

Tribute Speech Outline: Elisha Otis

Specific Purpose: To inform the audience about Elisha Otis' invention of the elevator break.

Thesis Statement: Elisha Otis' designed the first elevator breaking system made elevators safe and allowed for the construction of the modern city as we know it today.

Introduction

- I. Try to imagine New York City or any major metropolis without skyscrapers, this is how the world would be without Elisha Otis' invention.
- II. Today I will share with you how Elisha Otis revolutionized the modern world.
- III. Otis is not as well known as Thomas Edison or Henry Ford, but his invention is equally important for all of to know about the modern industrial world
- IV. Elisha Otis' accomplishment of designing the first elevator breaking system made elevators safe and allowed for the construction of the modern city

Transition: Let's discuss how the elevator break revolutionized the modern city.

Body

- I. Otis' invention of the elevator break changed the use of elevators forever.
 - A. Before Otis' break, elevators were extremely dangerous.
 1. According to Donald Dale Jackson in *Smithsonian Magazine* (1989), there were various lifting devices like the flying chair lifted by a rope at the palace of Versailles...(P. 2)
 2. The fatal flaw was if the rope broke the passenger would fall. (Ibid).
 3. Although Otis was not the first person to create a lifting device he was the first to devise a safe way to carry freight <as well as> handlers,
 4. <This> which would ultimately serve general passengers. (Ibid)
 - B: Before Otis' invention no building was more than a few stories high.

1. Otis' solution was a wagon spring that was mounted atop the platform . (Ibid)
 - a. <It> remained taut while the platform was in motion.
 - b. If the rope snapped, the ends of the steel spring would flare out, forcing two large latches to lock into ratchets on the vertical guide rails on either side of the platform.(Ibid).
2. Otis' invention along with improvements would transform the face of the urban world: they would create vertical cities. (Ibid).
 - a. The elevator made possible the soaring, dramatic skylines.
 - b. <These> have come to come exemplify the 20th century.

Transition: Now that we have talked about his accomplishment, lets see how we have benefited.

II. The benefits of Otis' remarkable invention are probably greater than most people realize.

A: His work allowed for the construction of massive skyscrapers.

1. The first office building with an elevator was the Equitable Life Assurance Society Building, which went up in New York City in 1870 (Goodwin, 2002, *Giving Rise to the Modern City*, 30)

2. In conjunction with the architect George Post and Otis' invention, the first skyscraper was built which proved to be profitable. (Ibid).

3. Thus began the era of high rise office buildings (Ibid).

B: The invention of the elevator break created the conditions to form American Big Business.

1. "Sky scrapers were about more than just money, it gave people a place to gather, to conduct business, <for> modern work environment" (Goodwin 46)".

2. "In January 1886 it was reported that in five new buildings in New York City 67,000 workers were lowered " (Goodwin, 51)

3. <They were >" raised everyday by the otis elevators" (Goodwin 51)

Conclusion

I. One only needs to imagine what it would be like to walk up hundreds of flights of stairs to understand the impact of this invention.

II. Ottis' development of the elevator break has changed the landscape of modern civilization, and we have all benefited. .

III. The development of the elevator break created a safe elevator system, which spear-headed an American movement skyward

References

Goodwin, J. (2001). *Otis Giving Rise to the Modern City*. Chicago Illinois: Ivan R. Dee Publishing. pp. 30,46, 51.

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