

So, What Do You Do?

Educating and Advocating for Prospect Research at Work and at Play



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Overview

- Background on the University of Alberta
- What Do People Think We Do?
- Research in the Area of Advocacy and Prospect Research
- Case Study from the University of Alberta
- Elevator Speeches



Learning Objectives

- Learning how to advocate for the Prospect Research profession within the fundraising community
- Promoting Prospect Research as a professional career path
- Helping participants develop personal confidence when they speak about their profession



University of Alberta Office of Advancement - Mission

- The Office of Advancement is dedicated to supporting the mission of the University of Alberta by fostering relationships that result in continuing goodwill and financial support from alumni, parents, friends, and organizations.



What Do People Think We Do?



Building Advocacy in the Prospect Research Community

- Helen Brown, “Coming Out” March 2014
 - “Nobody is going to tell your story like you”
 - In this article, Ms. Brown declared that, going forward, March would be International Prospect Research Pride Month and that this awareness should be used to “dispel the mythology that what we do is creepy or invasive”



Building Advocacy in the Prospect Research Community

- Helen Brown continued advocating for Prospect Research Pride in “Coming Out (Again)” March 2015
 - “We all have concrete success stories to tell about the impact our work has had on our nonprofits’ bottom lines”



Other Voices in the Prospect Research Community

- Jennifer Filla, “#Researchpride, Advocacy and Me” March 2016
 - “I consider myself a fundraiser who specializes in prospect research”
- Mark Egge, “Doing More with More” March 2016
 - “Prospect Research is the key to doing more with more. It’s all about finding **more** donors (with **more** dollars)”



Returning to the Roots of Advocacy

- Louise Chatterton Luchuk, “Digging Deeper: The Evolution of the Prospect Research Field” January 2005
- “Today, prospect researchers are a recognized and important part of the fundraising cycle, a partner with front-end fundraisers. Prospect researchers are not just digging up names of new prospective donors but strategizing with the rest of the team about cultivating, soliciting, and taking care of donors.”



A Researcher By Any Other Name...

- Most of us have job titles that consist of something like:
 - Prospect Research...Analyst/ Coordinator/ Officer/ Specialist/ Associate/ Director/ etc.
- Some organizations have adopted titles that offer greater insight into the potential for prospect researchers on a development team:
 - Ex. Research of Strategic Philanthropy; Research Strategist



Case Study – University of Alberta

- Structure of University of Alberta Prospect Research team
- Communication between frontline fundraiser and Prospect Research
- Partnership between faculties/units and Prospect Research



Case Study – University of Alberta

- Services and products provided
- Team size
- Evolution of Prospect Research profession



Case Study – University of Alberta

- What worked?
- What didn't?
- What are we still trying to improve?



Elevator Speeches – What Are They?

- A clear, brief “commercial” about you (or in this case, your profession)
- Defines a product, service or organization and its value proposition
- Usually no longer than 30 seconds (approx. 80 – 90 words OR 8 – 10 sentences)
- May be slightly longer depending on the situation (i.e. cocktail party vs introduction to a new frontline fundraiser)



Elevator Speeches – Why Have One?

- Preparing an elevator speech makes sure you are prepared to answer the dreaded “So, what do you do?” question in a concise, confident and informative way
- An effective elevator speech helps you advocate for your profession by presenting your skills and value



Basic Elevator Speeches – What To Include

- Who are you?
 - What organization do you work with?
 - What is your title?
 - What is your role?



Basic Elevator Speeches – What To Include

- What is your impact with the organization?
 - Tell a story that talks about your impact and how you do your work
 - What are you proud of?



Basic Elevator Speeches – Example 1

I am part of a team of prospect research professionals who support and enable fundraising initiatives across the University of Alberta Campus.



Basic Elevator Speeches – Example 2

I am a prospect researcher with the University of Alberta. I collect and analyse data on industry trends and giving to provide our Corporate and Foundation Relations team with strategic suggestions of organizations who may wish to partner with the University by funding research and programming. I recently proposed contact with an organization that is now funding TMJ research at the University. This research will help doctors better treat patients of this common motor-vehicle accident injury and result in improved quality of life for these Albertans.



Elevator Speeches – Getting Started

- Write down everything that comes to your mind
- Make strong, short and powerful sentences – Keep it simple
- Connect phrases so that the speech flows naturally and smoothly
- Review – have you answered the question?
- Create different versions for different situations
- Memorize key points and practice



In Conclusion - Learning Objectives

- Learning how to advocate for the Prospect Research profession within the fundraising community
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Thank You For Your Time!

Questions?

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