

Introducing Yourself

How to leave a good impression

Introductions can feel hard. And you know first impressions are lasting impressions, So here's a winning formula for introductions.

(Full disclosure: I learned this from a LinkedIn Learning Online Course, but it works!)

Forward facing statement (what you do)

+

Back story (what you have done in the past)

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Connect the dots (how the past qualifies you to do the future work)

= Lasting Good Impression

This is what it looks like:

Person 1: "Tell me about yourself"

Me: I bridge the gap between business and disability by helping companies employ people with disabilities and connect the disability services community to better connect with employers who need talent.

Person 1: "Oh, really? Tell me more"

Me: I started my career helping people with disabilities find jobs, then trying to improve governmental programs focused on disability and employment, then I went to work for Walgreens and spent 7 years learning how to help them evolve into a disability friendly employer while still serving customers, employees and shareholders at the same level. We created the first sustainable, enterprise-wide disability inclusive workforce in a Fortune 50 company."

Person 1: "How do you connect business and disability?"

Me: I use what I learned at one company and combine it with the experience gained while improving governmental systems and serving people with disabilities and look at a company's employment and human resources systems through both a disability and business lens. That allows me to gauge the gaps and propose collaborations and solutions to bring the two closer together. Businesses need good employees and data shows that employers who have a disability inclusive workforce gain a more advantageous bottom line. At the same time, I help the disability community learn how to connect and communicate more effectively with business to understand how to meet and match their needs for labor.

Now you try:

Start with a forward-looking statement. Describe what you do in an affirmative, action-oriented way:

Then give the back story. Briefly say what experience and success you have created:

Finish by connecting the dots between the past experience and the future goals:

Many people introduce themselves by starting with their past. Using this formula lets you start with the value you offer in the future, allowing the other person to envision you in their context.