

3.4 Networking & Elevator Pitches

Related Area: Communications

Lesson Objective(s): *Students will have to network often and be able to introduce themselves, explain their background, and share their goals in a very short timeframe. This lesson is intended to introduce the concept of the “Elevator Pitch,” the basics to crafting one, and how to write one for their current school or career situation.*

Outcome Goal(s): *By the end of this lesson, students will have their own written elevator pitch.*

Instructor Preparation Checklist

☐	Supplies and Tasks	Materials and Resources
	Media & Audio	Video Projector
	Websites	YouTube (2 links): https://youtu.be/Lb0Yz_5ZYzI https://youtu.be/XvxtC60V6kc
	Read/Review	3.4-A White House women want to be in the room where it happens
	Field Trips/Co-op/Outings	
	Supplies Needed	
	Print/Copy/Laminate	Peer Constructive Feedback Worksheet
	Miscellaneous	

Additional Notes:

Warm Up: Goal Mapping

Description: Instruct students to use the strategy mapping from the previous unit to create a map of how to get to one of their big goals. This may be getting into the school they wish to attend, the kind of job they want to have, or even a creative project they wish to complete. Students should break down their big goal into its individual steps in order to understand what they have to do to achieve their goal.

Explain that they should start the framework by saying, “What is my ultimate goal?” and work backwards from there to consider the milestones they will need to achieve it. By envisioning the big picture and then working out what it takes to get there, students will be able to see that small tasks are the building blocks to big dreams.

Purpose/Key Skills: The purpose of this activity is to build on previously introduced tools in order to help students prepare for the future. It's also a springboard for the Elevator Pitch activity later in the class, as this is the goal they'll be using.

Notes/Vocabulary: Strategy mapping, goals

Materials: Paper and pencil

(1) Elevator Pitch: What Is It?

Description: Show students the video [“How to Create Your 30 Second Elevator Pitch!”](#) by the Intern Queen explaining the steps to a good elevator pitch. Then write the individual steps on the board. In a class discussion, have students define and explain the importance of each step. Some of these will be self-evident, but the objective is to have students recognize the logical flow of the classic “elevator pitch” so that they're better able to use it as a tool, rather than a memorized speech.

Purpose/Key Skills: The purpose of this video is to acquaint students with the concept of elevator pitches and also what they're used for, i.e. explaining your background, current state, aspirations, and interest in the listener in a brief window.

Notes/Vocabulary:

Elevator Pitch Steps

1. Introduction
2. Background
3. Clarification
4. Connection
5. “Ask”
6. Closeout

Materials: Video Projector

(2) Elevator Pitch: What Do You Want?

Description: Tell students to take their strategy map and consider the next step they'll need help with in their goal — maybe it's meeting a professional they'd like to apprentice to or a recruiter from the school they'd like to attend. Having an elevator pitch written out will provide them an outline for how to explain their goals and ask for what they want. Then give them five minutes to write their elevator pitch.

After, break them up into small groups or pairs. Each group member should perform their elevator pitch and the other group members should provide constructive feedback using the

Peer Constructive Feedback Worksheet. (Note: students will need to write a separate Peer Constructive Feedback Worksheet for each group member.)

Purpose/Key Skills: In their careers, individuals will often have to be able to present an idea or even themselves in a very short window of time. Being able to think on their feet and recognize what message and details they need to get across will help them to better communicate their goals to others.

Notes/Vocabulary: After the activity, the teacher should note that this elevator pitch, while important, isn't a substitute for making real connections. This should help students streamline their professional and academic aspirations so that when they have the opportunity to share them, they can state them clearly. Stress that the networking is about building professional relationships with people who can help you in your career. The elevator pitch simply helps them put their goals into words so that they are able to ask for the specific kinds of mentoring and assistance they may need.

An "elevator pitch" also does not need to be memorized. When they are out networking, they should be able to take the blueprint of their pitch and improvise to fit the setting, just as they did with their extemporaneous speeches.

Materials: Paper and pencil, Peer Constructive Feedback Worksheet

(4) Notes on Networking

Description: Keep students in their groups. Display several quotes on networking on the board, one at a time, and have students explain what these quotes mean. Spend several minutes discussing each quote before moving on to the next one.

Next, have students in their discussion groups spend 10 minutes talking about a time that someone they knew helped them to do something they otherwise wouldn't have been able to do. For example, maybe their neighbor helped them get a summer job or perhaps a friend lent them something they needed for a project.

When 10 minutes are up, begin the discussion by saying that not everyone has equal access to opportunities. Then show them this definition:

Neptism: the practice among those with power or influence of favoring relatives or friends, especially by giving them jobs. Source: Google Dictionary.

Explain that we're all born into certain social circles. For example, we have more access to people who do our parents' jobs than people who work in other fields. We all have different access and relationships to people based on where we live, what hobbies we have, what

people we spend time with, and many, many more factors. This means that upfront, some people will have an easier time getting their foot in the door without very much effort.

Hand out **3.4-A White House women want to be in the room where it happens**. Have students read this article excerpt and discuss the questions at the bottom of the page.

Remind students that in their first discussion, they were able to find people already in their lives who helped them achieve a goal or solve a problem. Though we don't all have access to the same people, we all have people who can help us. Networking is not a competition. Like the example in 3.4-A, people who work together are often better able to achieve their goals.

Ask them to look around the room, and consider that they already have a classroom of people with whom they're connected, including the teacher. Ask them to think about everyone in the school who may be able to help them, including other students and teachers, support staff, administration, etc.

Remind students that though we don't all have equal opportunities, we all have the ability to foster the relationships around us and let those people know when we need help achieving our goals. Remind them also that with an increasingly connected world, social media and the Internet allow us unprecedented access to people we would have had difficulty connecting to in previous eras.

Purpose/Key Skills: The purpose of this activity is to emphasize the importance of building relationships in school and careers. It's also to address the inequity that students might face in the professional lives and even currently and how they can use the resources around them to combat that.

Notes/Vocabulary: networking, nepotism

Materials: Projector, 3.4-A White House women want to be in the room where it happens

(5) Reimagining Elevator Pitches

Description: Have students watch this video on the ["6 Elevator Pitches for the 21st Century"](#). Then have them discuss how, now that they have a clarified basic elevator pitch, they might be able to change their message in order to suit their needs in different situations. For example, explaining your goals to a recruiter might be different from casually discussing a school you'd like to attend with an alumnus at a party.

By doing this, students are taking the basic idea of an elevator pitch, and seeing it as a springboard for other goal-oriented projects. In essence, they're learning that they can connect with and be noticed by influential people in their desired fields in many ways.

Purpose/Key Skills: The purpose of this video is to emphasize to students that once they've done the difficult work of outlining and stating their goals, they can use that information in a number of different ways to help them in their pursuits. An "elevator pitch" is not a single, memorized speech; it is a guideline for presenting information to individuals who may help them in their career.

Notes/Vocabulary:

Materials: Video Projector

(6) Elevator Pitch Remix

Description: Have the students look at their goals again and consider at least one novel way that they might reach out to someone who could help them achieve their goals — Could they tweet something? Create a blog about the hobby they'd like to make a career? Could they tell a funny anecdote at a networking event?

Purpose/Key Skills: The purpose of this activity is to help students recognize how to take their basic platform and change it to suit their needs. It also helps students to think outside the box in terms of getting noticed and making connections.

Notes/Vocabulary:

Materials: Paper and pencil

Formative Assessment

□	Skill Description and Assessment	Notes
	Student has drafted an elevator pitch including all steps	
	Student is able to share that elevator pitch verbally with at least one other person	
	Student is able to revise their elevator pitch to some degree	