



Creating Your Message, Telling Your Story

DEMONSTRATE

Create Your Message:

Imagine you step into an elevator and the president of your country is there and says, "What's on your mind?" At most you have a few elevator stops before the conversation is over. What will you say? That's your ELEVATOR SPEECH! Have your elevator speech ready.

- Know your key points—what you care about, what needs to happen, what you will do, and what others can do.
- Use short sentences that convey vivid images.
- Make solid eye contact.
- Mean what you say and say what you mean.

Philippe Cousteau's Water Quality Elevator Speech

1st floor: Did you know that water quality is an issue that presents itself through many of our everyday activities?

2nd floor: Keeping water clean needs to be a priority at home, at school, and at work.

3rd floor: Youth are learning about water quality and developing strategies for their homes and schools.

4th floor: Our nonprofit, EarthEcho International, produced Action Guides: Out the Spout and Down the Drain.

5th floor: This is part of our Water Planet Challenge, empowering teens as environmental stewards.

6th floor: Youth are actively reducing the amount of pollutants that enter our water systems on a daily basis.

7th floor: Are you ready to help? Here's what you can do.

(Hint: Always have an idea about how the person you're talking to can get involved.)

Telling Your Story

If you want people to listen to what you have to say and remember the important points, tell a story.

Think of your water quality ideas and activities as a great story waiting to be told.

Here is a quick guide to telling memorable stories:

Opening: Paint a picture with words: When most of the students had poured out the front door at the end of school, our Defend the Drain team met with the school faculty to discuss what was being poured down our school sinks! Always remember to show the images you want them to remember.

Background: Provide the basic overview and context of the story you want to tell. Be sure to mention that what you have done is part of the Water Planet Challenge.

Create Interest: This is part of your story that holds your audience's attention. Compelling facts, human interest anecdotes (including comments), and surprising statistics capture the reader. These make your story compelling and memorable.

Resolution: Every story has a strong ending. Let people know what they can do and how they can become involved. Create relevance by moving the reader toward taking action.

Communicating important messages:

- Keep your story simple.
- Be authentic.
- Make the information relevant.
- Vary the length of your sentences.

Read your story aloud. Make sure this is your voice, your story, and your message.