. Maybe you haven't met that most important person yet. But when you do, what would be the Tell me more that will make you say, wow, what would be the logical conclusion to the conversation? Of course, it would be wonderful if the conversation concluded and they said, Hey, let me write you a check for a million dollars and give you a job with a three day workweek and a country club membership. Well, that'd be great. But you know, that story has everything but a unicorn in it. Our expectations have to be realistic, and our conversation has to be persuasive if we're going to create the outcomes that are necessary. On this next slide here, and I hope everyone's following along with me, we're looking at a slide that says focus your message. On the left hand side of the slide, you see a gentleman standing by three words, I need my I need my are the three words that represent speaking in the first person. Typically, when someone says, tell me a little bit about yourself, we take that as a cue to begin talking in the first person, right? I mean, my here's what I've accomplished. Here's what I've done, here are my my particular unique features and benefits, or we talk in third. And you can see third person on the right hand side here that he she, it, talking about our company, our school, our major, that sort of thing. Third person is what's represented there. But when you want to create an elevator pitch that's compelling, when you want to create a conversation that makes a connection. You have to leave first person and third person behind and focus on the most important person in the room. The most important person is you. When

you make the second person first. That's when your message becomes meaningful because what you've accomplished your grade point average and things that you've done in school, I'm sure those accomplishments are impressive, but until you phrase those accomplishments, in terms of what you can do for your prospective employer, the conversation isn't engaging. You're simply restating your resume. So make the second person first. In fact, the new elevator pitch is the story of you. It's your unique experience your unique academic accomplishments, but express in a way that creates engagement from your listener that makes your listeners say, Tell me more. The way that you phrase your remarks will help your listener say Tell me more. And you've got to make sure that your message is phrased in terms of you can see it here on the screen, what you can do with, through and for others. So many times when I work with college students, and I work with college students and MBA students all across the country, I'm very fortunate in that regard. And I, I absolutely love what I do. And I love the opportunity to connect with students, but so many students ask me, Chris, what do I do about my experience? Well, that's a question that isn't unique to Gen Y. It cuts across all generations, because everyone has experience. And everyone feels that there's something wrong with their experience in some way or another, right, you've either not got enough experience, or you've got too much experience your experiences in a area that you just don't know how to make that connection to your listener well, experience is important, but not as important as connecting it to your listener and showing that your past helps you to become a true solutions provider for a prospective employer. Now, in order to become a solution provider, you have to get clear on what that solution is that you can provide. And to overcome some of the fears that enter into the conversation. If you see here on the slide, you'll see a picture of a firefighter and



11:33

shout out to Kevin matar, who is a emergency medical technician in Chicago. He's also certified for scuba, and he is a guy who I interviewed for my book, the new elevator pitch, and I talked to him because on a daily basis, he literally faces matters of life and death. You know, people say that public speaking is the number one fear but really, no one has ever died from public speaking at least not that I'm aware of. And yet, what firefighters do is quite amazing on a daily basis. And so I reached out to Kevin and I talk with him about how he was able to overcome the fear which which is only natural. And it doesn't necessarily have to be a large audience. If you're in front of one very important person, if you're in front of one hiring manager as the power of the pen that could grant you your career wish, the stakes are high and adrenaline can come into the mix. But the way that Kevin monitor goes in and does his job and is able to accomplish so much and literally save lives. He says he does it by putting the needs of the other person ahead of his own of his own fear. Of course, he's been trained, he knows how to go about facing emergency

