# Task 1: Solicit buy-in and commitment from key stakeholders

## Elevator Speech: Tips and Samples

Directions: Read the information that follows and review this example to help you think about and refine your communication around diversity.

### What is an Elevator Speech?

According to Terri Sjodin, author of *Small Message, Big Impact: The Elevator Speech Effect* (Penguin, 2012), an elevator speech is

*a brief communication that introduces a service, philosophy, or an idea. The name suggests the notion that the message should be delivered in the time span of an elevator ride, up to about two minutes. Its general purpose is to intrigue and inspire the listener to want to hear more of the presenter's complete proposition in the near future.*

You should consider your elevator message about diversity as a way to start a conversation and to spark interest.

The goal,according to *Elevator Pitch Essentials* (Limb Press, 2008) author Chris O’Leary,is to quickly present compelling value by using **three keys:**

1. **Overview.** The point of an elevator pitch is to make sure the audience understands what you are talking about and what’s in it for them.
2. **Idea, Service, Project, Person, or Other Solution.** Outline why diversityis so important for the success of your program, school, university, or medical hospital.
3. **Just Get a Conversation Started.** Interest the audience in continuing to talk.

### Characteristics of an Elevator Speech

* It’s about 30 seconds to two minutes in length.
* It’s four to five sentences long.
* The topic is compelling.
* The language used is conversational, direct, and clear.

### Sample Elevator Speech 1

A strategic plan for diversity is critical to ensure that diversity is addressed consistently throughout our institution.

In academic medicine, we are preparing physicians, researchers, and health care professionals to deliver the best possible care in a diverse society.

Given the changing demographics in the United States, the players involved (patients and academic teams) will be of different racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds.

Every person has a unique background and therefore brings a different perspective to a discussion. Having a sound strategy in place for inclusion, one that makes sure underrepresented groups have a voice, is critical for us to efficiently address … (*identify the issue that is important to the person you are talking to*)

### Sample Elevator Speech 2

Diversity and inclusion are not only critical in preparing our next generation of physicians, scientists, and leaders to interact and excel in a diverse society, but are part of our mission and part of our accreditation requirements. If we are to truly fulfill this charge, we must be cognizant not only of basic science and healing the body, but of how our society creates and reifies privilege and oppression. This obligation is not simply something we say, but must be something that everyone in our medical school understands as integral to his or her job. We all have something to contribute to this conversation, and it is imperative that we have advocates and allies in every corner of the organization.

Your Turn: Write your own diversity elevator speech and statement using the model and examples provided and The Case for Diversity and Inclusion section in Part II of your *Strategic Planning Guide*, pages 14–18.

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