

Sharing Pilot Gems

Compiling An Elevator Speech

Have you ever been asked, “What does a Pilot do? Do you fly planes?” It might be because you are wearing your club shirt, or because someone overheard a conversation about one of your activities. Either way, this opens up an opportunity to share what we do in a concise and upbeat manner. Many call this an elevator speech, because if you only had the time it takes for an elevator to go between floors, could you convince someone that they need to be a part of this great thing we are doing? When I say be a part of, I mean do they want to be a member, a sponsor, a participant in a fundraiser, or even one of the many in the community that we have helped?

Being able to share your Pilot Gems without hesitation takes careful thought up front, practice, and extra work to ensure you are confident when it comes time to pitch, clear in your delivery, and concise in your messaging so you aren't wasting opportunities to do justice by your club and yourself. When you speak about Pilot, you represent yourself, your club, your District, and Pilot International. Not only do You Matter In Pilot, but the person you are talking to could Matter in Pilot by the time you are finished.

It is possible to have multiple versions of your elevator speech to accommodate multiple goals. For instance, if you are talking to someone that might become a sponsor, you might tailor your speech to benefits of sponsorship; whereas if you are talking to someone that is considering attending TBI Camp, you might tailor it to the benefits of community with other campers. However, the basic message remains the same.

It is important to keep it short, 30 to 60 seconds, and to the point. Make it interesting. Whether it's through storytelling, humor, data, fear, or something else, your elevator pitch needs to be able to capture attention, keep attention, and be memorable. And lastly, as I've just pointed out, make it personalized. Our stories are very personal – why we joined Pilot and why we are still here. That means that no two elevator speeches are going to be alike. Just like good ad copy, a good elevator pitch is catered to the audience. After all, every opportunity you get to tell someone about Pilot, you are marketing.

So let's get to business! I sent out the 5 steps to creating your perfect elevator pitch in last month's Governors Bulletin.

Let's work on a quick Sharing of Gems by going over these 5 steps. Since this is not the interactive workshop that was originally planned, I will give you each step and also give a couple of possible answers. Keep in mind, I had planned to get these answers from you!

- 1. Who do you work with?**
 - a. *Communities, Youth and Young Adults*
- 2. What service do you provide?**
 - a. *Brain Safety and Health, Support those who care for others*
- 3. How do you provide that service?**
 - a. *BrainMinders, TBI Camp, Anchor and Compass Clubs, Leadership Opportunities for Youth, Bike Helmets*
- 4. What is your unique selling point (USP) (what makes you different from others in the same field)**
 - a. *Focus on the caregiver as well as, if not more than, the patient. Focus on education to prevent injuries, Friendship*
 - b. *Influence positive change throughout the world, envision a world where all are valued*
- 5. What problem are you solving?**
 - a. *Families with brain-related issues require support*
 - b. *Youth and Elderly require education to prevent brain-related injuries*

As you can imagine, if we had completed this interactively, the answers to these questions would have been more well-rounded, and quite possibly, much more interesting! From these answers, you can build your base elevator/gem speech:

The Pilot Club was initiated in 1921 and it was named after the mighty riverboat pilots of that time. Those pilots represented leadership and guidance. Pilot International envisions a world where all are valued. Our mission is to influence positive change in communities throughout the world, and to do this we come together in friendship, and give people an outlet for service. We focus on preparing youth and young adults for service, encouraging brain safety & health, and supporting those who care for others. Some of our club projects in the past year have included... They have impacted the community in manner. We would love it if you would consider joining us.

As you can see, I have left room in there for you to personalize it to your club.

If I were speaking about my club, I would probably say, Some of our club projects in the past year have included doing projects with an adult day care, and providing support and bedding to Sleep in Heavenly Peace. They have impacted the community by brightening the lives of the adults that we meet with every month – and by the way they brighten our lives too. With respect to Sleep in Heavenly Peace, we are playing a part in getting children off the floor at night and sleeping in a bed. How's that for improving brain health? These projects are typical of the many things we do in our club. We would love it if you would consider joining us.

It is so important to get out there and share what we do – through this you could increase club membership, increase sponsorship, or maybe even help a person speak up about needing help for themselves. Practice makes perfect – these gems will not just roll off the tip of your tongue until you say them a few times. I haven't found a Pilot that wasn't absolutely thrilled with what they are doing – so get out there and spread the word. You will find that your joy can be contagious!

Laurie