

Great Conversations Take These Five Things

I've made it my practice for years to have significant conversations with just about everyone I meet. If you have an open mind and humility, you can learn from anyone. The more people I've talked to, the more I've learned.

It's easy to have a superficial conversation with someone. Most of our conversations aren't personal. How often has someone asked you, "How are you?" What's the universal response? "Fine. How are you?"

What if you didn't talk to make conversation, but instead you talked to make a difference?

I've used "S.P.E.A.K." as an acronym to help me make my conversations go beneath the surface. You can use these questions with anyone you meet—no matter how much money, power, or popularity the other person has, this tool will help you go deeper and be more personal:

S – Story: "What is your story?"

This is an open-ended question that gets people started. Most people like to talk about their story because being known is a basic need we all have.

P – Passion: "What motivates you?"

Everyone is moved by something. A person's passion is one of the things that makes that person unique. You make a significant connection when you take an interest in what others care about. When you get people to talk about what they love, you'll be transformed by a different perspective.

E – Encouragement: "Do you know what you'd be good at?"

Once you know someone's story and their passions, it's natural to encourage them to do something they are good at—or to consider something they could do well. This is a faith-building opportunity. People thrive when they are encouraged and empowered. Most people don't have enough faith to believe in the dream God has given them. You can encourage them to take that next step.

A – Assistance: "How can I help you?"

When you ask this kind of question, you are being like Jesus. He often asked, "What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus served the people he encountered, and every conversation was according to God's plan. You may be in a person's life just so you can give them the help they need to fulfill God's purpose for their life.

K – Knowledge: “What do you know that I need to know?”

This question is for your benefit. You can ask anyone this question because everyone knows something you don't. With the right question, you can learn from anyone. You don't have time to make all the mistakes! Wise people draw out learnings from the experiences of others.

There's a bonus question that you should ask yourself: “Who do I know that should hear what I've learned?” This question passes along wisdom that others need to hear. Don't hoard it for yourself; share what you learn with others.

Today we spend so much time buried in our mobile devices. Some of us have forgotten how to approach one another and have a meaningful conversation. Questions like these can help you engage with anyone you meet.

> [Read more from Rick.](#)