situations, and probably much the same way that you've been trained by Career Services or by your experience to communicate with others. But when you put their needs in front of your own, you realize that you're there to have a conversation about the solution that you can provide for the company. It's about your past. It's about what you've done, and the different extracurricular activities you've been involved in and that sort of thing. But it's really about what you can do for your employer. And the greatest way to overcome your fear is to make your listener more important than any anxiety that you're feeling. In other words, make your story, your focus, it's no secret that in life, we get what we expect. And when we change our focus, we can change our results, that we change our story, we can change our results. Now, I'm not suggesting that you change your story and make it something fictitious. I'm suggesting that the way that you tell the story will dictate how people treat you and your success in your career. That's been my experience in my career was that the way that I communicated help to teach others how to treat me how to pay me. And the role that I created for myself was directly related to my story. So there's another secret of the new elevator pitch, whoever tells the best story wins. That's why I wrote this book, which you see here on the screen. It's called the new elevator pitch. And it's designed to give you confidence and command and control around your personal story. And I just want to share it with you as a resource, especially for the Career Services professionals that are here the career counselors that are that are on the call and participating, we encourage you to take a look at the new elevator pitch because it's not just a short two minute speech. It's a method of communication for the digital age and method of communication that's making a difference for schools all around the country. And perhaps it's a message that can make a difference for you. You can find out more about it at the new elevator pitch calm. Let's talk a little bit about where the elevator pitch comes from. And I'm not sure if anyone on the call knows the origin of the elevator pitch. But you can see from this slide, which is sort of a visual clue where the elevator pitch comes from. The elevator pitch actually has its own origins in the studio days of Hollywood studio days of Hollywood, yeah, the idea of the elevator pitch came about from screenwriters or maybe I should say prospective screenwriters who would find a movie executive about to get into an elevator and were perceived to get into the elevator and pitch. That movie executive on an idea for a screenplay. From these humble beginnings, the elevator pitch or the elevator speech has morphed into a short, persuasive way to sell someone an idea before the top floor. At least that's how it originated. But let's take a look at the elevator pitch in a modern context with this quote from Jerry Seinfeld, which appeared in The New York Times, Jerry Seinfeld says, Why would I talk to a TV executive at this point and ask them what they think I have this idea for a TV show, I can just put it up on the internet. You see, the way that we communicate has changed. And from a bit of an urban legend, from the studio days of Hollywood, the elevator pitch has changed. And in fact, it's changed so much that it's in need of a makeover. I mean, let me tell you, my friends, I, I'm a national elevator pitch champion.

And I don't know how realistic it is that I could sell a studio executive on a screenplay idea, even if that screenplay was simple as Snakes on a Plane.



16:27

My point is that the elevator pitch has to be a conversation. It has to be a dialogue. You can't tell your life story from birth up till yesterday in a two minute speech. So why should you even try, you can't fit your dissertation into an elevator ride. But what can you do, you can entice with a persuasive message that leads to the logical outcome that continues your story. Some people think that their story starts off like this guy that you see here on the left hand side, especially when you talk about selling or pitching something, you know, sales has so many negative connotations, but in the context of a new elevator pitch, the new elevator pitch is really about persuasion. It's about influence. And by the way, that's what sales is about. That's also what leadership is about. If you're a student leader, you've got to be focused on persuading others to agree with your ideas to engage with your ideas. But this gentleman, the orange shirt, is the typical pitch man that has no place in your elevator speech. I was doing a workshop, and I saw my friend Fred in the front row. And I do a number of workshops all around the country. I work with corporations, organizations, and nonprofits as well. And Fred was in the front row of this, this particular presentation, I said, Fred, stand up, give me your elevator pitch. Tell me a little bit about yourself. And so Fred stands up and this is what he says. Hi, my name is Fred. And I'm the Joe Montana of marketing.



18:10

Wow. Now, you probably know who Joe Montana is. He's a former Hall of Fame quarterback for the San Francisco 49ers 11 several Super Bowls. But you know what Joe Montana is doing right now. And you see it there on the screen. He's the celebrity pitchman for Skechers. So when Fred said he was the Joe Montana marketing, I didn't know whether he was trying to say that he was retired superstar, or that he just had really comfortable shoes. My point is, don't resort to gimmicks in opening your elevator speech. When you present yourself what you want to be is your most authentic. And don't rely on some tricks or gimmicks or games to present yourself. Now. You've got to be real, if you want to be really meaningful to your listener and really clear about what you can do for that prospective employer. Let me ask you this question. Does anyone out there know who Norbert Leo Butz is? Now, this slide is a bit of a giveaway because you've got a picture of Norbert Leo Butz right there on the right hand side. Norbert Leo Butz is an American actor who played Fierro in the original production of a musical called wicked which you may have heard of. He's also been in shows like Dirty Rotten Scoundrels, and he recently won

