
drcog civic academy
Welcome 2026 members!
Civic Academy: Week 6
November 3, 2026
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Department of Urban and Regional Planning
COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO DENVER

Agenda

6:00 p.m.	Greetings and dinner served
6:15 p.m.	Metro Denver Nature Alliance: A story of regional collaboration for equitable access to nature
7:30 p.m.	5-minute break
7:35 p.m.	Elevator pitches
8:10 p.m.	CU Denver MURP program
8:30 p.m.	Adjourn

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Metro Denver Nature Alliance: A story of regional collaboration for equitable access to nature

Sara Rose "Sa'ro" Tannenbaum



5 minutes

Break



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Elevator Pitches

Persuasive Communications

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What is it? Why is it important?

- **Origin of the term** – elevator ride (less than a minute)

- **Purpose**
  - **Personal** introductions
  - Introduction of **products/services, organizations, projects, initiatives**

- **Key elements**
  - Captivate – make a connection and generate interest
  - Communicate – clearly and concisely convey information
  - Convince – motivate audience to take action

What is it? Why is it important?



Not JUST about verbal communications

- Advertising copy
- Outreach
- Landing page on website
- Social profiles
- Emails
- Mission statements
- **Individual action plans**

Anywhere you need to distill your business, **project,** product, initiative, service, **VALUE** in order to get people to act

Basic Template

First – identify your audience and ask what will appeal to their self interest? What do you want them to understand, and what do you want to accomplish?

- Short introduction
- Establish the problem (or opportunity)
- Introduce the solution
- Share the benefit
- Call to action

Example – private sector

Hi, I'm Steve Erickson and I have an innovative marketing firm (intro) that helps retail businesses like yours open entirely new markets (opportunity) by using online advertising, websites and AI tools (solution).

We've helped stores grow sales exponentially and even saved a few from closing their doors. (benefit)

Would you be interested in learning more? (call to action)

Example – public sector

Hi, I'm Steve Erickson and I work with the Way to Go program (intro). We use federal funding to reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality in Denver,(problem) and we provide free services to companies like yours, setting up commute choice programs and educating your staff (solution).

Companies we work with find they're better able to attract and retain the best employees, and position themselves as eco-friendly. (benefit)

By the way, all of our services are free. Would you be okay if I emailed you some information to consider? (Call to action)

Example – initiative

Hi, I'm Steve Erickson and I'm one of your neighbors, having lived in the community for the last 20 years (intro). I'm sure you've noticed the increasing problem with black bears getting into our trash on pickup days? It's not only creating huge messes on our streets, it's not healthy for bears, and of course also a safety issue for all of us - once bears become conditioned to our trash being a food source, and being in close proximity, they're emboldened to interact more with all of us. Including our kids! (problem)

I'm working to petition neighbors to require "bear-proof" trash cans at all houses in Juneau. If I get enough signatures, we'll then work to get this before City Council.

If successful, this will not make our neighborhood safer, cleaner and also keep bears from being euthanized. (benefit)

Will you sign my petition? (Call to action)

Developing your “elevator pitch” for your action plan

Before you write it out, consider the following

- Who is your audience for this particular message? – neighbor, lawmaker, investor, government official, community partner?
- For each audience, what might appeal to their direct self-interest? What’s in it for them? Why should they care?
- What do you want your audience to think or understand about the issue?
- How do you want them to feel about what you’ve said? Inspired, concerned, hopeful?
- What do you want your listener to do after they hear your message?

Start writing!

- **Short introduction**
- **Establish the problem (or opportunity)**
- **Introduce the solution**
- **Share the benefit**
- **Call to action**

- **Finally**
  - It's okay, even advisable, to create several versions - :30, :60, :90
  - For multiple audiences
  - For multiple formats – written (ad copy, web page), verbal

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Thank you and good luck!



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Next steps and adjourn