

Developing an elevator pitch

Overview

The activities will help students share ideas and influence decision making.

Learning intentions

- Students understand how to create an 'elevator pitch' to confidently present ideas and proposals to the school executive or other community groups.

Resources

- Writing paper, pens
- Whiteboard or butcher's paper

Activity: The elevator pitch

Instructions

Explain to students that an elevator pitch is a brief, persuasive speech that can be used to spark interest in a project, idea, or product. It needs to be succinct (brief), while conveying important information. The speech should be no longer than 4 minutes.

To craft a great pitch, follow these steps – it may be useful to write each step as discussed, on a whiteboard or butcher's paper:

- Identify your purpose in speaking.
Summarise in one simple sentence what your project / idea / product does or provides.
 - Describe the benefits of your project / idea or product.
 - List the features that differentiate your project / idea or product.
What sets it apart or makes it stand out from others?
 - Explain key features of your proposal.
 - Give an example of a successful outcome of your project.
What will be achieved as a result?
 - Sum your project / idea or product up in one key sentence to persuade your audience.
 - Smile!
- Have a student read out this example:
'My name is Sarah and I come from Port Sinclair High School. It's a really good school but I think we can do more to involve the community to help students feel like they belong.'

Recently we enrolled a large number of students from refugee backgrounds and I think it would be fantastic to have some people from Syrian backgrounds come and teach us about Arabic food and customs.

It would be a great way to show them they are welcome and that we want to learn about their background. They could also benefit from meeting people from their language background to find out information about our local area. We could even get the students themselves to work with the community groups to teach us these things.

I think it would be an excellent way for us to show we care about them.'

- Get the students to work in pairs or groups to create and deliver their elevator pitch. They can use their own idea or you can give them one of the following;
 - New water bubblers for the playground
 - A common room for senior students
 - Starting an after-school homework club
 - Starting a hip-hop dance club run by students
 - Going on excursion to "Sculpture by the Sea".
 - Starting a breakfast club
 - Having a school wellbeing day with neighbouring schools
 - An anti-bullying poster competition
 - Including students on the selection panel for a year advisor
- When they have finished writing their pitch, ask them to practice it with another pair who gives them "2 stars and a wish" as feedback (two things they really liked about the pitch; one suggestion of something that could be improved or changed).
- The students make changes to their pitch before delivering them to the whole group.

Debriefing questions

Ask the group to consider:

- Which pitch did you find most effective and why?
- What else be useful when you're doing an elevator pitch to support your proposal? Some examples could include a prototype, the project plan or a poster.

Concluding comments

Some people find public speaking difficult. To help you to feel more relaxed and confident, remember to allow time to prepare what it is you would like to say. You might also like to try:

- practicing with a friend and get them to give you feedback, like we did in the above example.
- film yourself speaking and give yourself feedback

- set yourself a goal of gradually speaking in public for example, speaking to the leadership team, speaking in class and gradually building up to a larger audience over time

Alternately, you might decide to ask another member of the student leadership team whose strength is public speaking to deliver it for you – you're on the same team and your message is still being heard.