the Tony Award for a musical called Catch me if you can catch me if you can, is the story of Frank abig. Now you may have seen the movie with Leonardo DiCaprio, where detective chases Frank, Avigail all around the world as he poses as a pilot, a lawyer and various other people writing hot checks all around the world. Well, Norbert Leo Butz played the role of the detective that was after Frank Abigail and he received a Tony Award I was watching the Tony Award with my wife and daughters the Tony Awards. They made the announcement that the winner for Best Supporting Actor in a Musical was Norbert Leo Butz and Norbert Leo Butz jumped out of his seat and he came running up on stage. And this is what he said is he accepted his award. He said, I don't know if I'm the most talented among this group of actors. But I am certainly the most grateful. Well, that that comment blew my mind. In fact, it blew my mind so much that I came up off the couch in my living room, literally. Because I realized that the Dallas Mavericks were in the playoffs and my wife was making me watch the Tony Awards. Now, that's not exactly true. My wife and oldest daughter are both professional actresses. So when the Tony Awards are on, I get to watch the Tony Awards, and also all caught up on Glee if anyone out there is interested in that. But back to the story of Norbert Leo Butz. He said, I'm not sure if I'm the most talented in this group of actors, but I'm certainly the most grateful. He had just been selected as the most talented of that group of actors. He had won the top award in his field, but instead of copping attitude, he gave gratitude, he came across with something that was quite authentic, quite sincere and yet, completely unexpected. So let me ask you, what is it that unexpected about you about your talents and abilities? What is it that you could share that is unique, and maybe as we go through this, and I'll, I'll give you some prompts, and some things to think about and some things for the folks in career services to consider, as they reteach and retrain on this material. But I want you to think about what it is that special and unique about yourself. You see here on this next slide, you've got a picture of Jeffrey hayzlett. Jeffrey hayzlett, is the former Chief Marketing Officer of Kodak Corporation. And he has written a couple of best selling books, the first of which is called the mirror test. And in the mirror test, Jeffrey hazet, says you've only got eight seconds to grab someone's attention to create that lean in factor. But tell me more. And you want to make sure that in those eight seconds to grab someone's attention that you deliver something that's That's unexpected. Don't start off with statistics. And certainly don't start off with cliches. And if you're going to talk about preconceptions, for example, what everyone thinks is true about accounting, or what everyone thinks is true about students at the University of South Florida, you need to take those preconceptions, and turn them upside down with a unique statement about yourself and your value proposition.



22:37

Don't start off with something that everyone has heard 1000 times before. Start off with a

unique insight into who you are and what you can do. So how do you create that? Well, you've got to ask yourself three questions, three very important questions. I'll share them with you here in just a second. So that you avoid becoming like this guy that you see here, this sort of typical salesperson, you got to ask yourself three questions. And these are three questions that I figured out as I was working with an MBA student, I do work with the number 12 rated MBA program in the United States and as well as other programs. And I'm thrilled to get that opportunity and feel very fortunate to work with students who are so talented. I was working with one particularly bright MBA student, and I said to him on a hot shot. Let me hear your elevator pitch. Tell me, what is your greatest accomplishment? And he stood up and he said, Well, I'm very proud of the fact that I got my undergraduate degree in just three years. I said, Wow, three years. That's that's really impressive. Congratulations. But guess what? Me too. So let me ask you the first of three questions, this first question that just has two words in it. Here they are ready? So what? So what do you got your undergraduate degree in three years that that is an impressive accomplishment, but many others have done the same. So how can you take your accomplishments and phrase them in terms of what you can do with through and for others? We did some coaching. And I worked with them. And I asked him again. So what is your greatest accomplishment? He said, Well, I'm very proud of the fact that I got my undergraduate degree in just three years, and I did it not by cutting corners, but by learning how to be more efficient and effective with my time. As a result, when I got into the workforce, I was promoted more quickly than my peers. And now I'm a general manager. I said, congratulations, General Manager. That's great. I hate to tell you this, though, but there are a lot of general managers out there. So let me ask you the second question. The second question also has two words and here they come ready. So what so what I mean wasn't trying to be harsh or ask hard questions, but when you're in front of an employer, and they're getting ready to think about paying you that salary, not just for the next year, but for many years to come, I want to know, so what, and you have to phrase your unique advantages. In terms of your listener, I said, Please, can you try to phrase your, your solution in terms of me, and not that I'm the be all and end all of the judge, but I happen to be the person in the room who was listening, and I wanted to get engaged and enrolled. Plus, I only knew that he was a gentleman, I newly graduated in three years. So what was it that he could share with me that was unique, and it didn't get me involved? Try again. So here's what he said. I'm very proud of the fact that I got my undergraduate degree in three years. And I did it not by cutting corners, but by learning how to be more effective and efficient with my time. As a result, when I got into the workforce, I was promoted more quickly than my peers. And now I'm a general manager. And I help my team to learn how to be more effective and efficient with their time. So I take my experience, and I translate that into new revenues and new profits for my company. Now, I'm not sure if you're interested in working with folks that have those capabilities, or my my skills might be of service to your organization, but it's so maybe we should connect on

LinkedIn. And here's my business card, and let's get together, have coffee sometime, we can talk more about it.



