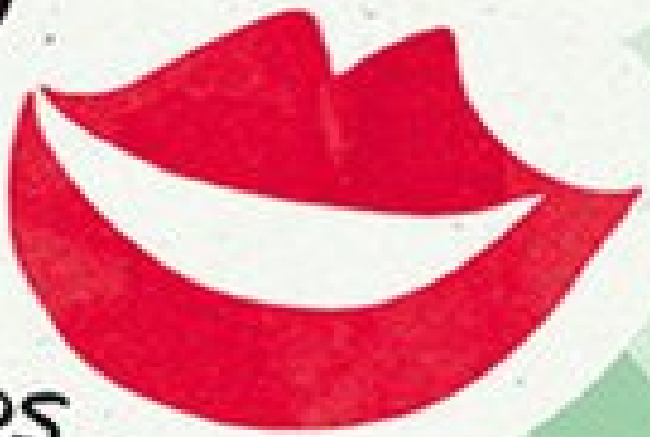
LEIL LOWNDES

THE INTERNATIONAL BESTSELLING AUTHOR

How to TALK to Anyone

92 little tricks for BIG success in relationships



How to Talk to Anyone - 92 Little Tricks...

How to Talk to Anyone - 92 Little Tricks...

How to Talk to Anyone - 92 Little Tricks...

How to Talk to Anyone - 92 Little Tricks...

Introduction

How to Get Anything You Want from Anybody (Well, at Least Have the Best Crack at It!)

Have you ever admired those successful people who seem tohave it all? You see them chatting confidently at business meetings or comfortably at social parties. Theyre the ones with the best jobs, the nicest spouses, the finest friends, the biggest bank accounts, or the most fashionable zip codes.

But wait a minute! A lot of them arent smarter than you. Theyre not more educated than you. Theyre not even better looing! So what is it? (Some people suspect they inherited it. Others say they married it or were just plain lucky. Tell them to think again.) What it boils down to is their more skillful way of deaing with fellow human beings.

You see, nobody gets to the top alone. Over the years, people who seem to have it all have captured the hearts and conquered the minds of hundreds of others who helped boost them, rung by rung, to the top of whatever corporate or social ladder they chose.

Wanna-bes wandering around at the foot of the ladder often gaze up and grouse that the big boys and big girls at the top are snobs. When big players dont give them their friendship, love, or business, they call them cliquish or accuse them of belonging to an old-boy network. Some grumble they hit their heads against a glass ceiling.

The complaining Little Leaguers never realize the rejection was their own fault. Theyll never know they blew the affair, the friendship, or the deal because of their own communications fubles. Its as though well-liked people have a bag of tricks, a magic, or a Midas touch that turns everything they do into success.

Whats in their bag of tricks? Youll find a lot of things: a sustance that solidifies friendships, a wizardry that wins minds, and a magic that makes people fall in love with them. They also posess a quality that makes bosses

hire and then promote, a chara teristic that keeps clients coming back, and an asset that makes customers buy from them and not the competition. We all have a few of those tricks in our bags, some more than others. Those with a whole lot of them are big winners in life. How to Talk to Anyone gives you ninety-two of these little tricks they use every day so you, too, can play the game to perfection and get whatever you want in life.

How the Little Tricks Were Unveiled

Many years ago, a drama teacher, exasperated at my bad acting in a college play, shouted, No! No! Your body is belying your words. Every tiny movement, every body position, he howled, divulges your private thoughts. Your face can make seven thousand diffeent expressions, and each exposes precisely who you are and what you are thinking at any particular moment. Then he said somthing Ill never forget: And your body! The way you move is your autobiography in motion.

How right he was! On the stage of real life, every physical move you make subliminally tells everyone in eyeshot the story of your life. Dogs hear sounds our ears cant detect. Bats see shapes in the darkness that elude our eyes. And people make moves that are beneath human consciousness but have tremendous power to attract or repel. Every smile, every frown, every syllable you utter, or every arbitrary choice of word that passes between your lips can draw others toward you or make them want to run away.

Mendid your gut feeling ever tell you to jump ship on a deal? Womendid your womens intuition make you accept or reject an offer? On a conscious level, we may not be aware of what the hunch is. But like the ear of the dog or the eye of the bat, the elements that make up subliminal sentiments are very real.

Imagine, please, two humans in a complex box wired with cicuits to record all the signals flowing between the two. As many as ten thousand units of information flow per second. Probably the lifetime efforts of roughly half the adult population of the United States would be required to sort the units in one hours interaction between two subjects, a University of Pennsylvania communications authority estimates.

With the zillions of subtle actions and reactions zapping back and forth between two human beings, can we come up with cocrete techniques to make our every communication clear, confdent, credible, and charismatic?

