

KEEP TALKING

Communicative Fluency

prompts

A SHORT TUTORIAL SHEET TO HELP YOU INCREASE YOUR SMALL TALK CONVERSATION SKILLS. YOU CAN BUILD YOUR ABILITY TO LISTEN, KNOW WHAT YOU'RE LISTENING FOR, RESPOND AND BUILD A REPERTOIRE.

Conversation-starts the conversation.

DO YOU THINK IT COULD GET ANY HOTTER OR COLDER THAN TODAY?

Some people may say that opening a conversation with a question about the weather is unoriginal and might kill the conversation before it gets underway. That's why I call these gambits. They are openings where you try to build the conversation..

THERE IS SOMETHING TO BE SAID ABOUT SEEING ART LIKE THIS, FOOTBALL PLAYED THIS WAY. A DAY LIKE TODAY.

This is an attempt to build consensus before the conversation even starts. If the person is a contrarian they will disagree with you, but that is okay, the topic will be hot.

THIS IS A VERY EXCITING MOMENT, DAY, TIME, DO YOU KNOW WHY?

This move builds camaraderie. Did you just learn to do X or did you just learn something exciting about the future, or the human race. This is a bravado play which ups the ante of the conversation and takes it away from the doldrums.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO GET SOMETHING FROM THE BAR, BUFFET TABLE. I'D LIKE TO GET TO KNOW WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT X?

Have you ever been at an event and thought I'd like to get to know him or her. Why not invite them for a free drink or dip at the buffet bar and ask your question. You could make an instant friend or at least get to know what someone thinks about x.

WOULD YOU RECOMMEND THIS X TO A FRIEND?

Sometime it's hard to get someone's opinion with a direct why do you like this question, but would you promote it is a question that isn't intimidating in the least.

by Annabelle B-Baumann

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Corral- adds or sums up questions.

HOW DOES TODAY SUMM UP FOR YOU?

Asking how a person feels about the day is a way to find out what their take aways were and how they think.

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO SOMEONE WHO WOULD SAY...X

Asking what a person's response would be to a "devil's advocate" question. Where you take the stance of presenting one likely take on the event or the discussion spices up the discussion without making you the "bad guy."

WHAT'S ARE SOME OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF YOUR WEEK?

Asking for a summary of the persons week, or month gives you a look into what their priorities are and what has been on their minds this week.

WHAT LESSONS HAVE YOU LEARNED FROM WHAT WE HAVE JUST HEARD?

Use the conversation gambit if you are interested in finding out how your conversation partner processes information.

WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU AT THIS POINT IN YOUR LIFE OR CAREER?

Asking about someone's priorities in life gives you insight into what they value and what is on the top of their value chain at the moment.

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Question—for more information.

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR THE WEEKEND?

Use this line of questioning to find out more about what this person does in their freetime.

WHAT ELSE WOULD YOU WANT ME TO KNOW ABOUT YOU?

What does this person say about themselves? How do they think about themselves? Use this to find out more about their self-esteem.

WHAT IS A SIGNIFICANT EVENT IN YOUR LIFE UP TIL NOW?

What are events or a significant event that has shaped your life will add depth to the conversation and add a deeper layer to the conversation. It could go in any direction so be prepared for a deep answer.

HAVE YOU EVER LOST ANYTHING OF VALUE?

What does this person hold on to? What have they lost? What do they consider valuable? Is what this question answers.

DESCRIBE THE MOST INTERESTING PLACE YOU HAVE TRAVELLED?

Asking about travel is always a great question, but when you ask someone to rate or judge you are adding another layer to the conversation.

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Conversation Gambit- A castle move to deep-end the conversation.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO, START TO DO, OR DO MORE OF IF IT COULD CHANGE THE WORLD?

Asking about what a person deems important and would change the world is a way to see what they care about.

WHAT SURPRISES YOU THE MOST ABOUT HUMANITY?

Asking deeper questions helps to create a bonding moment. The person may also feel they don't have anything to say about the topic which is telling also.

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU HAD A GOOD CRY?

Asking about what makes a person emotional helps you to see how much depth of feeling they have and for what.

WHAT IS THE CRAZIEST THING YOU EVER DID- SO CRAZY YOU WONDER HOW YOU SURVIVED IT?

Asking about what makes a person emotional helps you to see how much depth of feeling they have and for what.

DO YOU BELIEVE "THE TRUTH WILL SET YOU FREE" OR "IF YOU DON'T HAVE ANYTHING NICE TO SAY, THEN DON'T SAY ANTHING AT ALL."

When you ask about moral character you learn a lot about how a person views sayings and proverbs that help us steer our moral character.

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Conversation Gambit- Closing move

WELL, I'VE GOT TO GET UP EARLY TOMORROW, IT'S BEEN WONDERFUL GETTING TO KNOW YOU.

Give a reason for why you have to end the conversation and try to end with a positive connection.

WHERE DOES THE TIME GO? IT'S ALMOST MIDNIGHT.

Point out the time and using a well-known saying can add a sense of connection sense the conversation is ending after being so interesting.

I'D LOVE TO CONTINUE THIS CONVERSATION AT ANOTHER TIME.

Offering or suggesting a possible further meeting will also leave your partner with the feeling that their time and relationship is important to you.

ANOTHER THING I'D LIKE TO SAY BEFORE I GO IS...

Prefacing what you're going to say next with the fact that you must leave let's the person also wind down with last words before the conversation ends.

I NEED TO SPEAK WITH THE HOST, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME...

Excuse yourself. You feel sorry for having to end the conversation say so!

by Annabelle B-Baumann

SURVIVAL
SKILLS

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This short tutorial is to help you increase your small talk conversation skills. You can build your ability to listen, know what you're listening for, respond and build repertoire. A conversation gambit, a chess move to open play in conversation is an attempt to start a conversation.

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