26:31

Well, my friends, I didn't need to ask him the third question, which I'm sure you can guess is, so what, because he had answered all three of those questions. In his delivery, he had answered with a story that got me instantly engaged, and went from quotes on a resume to a solution, a solution that he could offer for me. And that got me engaged. So your assignment right now is to think about three special characteristics, unique attributes, or I really like this third one community commitments because if you've been involved in a nonprofit organization, or if there's something that you've devoted your time to, perhaps a Greek organization, they're on campus or another student group, sometimes talking about those community commitments can be a great source of connection with your material. You know, if you want your story to matter to someone else, start off by talking about what matters to you. And do it in a way that's that's engaging. And that shows your, your enthusiasm, you see the best elevator pitch, it's not judged by the sound of your vowels or your confidence, it's not judged by your gestures, or anything like that, it's actually judged by what your listener does, when you're done. And creating a message that generates action that leads to results starts with you getting connected with your material. So think about special characteristics, unique attributes or community commitments, that you can phrase in terms of others, what have you done for others, is a great place to start. If you want to present your business case, that you could do something special for your prospective employer. So think about that. And we might come back to that at the tail end of the of the call today, and give you an opportunity to share some of your unique characteristics. And a big part of my my coaching practice. And the engagement that I do with students involves getting clear on these unique characteristics. And in fact, if you're interested to learn more after the presentation, today, I'll give you the information on my YouTube channel, where you can see actual clips of presentations, where I'm working with students, in groups and individually. So you can learn more about how to get clear on your message. And making connections, it's very easy to start off by saying we're the biggest, we're the best for those of you that go to larger schools, it's very easy to say, you know, I'm coming from the school and my degree, the letters after my name, the two or three letters after my name should speak for themselves. But unfortunately, in this economy, there are a lot of folks out there that have great degrees from prestigious institutions. The challenge is how do you prove the value of that degree and that value is proven on an individual basis, the great reputations that the terrific schools enjoy or reputations that have been built by individual contributions. And whether you go to a famous name school or an up and coming institution, you've got to be clear about focusing on what's unique about you, because not all graduates of a particular institution are created equal, as you

know. So what matters most is what's unique about you about your story, and the way that you achieve that uniqueness is by creating a conversation that's engaging and the best way to do that is by framing the conversation. In fact, in the next portion of the presentation, I'm going to share with you some ideas that will help you to live really read minds. Now that may sound like a bold claim. So let me explain. One of the secrets of the new elevator pitch is that the best elevator pitch starts with what your listener is thinking, what your listener is thinking, remember, our focus is on the second person, we've got to make the second person first. And we have to focus on what our listeners thinking. This is something that I learned when I was working with a coaching client, a pharmaceutical sales rep came to me for career development coaching. And we sat down to meet for the first time and she said, Chris, I am so glad to meet you. I, I've heard so much about you. Tell me a little bit about yourself. Well, that's the classic setup for an elevator pitch. And I thought, wow, this is gonna be really easy. Okay. I'm the national elevator pitch champion.



30:53

She looked at me and she said, Wow, that's really great. What's an elevator pitch. My first thought was, well, I knew I could help her. But I realized that I had done what right, encourage my con, my contacts and my clients never to do and that is blurt out your inner monologue start blurting achievements and accomplishments from your resume. Without framing the conversation. I hadn't stopped to consider how to frame the conversation correctly. And now I want to share with you four framers, four conversation starters that can help you to get engaged with your listener and here they are reading. The first one is have you ever noticed? Have you ever noticed dot dot dot and by the way, I'll go through and I'll show you examples of of these. So you can, you can clarify, but let me get out the four framers here, have you ever noticed we want to put the second person as close to the front as possible? Here, the second person isn't first, but it's the second word. And number two, you know how? Number three, I'll never forget when number three is very useful if you have a defining moment in your life, if there was a particular event that led you to your to your chosen career path. And example, for number three, we'll never forget when my sister was diagnosed with cancer, and it changed our whole family dynamic. Now she was able to go through chemotherapy, and now she's been cancer free for a number of years. But that defining moment helped me to decide to major in pre med here at the University of Pennsylvania. And I hope to go on to medical school. So that I can give something back to oncology patients and help to cure folks who face challenges like my sister did. That sort of personal story. And a connection with a past event can be very, very powerful. And then finally, number four, doesn't it seem like and of course, number four really, really is saying Doesn't it seem to you like but we don't exactly talk like that. But that's it's sort of an implied you. But this is a way to start off that initial story. And I'll show you examples of

these framers in just a second. Because you've got to make sure that you take your story and put it in the palm of your audience's hand, you've got to take your story out of the academic institution, and phrase your advantages in terms of a concrete hon. Create solution that you can provide. So don't pitch, create that conversation and do it by framing up the story of you. When you put your story in the palm of your listeners hand, you create the engagement that you need. Now, you may want to know more about how to create that engagement and how to really present yourself. And so I want to share with you this link here, that is a free download for you. It's a one hour audio file, and you see it there. It's [bit.ly forward slash, presentation power](https://bit.ly/forward-slash-presentation-power). And it's a program that I've put together as an audio file that will share with you my best tips and tricks for creating a powerful presentation. From me, I talk for a living, I'm a storyteller, and I help others with their stories and presentation power represents my best tips to help you get clear on your message. So that you can speak without saying, um, and, and like, so that you can communicate clearly. And I encourage you to take a look at that link after the presentation is over. And if you're interested in receiving copies of these slides and stuff, I believe that they'll be made available as well. We share with you an example of one of the framers you know how Warren Buffett wrote that letter in the New York Times very famous letter about how he pays a lower tax rate than any of his employees. Well, that's what I want to do. I want to help high net worth individuals to make sure that they maximize their tax returns. And that's why I'm studying accounting here at Denison University. That's why I've gone into this field so that I can help individuals like you to make sure that when it's time to settle up with Uncle Sam, that you take every possible advantage of the rules of law so that you maximize your tax. Right.



