ELEVATOR SPEECH—EVIDENCE-BASED MESSAGES (SC7E)

Module
Strategic Communication (SC)

Format
Small group exercise

Purpose
This activity contributes to the module learning objectives by giving participants practice at crafting a complete, evidence-based message to convey to a policymaker.

Time Required
- 45 mins.

Activity Description
This exercise builds on the key findings, implication, and recommendations that small groups developed in the Crafting Evidence-Based Messages exercise. Continue the same small groups using the same case study. This should be a fun and lively activity—encourage people to embrace their roles in the final role-playing part of the exercise.

Working in small groups, participants write or outline a 60-second elevator speech based on the key findings, implications, and recommendations they wrote from the case study. The groups work together to write the 60-second elevator speech, but they must pick one person who will deliver it to the policymaker of their choosing. The scenario is that they have come upon the policymaker in an elevator, and have 60 seconds to deliver their key message.

Because 60 seconds is such a short time, the elevator speeches should focus on the findings and implications in order to get the policymaker’s attention about the importance of the topic. If they do a good job conveying the findings and implications, the policymaker will be interested and ask follow-up questions or suggest a follow up meeting. This is an opportunity to share their recommendations. If they jump to recommendations without clearly communicating the data and implications, the policymaker will push back, and may ask why he/she is being asked to do something about this issue. Although the 60-second elevator speech should focus on findings and implications, the person delivering it should be prepared with recommendations in response to follow up questions.
Encourage the person playing the policymaker to embrace the role, and be challenging or critical to those presenting to him/her. Sometimes we call the policymaker's cell phone in the middle of one speech, to mimic real-life interruptions. Someone should be timing the speakers, and giving a “ding” after 60 seconds, as if the elevator has come to the policymaker's floor. The policymaker can choose to “hold the door” and continue the conversation if his/her interest has been piqued.

Allow 20-30 minutes for the small groups to work together to draft the elevator speech. Each group chooses one person to role play. After all groups have gone, and as time allows, have a discussion about challenges and provide feedback and suggestions.

**Key Learning Concept(s)**
- Selecting appropriate data and messages for a 60-second speech.
- Presenting data and messages that are relevant to the audience.
- Concise and engaging oral speech to get an individual’s attention.
- Responding to questions.

**Materials Needed**
- Worksheet

**Associated Exercises**
- Crafting Evidence-Based Messages (SC6E)

**Required Preparation**
- Case Study
- Crafting Evidence-Based Messages completed worksheet