Creating an Effective Elevator Pitch

**Definition of an elevator pitch:** You find yourself in a situation where you unexpectedly are in contact with someone who could be very effective in raising support for educational technology (e.g., a legislator you’ve been trying to meet with for months.) You have less than a minute to make a positive impression on this person. To make the most of this moment, it is critical that you have prepared a pitch in advance.

**Settings to use an elevator pitch:**
- Elevator
- Cocktail party or other social setting
- Buffet line
- Airport waiting room
- Conference

**General Tips and Strategies**
- Frame the elevator pitch around the point of view of the person to whom you are speaking.
- Center your pitch around a problem this influential person can help solve.
- Speak *his* or *her* language. Use plain, simple English—not jargon.
- You want to pique the person’s interest and leave him or her wanting to know more.
- Be passionate.
- Be concise and succinct.
- Practice, practice, practice!

**General Outline for an Effective Pitch**

**Introduce yourself and make a compelling case:**
- Introduce yourself and quickly describe your role and expertise in educational technology.
- State the case you wish to make, using powerful details that are important to the listener (e.g., higher test scores; scientifically based research; global economy).
- Back up your argument with data or research that supports your claims.
- Suggest how the listener can resolve the problem.
- Explain how you can make his or her job easier.

**Just before the elevator door closes and your 30 seconds are over:**
- End with some kind of call to action—a future meeting or a phone call to continue the conversation.
- Ask for a business card and supply one as well.