35:02

How is that different than saying, Hi, my name is Tim Smith, I go to Denison University, I'm majoring in accounting. Well, the information is the same. But if you really want to create a powerful elevator pitch, start with one of the four framers start with that story that makes people lean in, don't start with your name, rank and serial number. That's right, in the new elevator pitch, it's a scientific fact that your name rank and serial number are not going to change in the course of a two minute speech. It's so easy to start off with something that's pedestrian. That's yesterday's news. That's your grandpa's elevator pitch, the modern message is about you. And I don't mean that it's about you, it's about you, your listener, it's about making the second person first. So start with a method of engagement that recognizes the most important person in the room with your demonstrated characteristics. And of course, the most important person is your listener. Here's another example. You know, I've learned a lot here at the University of California, San Diego. But the greatest lesson I've ever learned, came from an eight year old girl in

Guatemala, when I volunteered last year for Habitat for Humanity, and went down to Central America, and helped to build a home for a family. They're in Guatemala and Christina, the eight year old girl, when when we gave her and her family, the keys to that home, I realized that what we take for granted here in this country is something that that can be so spectacular, and so life changing in other less fortunate places. And that's why I'm committed to the cause of helping folks to get into affordable housing in Central America. That's an elevator pitch. That's clear, that's concise, that's compelling. And that gives you an insight into who this person is beyond just the information on his or her resume. So consider that and consider your story. And if you'd like to know more, again, this is actually a sort of a modified excerpt from the new elevator pitch in a chapter called why hire you. And it can give you more insights if you're interested in learning more after the presentation. So you want to provide your demonstrated strengths and strengths have to be demonstrated. I mean, it's one thing to say I'm nine sides of awesome. Would you like some, but how have you demonstrated that you're awesome, because it's easy to inject hyperbole and adjectives into an elevator pitch, you can say just about anything. But what can you do that's really meaningful. And what you can do really starts with your values and your ideals. And when you share your values and your ideals, you can create common ground and that common ground is what leads to uncommon results and the connection with that prospective employer. That could be your ticket to your dream job, even in a difficult economy. As an elevator pitch guy, I'm interested in helping people to get to yes, I'm interested in agreement and compliance. And I discovered an important study into the nature of agreement. I mean, I assume that those of you that are students and jobseekers on this call, you're interested in finding a path to Yes. I discovered a study that was conducted by Helen Langer. Ellen Langer is a Harvard researcher. And this study was done a few years ago, and it was conducted in order to gain insights into the nature of agreement and compliance, how to get people to say, yes. And so here's what Helen Langer and her team of researchers did. This, this study was conducted a few years ago, they went into libraries into libraries where people were lined up to use the copy machine, they would get lined up to use the copy machine. And Helen and her team of researchers went in and they said to folks in line, excuse me. Do you mind if I cut in line? I have to make five copies? Excuse me, do you mind if I cut in line? I have to make five copies? And I'm curious to know, for those of you on the call, what percentage of the time do you think that people said, Sure, go ahead, you can you can go ahead and make copies. And now maybe if you can help me out here and share with me some of the feedback that you receive? I'd be curious to know what people on the call thing. You can type in your answers there on the screen. What percentage of the time do you think people said yes? What percentage of the time would you say yes. response from Tom thinks it's 60% of the time. Interesting. You know what, Tom, you are exactly right. Tom may have participated in this survey. It actually 2% right on the money 60% of the time, six times out of 10 people said yes. So the researchers as good researchers do, they said, well, let's see what we can do to

influence these results. Let's see if we can change them in some way. And here's what they said.



39:54

They went in to libraries where people want to talk to make copies and they said excuse me, do you mind if I cut in line? I have to make five copies? Because I'm in a hurry. Excuse me, I have to cut in line. Make five copies, because I'm in a hurry. What do you think happened to the results?



