

# Easy Ways to Have More Meaningful Conversations

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Being an excellent conversationalist is part science and part art. **For most of us, it takes practice to be successful at communicating verbally.**

There are plenty of little tricks and strategies you can use to enhance your conversation experience. You'll enjoy your conversations more, and so will the other person. Verbal skills are great for advancing your career and social life.

A great conversationalist always has someone to talk to!

**Practice these techniques to enhance your verbal skills:**

**1. Lower your requirements for success.** When it comes to making small talk at a party, too often we want to be the most amazing conversationalist the world has ever seen. It's not necessary to be the "best" anything to leave a positive impression or to have a successful conversation.

- By lowering your performance requirement, you can relax and be a better conversation partner.

**2. Ask better questions.** Ideally, you shouldn't have to say too much during many conversations. **Just a few, well-chosen questions can keep the other person talking for quite a while.** Ask open-ended questions about something meaningful to the other person and just kick back and relax.

- Good questions are an easy way to keep the other person engaged in the conversation.

3. **Listen well.** Listening is half of the conversation. Keep your eyes and attention on the other person. Think about what is being said. Avoid thinking about what you want to say next. Just keep your attention on what's being said to you.

4. **Ensure that you're both understood.** Make sure you heard what you thought you heard. Verify that you've been understood, too. Good communication requires that the relayed information was received and understood.

5. **Wait your turn.** Avoid interrupting someone. Just because you're done listening doesn't mean they were done speaking. Wait until the other person is done talking and then feel free to respond. The other person will appreciate the consideration.

6. **Be interesting.** Unless there was recently a tornado or a record high temperature, no one other than a meteorologist wants to talk about the weather. **Have a couple of good stories ready to go at a moment's notice.**

- One easy way to be interesting is to stay on top of current events. Watch the news while you sweat your cares away on the treadmill. However you manage it, ensure you know what's going on in the world.
- If you know what the other person is passionate about, you can use that as a conversation topic.

7. **Be open and honest, but polite.** Honesty and openness are refreshing. Too many people are overly concerned with being politically correct or socially acceptable. This isn't an excuse to be rude, but having an opinion that you're willing to share puts you head and shoulders above most.

8. **Show enthusiasm for the chance to speak with the other person. Make the other person feel special.** You know how good it feels when someone is excited to see you. See if you can create a similar feeling in the other person.

9. **End the conversation when the time is right.** It's better to go out on a high note than after the conversation has died. This way, they'll be eager to speak with you again soon.

We aren't taught how to be a great conversationalist in school, but we should be. It's a valuable skill that can help your career. It can also allow you to have a more enjoyable time at social events. **It can give a great boost to your social life in general.** Take advantage of every opportunity to work on your conversation skills.