



The Art of Interviews: Using Acting Techniques in Interviewing for Jobs, Scholarships and Graduate School Gregory Justice

THE SEVEN-POINT PLAN

1. Point One: The Entrance
 - a. The true interview starts the moment you can be seen and it does not end until you are both out of eyeshot and earshot of everyone associated with the interview environment (usually about two blocks away from the site).
 - b. Working in the Positive Energy Zone
 - i. Francois Delsarte theory of Positive Energy
 - ii. The string exercise
 - c. Walking into the room
 - i. Walking in with the string exercise
 - ii. Eye contact
2. Point Two: The Introduction
 - a. The Handshake – it must be practiced
 - b. Speaking your name
 - i. Only about 60% of people's name are understood in introductions
 - ii. Speaking name with upward inflection.
 - iii. Speaking your name with negative vocal energy
3. Point Three: Transition from You to Interviewee
 - a. Dealing with the CHAIR
 - i. Sitting in the positive, sitting on an angle to the interviewer
 - ii. Dealing with accoutrement
 1. What do you carry your resume in?
 2. Coats, purses, umbrellas, etc.
 - iii. Moving in the chair to re-gather audience attention
 - iv. Using gestures in the chair
 1. Keep gestures in the upper plain of the body
4. Point Four: The Interview

5. Point Five: Transition from Interviewee back to yourself
6. Point Six: Thank you
7. Point Seven: Exit
 - a. Show no subtext until you are far, FAR from the site

Elevator Speeches

What are they?

An elevator speech is a short (15-30 second, 150 word) sound byte that succinctly and memorably introduces you. It showcases your uniqueness. It focuses on the benefits you provide. It is delivered effortlessly. Its purpose is to intrigue the listener and get them to invite you back for further conversations.

Why prepare them?

One, the opportunity may arise where you only have 15-30-seconds (80-150 words) to make a pitch to someone on what it is that you do and why this individual should be intensely interested in that. Two, it helps you to synthesize the work that you do, making you be clear to yourself and others about your expertise.

What are the steps?

Compose it. Compose it again. Re-write it 5-15 times. Edit it. Give it to others for editorial feedback. Re-write it again. Begin to practice it. Practice it more. Memorize it. Practice it even more. Perform it for anyone that will listen. Finally, un-memorize it.

Where are they used?

They can be used in an elevator, if the opportunity arises. However, the best place for them to be utilized at this time in your career is Job Fairs. Another place to utilize them will be employer presentations.

How are they comprised?

The lead question from the contact (before you begin your elevator speech) is often, "What do you do?" The answer is where the trap lies. If you respond, "I am an electrical engineer" or, "I am in bioengineering," the response you will receive is often "Oh, that's nice," and then they look away -- bored.

When someone asks, "What do you do?" we usually answer with a label. For elevator speeches, one needs to learn to answer as a solution provider. If you know the employer you are speaking to, and have identified their problem, you and your expertise are going to be able to provide a solution to their problem.

How to Compose the Elevator Speech?

A) Determine your target or niche audience. What problems do they have that you can solve? Do not overlook this step. Most elevator speeches focus on what the speaker

does. This is why they fail. You want to get the listener interested in you. Find the hook. The hook is the problem that you can solve. Remember, you are the solution provider to the problem.

B) Begin with a strong grab line. (Grabbing and audience with the character's first entrance.) There are three different ways one may begin:

- 1) A personal grabber line that none of your competition will ever be able to use.
 - a) I am originally a cowboy from Montana.
 - b) I began my acting career as a drummer in a pit band who wanted to be seen and heard.
 - c) I will be your most devoted new employee you'll ever hire.
- 2) A line that describes your abilities as a solution provider.
 - a) I help small businesses and non-profits tell their story to the people who need to hear it.
 - b) I help you get more clients than you know what to do with.
 - c) I can make any boss shine.
 - d) I am used to working in a non-hierarchical environment, one that demands honesty, creativity and collaboration.
- 3) A line that has conflict in it that you are working to solve.
 - a) I am a bio engineer that is grappling with how nano technology will never let your car's paint stay scratched ever again.
 - b) I make people walk and talk better and show them how to grab and hold the attention of their audiences.

C) The rest of the body of the speech focuses on the five W's. Who, what, where, when and why?

- 1) Who am I (use your new grabber beginning line)?
- 2) What field or industry are you in?
- 3) What position are you in? In what capacity do you serve?
- 4) What is your USP (Unique Selling Proposition)? What makes me different from the competition?
- 5) What benefits do your customers (or those that you have worked with derive from your services?

Samples

I help small businesses and non-profits tell their story to the people who need to hear it. You see, when someone knows our story, they can't help but like us, and we support and do business with those we like. So, together, we craft your story and start telling it to your employees, the media, potential clients, and to the world. I know it sounds like marketing, but what makes me unique is that first and foremost, I am a storyteller. I also have a technical, art, writing, and design background which I combine to tell your story in a special, get-their-attention way. I recently completed a sixteen-page publication with an additional 15,000 copies that appeared in the March issue of *Cleveland Magazine* telling the stories of Cleveland's community development corporations. They were so

delighted with the outcome that I am now in the process of designing an extensive website for them.

"Hi, I'm Dale Kurow, and I help people become more successful at their work. For example, I've helped a client change jobs with a 40% salary increase, I've helped a client develop the skills to deal with a difficult boss, and I've helped a manager devise new ways to keep her staff motivated."

My name is Greg Justice. I am originally a cowboy from Montana that became an actor, director, and professor. I help college students get jobs, win scholarships and gain acceptance into graduate school. I do this by taking techniques professional actors use in making their audiences stay tuned in for long periods of time and share how these techniques can be used in interviews by anyone. My workshops outline scores of techniques that build the confidence of all interviewees and help them eliminate their competition and win the position.

WHO ARE YOU? An Exercise to Help You Construct a Personalized and Powerful Elevator Speech

One of the best ways to be successful in any part of interviewing is to know who you are. This is a difficult task. In fact, most people do not really know themselves very well at all. For one thing, we are always changing. To compound the matter further, we perceive ourselves very differently than those that perceive us. Sociologists call this the looking glass theory.

This is a relatively simply exercise. It's also fun. Here's what you are to do over the next two weeks.

A FOUR STEP PLAN IN GETTING TO KNOW WHO YOU ARE

- 1) Ask six acquaintances how you appear to them and what personality traits do you convey.
 - Two of the people should be close friends.
 - Two of the people should be casual acquaintances.
 - Two of the people should be almost strangers.

Ask them to describe you. To tell you what kind of person you are. What first impressions do you make? What kind of personality do they perceive? What things about you are likable? What things are not? Use your imagination in how you ask these individuals their impression of you.

Write their observations down. Don't treat this as a formal paper. Instead, treat this as information gathering. I will want to see that you did this work, however, I'm more interested in you making discoveries about yourself.

Determine whether you like their answers, and decide why you do or do not like the way you appear to them.

Did they perceive you correctly?

Is there anything in your personality projection you wish to change?

Is there anything in your personality projection you wish to strengthen?

- 2) Decide upon your favorite person in history that you admire. Someone you might like to emulate, model yourself after, or be like. Determine why you chose this person. List the attributes that make you admire this person. Be specific.
- 3) If you could change what you dislike in your looks, behavior, and character what would they be? Be honest and be specific.
- 4) Begin to make a list of what you like in your looks, behavior, and character. Be honest and be specific.