40:22

get any feedback your, your Shiko suggesting 5%. Was there? Right? She didn't like that reason. Yeah. So the finger went down, and that is down. But way down. I mean, 55 basis points basically 55% down. Okay, what other? Are you getting other feedback? anybody think of 30% from Fred. And Sandy is 40. And Ed is 75. I'm sorry about that, Fred. Not go ahead on. So I was talking over you over the phone. That's it. That's it. That's all Oh, when they went in, and they say excuse me as make five copies, because I'm in a hurry. The results changed. They went up, they went up to 94% 94%. And so the researchers thought, well, this word, the cause just providing a reason is something that's very, very powerful. So let's see. Let's just test it one more time. And they went back in and this is what they said, Excuse me. Do you mind if I cut in line? I have to make five copies? Because I have to make copies? Excuse me, do you mind if I send in an ad to make five copies? Because I have to make copies? What happened to the results?



42:01

jovita says 50%. Another 80%? Another name 50? named 50%. So everybody thinks that goes down some more than others? Well, you're all correct. The numbers did go down to 93% 93%. And so the researchers surmised that this word because was the magic word. The because was the power that simply providing a reason was all they needed to do. So they had to test it one more time. And they went back and this is what they said, Excuse me. Do you mind Am I cut in line, I have to make 20 copies? I've made 20 copies, because I'm in hurry because I have to make copies. What happens the results, the results went through the floor, the bottom dropped out. And the reason why? Because those expectations were unrealistic. The expectation was uncomfortable, it was too inconvenient. So the message that we take away from the liner study is don't go for 20. Don't go to 20. Don't try to ask for too much. Keep it brief. In fact, if you go for five, four times, and provide a because or reason. Even if your reason isn't that strong, you still can

have a 93% success rate. So keep your message brief. follow the example of Twitter, and make sure that you provide a reason that answers the question, why hire you. Finally, in terms of an elevator pitch, your elevator speech, you know, if it's persuasive, you want to bring it to a close, you want to bring it to its logical conclusion, you want to make sure that your expectations are realistic and logical, so that you can create the same kind of success that they did in the Langer study. And I want to introduce you to another idea that will help you to make sure that your expectations are realistic. And that will help you to do as I promised before,



44:07

to help you to read minds. That's right, to help you to read minds. And in order to help you read minds, I need to draw your attention to the little black and white graphic here in the left hand corner of the slide. You see there a chair and not just any chair, but an empty chair. And this is an empty chair that actually predates the Republican National Convention. And the bit that Clint Eastwood did that actually kind of ruined my story about the empty chair. But if you'll stay with me on this, my empty chair has a message. When you think about who the empty chair is reserved for now. It's not just reserved for sitting presidents. The empty chair is reserved for the person who will be impacted most by your conversation, your elevator pitch, but that person isn't in the room. Maybe it's the hiring manager when you're meeting with human resources. Maybe it's the student who's going to read the textbook that you're going to sell to the school district, maybe it's cancer patient who's going to be using the MRI machine that you are proposing to the doctors into the hospital, you see the patient, the student, the person impacted by your solution may not be in the room. And that empty chair is reserved for them as a reminder, to help you to think about who your audience is thinking about the empty chair is reserved for your customers, customer. And as the job search is a persuasive process where you want to create an outcome, you want to be influential, you want to create influence that makes people want to hire you, you've got to think about the empty chair, you've got to think about what your listener or your audience is thinking about. And as you consider the next logical steps, your outcome that tell me more, phrase it in a way that's modern, in a way that fits for how we communicate today, you know, you can always try the software or the app before you buy it, right. So why not offer the same sort of solution in the job search process? Why not phrase your next step as an invitation, and networking meeting, this invitation could be as simple as you've heard in another examples that I've given, let's, let's exchange business cards, let's connect on LinkedIn, maybe we can meet for coffee sometime. But the face to face, let's talk in real life, about the solutions that you're looking for. And the solutions that I can provide. That simple invitation can be the logical next step and pressure off, you know, in two minutes or less, you're not going to be able to speechify someone into a hiring decision. But you can create a dialogue, a connection,

you don't want to be hired by a company make a decision about you in two minutes or less. But you definitely want to be hired by a company that says no more and creates the engagement that you need, why not offer an invitation, that's logical as that next step, and you've got to give some time to consider what that invitation is. And for those of you that are Career Services professionals on the call, I encourage you to think about what that logical next step might be that a student could ask for. What is that logical next step. And I keep saying the word logical logical means that your story reflects an understanding of your potential employer,



