1 The Assignment

Professional opportunities often come about as the result of a chance meeting, such as in an elevator at a trade show or conference. If you are lucky enough to encounter an influential individual at a chance meeting, it is important that you respond appropriately and present yourself in a professional, concise manner. You should be prepared to quickly highlight your most important professional qualities and accomplishments in a way that does not seem like a “sell” or a blatant attempt to win favor. A professional self-introduction essentially answers the following three questions: Who are you? What do you do? How can you contribute toward reaching goals or meeting current needs? The self-introduction is spoken in a light and friendly tone and usually ends with a suggestion for further contact. Keep in mind that the purpose of a self-introduction is to begin a conversation with another person about an idea you have. In this sense, it is not really a “pitch”, but rather an offer to discuss how you can solve a problem or get a job done.

The following are a few examples of professional self-introductions:

“Hello. My name is Andy Ebon, founder of EBS Virtual Communications. I help my clients with their internet marketing and promotion needs through web development, website promotion, and incorporating eMarketing with overall marketing plans. Tell me about your current website.”

“I'm Paul Coker. Some companies call my job project management or technical team leading. I help teams reach their goals better, faster, and cheaper by welding radically different perspectives into a single team effort, avoiding wasted or dead-end efforts. Do you know of any companies that might need that kind of leader for a team of tech specialists?”

“Hi. I'm Ed Swiss, and I connect people to computers. I create simple, effective user interfaces that make it easier for people to do their jobs. What kind of simplifications would you like to see in your workplace?”

Examples are from http://www.expressionsofexcellence.com/sample_elevator.html

For this assignment, you will craft a brief (30-second) professional self-introduction. Your self-introduction should be truthful about your current state as a student, but can include some information about where you would like to be at some time in the near future. Your intended audience is a recruiter at a career fair or a venture capitalist attending a trade show that you happen to have made eye contact with as he or she entered the elevator in the hotel lobby.
You should prepare your introduction before the day on which it is due. You will have an opportunity to practice your introduction before the due date to solicit feedback from other students in the class. On the due date, one student will play the role of your “chance encounter” and the rest of the class will play the role of someone (perhaps another recruiter or venture capitalist) who overhears the introduction. The class will evaluate your introduction on a scale from 1 to 5, with a ‘5’ indicating a definite follow-up meeting and a ‘1’ indicating no chance of a follow-up meeting.

2 What to Submit

At the end of the class period during which the self-introductions take place (noted as the due date given at the top of this assignment), you will hand in to the instructor the “Self-Introduction Evaluation Form.” This form will be distributed at the beginning of that class.

3 Grading

This assignment is worth a maximum of 6 points towards the “Other Assignments” category. Your grade for this assignment will be calculated by dividing the average class rating by 5 and multiplying the result by 6; for example, if your average class rating is 4.2, then your grade will be 4.2/5 x 6 = 5.04, or 84%.