47:22

that you've done your homework that you know, a ballpark figure of what the starting salaries are at this particular company, that you know what this position might pay that you know, a little something about the environment, in a competitive marketplace, that your prospective employer is in, you have to do your homework. And there are four words, that can make a real difference in terms of your story. And therefore words that are difficult to convey for millennials, I'll be frank with you. But if you can convey these words, you separate yourself from everyone else. And here they are. I've thought this through. If you can show a prospective employer that you're thinking about what they're thinking about if you're focused on your customers customer. And when I say customer, that first customer is the person in front of you, the person that you want to hire you, when you're thinking about what they're thinking about, you're creating the kind of connection that's very meaningful. So here are some phrases that can help you to get the ball back in the dialogue. Because the new elevator pitches I've said before, it's a conversation. So here are some things, some words that you can share, and I won't read these to you, you can read them just as well as I can. But by doing research on websites like LinkedIn, you can find out about information that that can color your conversation. And being specific, in your remarks, shows interest, and shows that you've done your homework and shows that you've thought this through thinking things through is what leaders do. And leadership comes at any level leadership is not just about the title that you have. Leadership is about influencing others. And if you want to influence others, show others that you recognize them. And every phrase here gives you the opportunity to show how you recognize the person in front of you and the company that's of interest to you. So as we come to the conclusion of my prepared remarks, Sharon will turn it over for questions in just a second. You see here the recipe for the new elevator pitch. You want to remember the frame the conversation we talked about for framers that showed up earlier in the conversation today. You want to be unexpected in your opening, but not gimmicky. You want to let people know that you've studied statistics, so that you can define them that you're not here to relive a stereotype or a cliché, but to provide new solutions and to look at things in new ways. You want to talk about your unique accomplishments and aspirations but

doing in a context of why and because the best conversations start with why and that's what people want to know why you Why should I hire you? Well, think about your because Because if you hire me, what, what's going to be different? When you're on board, when you're in the picture, you've got to think about that. And for Career Services professionals, you've got to help students to, to craft that message. Because when every employer is looking for every employer across every industry is one thing. And one thing only, and that is solutions providers. What is the solution that you can provide? And how can you phrase that turns with considering empty chair, in terms of thinking of your customers customer, the person or persons who will be dramatically impacted by what you propose you come on board? Who are the folks that you're going to be working with? And what will be your responsibilities? And what departments will you impact? Do your homework so that you can answer those questions to the best of your ability and included invitation? What's the next logical conclusion to your conversation? Finally, perhaps most importantly, remember, as I said, before the challenge of our age challenge of our time, that real connection, we've got more ways than ever to connect. But how do you create that that real connection? How do you find that common ground, it's by presenting your story in a way that's compelling and focusing not necessarily on your remarks, but on the most important person in the room. And that is, your listener, create the action that you want create that Tell me more. If you're interested to learn more, I want to invite you to connect with me via your favorite social network. Mine is probably LinkedIn. But you can also find me on Facebook at Ford slash the new elevator pitch, I'd like to invite you to like my page, you can check out my book, at the new elevator pitch, comm or find me on Twitter, I take my networking very seriously. And I work hard to make sure that I provide value to my network. And if I can provide value to you. And when I say you, I mean the students as well as the Career Services professionals that are listening on this call, please don't hesitate to reach out and let me know. I've also put together a series of YouTube videos on my YouTube channel is youtube.com. forward slash last fall on line. That concludes my prepared remarks. And I want to leave the time that we have here together to open it up for questions. And Donald turn it back over to you any questions at all from the group that I might be able to answer?



52:19

Chris, thanks for that presentation, you, you make it quite apparent why you were the national elevator pitch champion. And it looks to me like you've thought this through and have a formula that all of us can follow. And the other thing that I see from this is, you're reminding all of us that an elevator pitch is not optional. It's it's really if we want to be identified as a professional, someone that could in eight seconds or so begin to get the attention of someone that's going to hire us we need to have an elevator pitch. It's so true

Don, and you've got to make sure that you match up with your avatar, I mean, until the day when you can text or tweet your way into a job, you've got to be able to tell your story in a way that's that's compelling. And that's really the focus of my my coaching practice. And the reason that I do what I do is because I believe that everyone has a story to tell. And one of the greatest tragedies, I think would be if some of the brilliant minds that are on this call, didn't have the ability and the skill to tell their story in a way that does justice to to what they've been working on and to to the time and effort that they've invested in getting their degrees. Well said, and I share your passion. In fact, AI research is showing that 60% of us, according to the Stanford shyness clinic that 60% of us consider us ourselves shy. So if we can't develop our elevator pitch, to give us a little more confidence, chances are we're going to lose that one opportunity that could have changed our lives. Well, and if you consider the new elevator pitch as a conversation, remember, we all have conversations every day. So we all have the skills and the tools that that we need. The like anything in life, though success is about focus. It's about where you put your attention and when you can get some coaching and some guidance, so that you understand how to translate your story into actionable results and into a message that makes someone say, you know what, we do want to hire you. And you consider and visualize that day. It can be it can be very exciting and something that's that's not something that doesn't make us turn inward. But it makes us say, you know what, I know how to do this. I think that you know, for my for my introverted clients, when they know how to do something and they know why to do something. They have the skills that they need. And and that is really something that I'm very committed to and I know you are to helping people to tell their stories and I'm, I'm grateful for for you reaching out for talent marks and to just have this opportunity to help tell my story. And it's just my hope that it helps others to tell their And whether it's more effective? Well, Chris, that's a good segue into a question from Ed, how do you keep from sounding like a canned pitch a canned presentation? Great question. And don't memorize your presentation. That's, that's the best advice that I could give you. The new elevator pitch isn't something that just takes place on a single elevator, a new elevator pitch has to work in the lobby in the boardroom. It has to work in Starbucks when you're on a plane, on a train, when you're meeting people for the first time, you know, your unique skills and capabilities don't change. But you know, you're going to present yourself differently. If you're having an informal conversation, meeting someone for the first time at a networking event, versus an on campus interview with your dream and obviously, the it's going to change. But no matter who you're talking to, I would encourage you to use the tools that we've talked about here, consider the four framers make sure that it's a conversation and make sure that you make it about your listener, anything you talk about, phrase it in terms of what you can do with through and for others. And by putting your attention on a second person, by putting the attention on your listener, you can never make a mistake. The mistake would be to sit there and quote chapter and verse from your resume, or from the things that you've accomplished in your professional career, without

tying that into the person is right in front of you. And that that's the source of real engagement. I hope that helps you. Question from Andy, what's the best way to test my pitch? Is there a formula or a way I can try to get some feedback from other people.



56:33

And the best way is right in your pocket, take out your phone, turn on the camera, switch it to video, and videotape yourself. Now that may sound like you'd rather have a root canal, but I'm telling you, the best advice I can give you is to get in front of the camera, you know, they say the camera never lies. And I tell my coaching clients that I'll provide the best insights that I can but no one is better at listening to your story than you are. And you need to be able to practice it and to and to see it. So that. And again, when I say practice, don't don't practice that where you memorize it. But watch yourself, watch the way that you deliver your message. And then practice it with others, especially for those of you that are in that 60% dimension that tend to work outside. You have to make yourself get connected. Because if you want you want to practice it, before you get in front of that, that employer, you want to make sure that you have those practice sessions and for Career Services professionals, I'm sure there's an opportunity for you to reach out and say, You know what, here's the practice sessions that we have coming up so that people can actually do that. And I'm a big, big advocate of videotape yourself. Very good points and a question from Sue. She's giving you a little bit of a challenge here. Maybe you can help her out craft that the elevator pitch. She's had a leadership position in Panhellenic. And she manages their events, any advice on how she can spin that? So someone would be interested to hear more? Absolutely. Last year, I had the opportunity to speak at the southeastern Panhellenic conference. And I've also done a number of presentations for Greek organizations as a keynote for alpha Omicron pi last year, and I love working with with Panhellenic. So thank you for your question. I appreciate that. A couple of things that have been very effective for me and working with Greek organizations is to talk about what the contribution is that your organization makes to the community, to the Greek organizations as a whole. And can I apologize, I don't know whether you're speaking about Panhellenic at your university or national position. But what is the contribution that you make to the community? And how is that meaningful? How are you able to change lives for participants, analytic organizations, or perhaps for the philanthropic organizations that you support the nonprofit organizations that you support. And when you start there, when you start with the contribution that you make, it changes the conversation from, you know, well, our founders talked about, you know, not that that information isn't important. But storytelling is about choosing your point of view. And I would submit to you that the strongest place to begin is that that area of community contributions, because when you establish the contributions that you make to the community, the grid community, the university community, the national community, a

community of nonprofits, whatever the case may be, when you establish that link, what what it naturally leads you into this, we'd love to have your help, you could really make a difference for us here at tried out or here at the Arthritis Foundation or whatever the case may be. But it's a great way to get people engaged and to lead towards the persuasive outcome that you'd like you'd like whether it's, you know, dedication of their time or just an interest in going through recruitment, whatever the case may be. I hope that Hope that helps. Chris, thank you very much for being with us today sharing your expertise, this is going to be incredibly helpful for students to begin to build their elevator pitch. As you continue to speak around the country, we encourage you to update on our Facebook fan page so that we can follow you and stay in touch with your knowledge. And I encourage everyone that's been involved today to take advantage of Chris's offer for the videos and the YouTube articles so that you can begin to use additional resources to build your elevator pitch. Chris, have a great day. Thank you, Don. Thank you. It's been a pleasure, everyone all the best to everyone on the call and thank you so much for participating. It's been a pleasure. Thank you.