Determined to find the answer, I read practically every book written on communications skills, charisma, and chemistry between people. I explored

hundreds of studies conducted around the world on what qualities made up leadership and credibility. Intrepid social scientists left no stone unturned in their quest to find the formula. For example, optimistic Chinese researchers, hoping charisma might be in the diet, went so far as to compare the relationship of personality type to the catecholamine level in subjects urine.

Needless to say, their thesis was soon shelved.

Dale Carnegie Was GREAT for the Twentieth Century, but This Is the Tw e n t yF i r s t

Most of the studies simply confirmed Dale Carnegies 1936 classic, How to Win Friends and Influence People. His wisdom for the ages said success lay in smiling, showing interest in other people, and making them feel good about themselves. Thats no surprise, I thought. Its as true today as it was more than sixty years ago.

So if Dale Carnegie and hundreds of others since offer the same astute advice, why do we need another book telling us how to win friends and influence people? Two mammoth reasons.

Reason One: Suppose a sage told you, When in China, speak Chinese, but gave you no language lessons? Dale Carnegie and many communications experts are like that sage. They tell us what to do but not how to do it. In todays sophisticated world, its not enough to say smile or give sincere compliments. Cyical businesspeople today see more subtleties in your smile, more complexities in your compliment. Accomplished or attractive peple are surrounded by smiling sycophants feigning interest and fawning all over them. Prospects are tired of salespeople who say, The suit looks great on you, when their fingers are caressing cash register keys. Women are wary of suitors who say, You are bea tiful, when the bedroom door is in view.

Reason Two: The world is a very different place than it was in 1936, and we need a new formula for success. To find it, I observed the superstars of today. I explored techniques used by top salespeople to close the sale, speakers to convince, clergy to convert, performers to engross, sex symbols to seduce, and atletes to win.

I found concrete building blocks to the elusive qualities that lead to their success. Then I broke them down into easily digestible, news-you-can-use techniques. I gave each a name that will quickly come to mind when you find yourself in a communications conudrum. As I developed the techniques, I began sharing them with audiences around the country. Participants in my communications seminars gave me their ideas. My clients, many of them

CEOs of Fortune 500 companies, enthusiastically offered their observations.

When I was in the presence of the most successful and beloved leaders, I analyzed their body language and their facial

expressions. I listened carefully to their casual conversations, their timing, and their choice of words. I watched as they dealt with their families, friends, associates, and adversaries. Every time I detected a little nip of magic in their communicating, I asked them to pluck it out with tweezers and expose it to the bright light of consciousness. We analyzed it together, and I then turned it into an easy-to-do little trick others could duplicate and profit from.

My findings and the strokes of some of those very effective folks are in this book. Some are subtle. Some are surprising. But all are achievable. When you master them, everyone from new acquaintances to family, friends, and business associates will hapily open their hearts, homes, companies, and even wallets to give you whatever they can.

Theres a bonus. As you sail through life with your new comunications skills, youll look back and see some very happy givers smiling in your wake.

How to Talk to Anyone - 92 Little Tricks...

PART ONE

How to Intrigue Everyone Without Saying a Word

You Only Have Ten Seconds to Show Youre a Somebody

The exact moment that two humans lay eyes on each other has awesome potency. The first sight of you is a brilliant holograph. It burns its way into your new acquaintances eyes and can stay emblazoned in his or her memory forever.

Artists are sometimes able to capture this quicksilver, fleeting emotional response. My friend Robert Grossman is an accoplished caricature artist who draws regularly for Forbes, Newsweek, Sports Illustrated, Rolling Stone, and other popular publications. Bob has a unique gift for capturing not only the physical appeaance of his subjects, but for zeroing in on the essence of their pesonalities. The bodies and souls of hundreds of luminaries radiate from his sketch pad. One glance at his caricatures of famous pe ple and you can actually see their personalities.

Sometimes at a party, Bob will do a quick sketch on a coctail napkin of a guest. Hovering over Bobs shoulder, the onlooers gasp as they watch their friends image and essence materialize before their eyes. When hes finished drawing, he puts his pen down and hands the napkin to the subject. Often a puzzled look comes over the subjects face. He or she usually mumbles some politeness like, Well, er, thats great. But it really isnt me.

The crowds convincing crescendo of Oh yes it is! drowns the subject out and squelches any lingering doubt. The confused subject is left to stare back at the worlds view of himself or heself in the napkin.

Once when I was visiting Bobs studio, I asked him how he could capture peoples personalities so well. He said, Its simple. I just look at them.

No, I asked, How do you capture their personalities? Dont you have to do a lot of research about their lifestyle, their history?

No, I told you, Leil, I just look at them. Huh? He went on to explain, Almost every facet of peoples personalities is evident from their appearance, their posture, the way they move. For instance . . . he said, calling me over to a file where he kept his caricatures of political figures.

See, Bob said, pointing to angles on various presidential body parts, heres the boyishness of Clinton, showing me his half smile; the awkwardness of the elder George Bush, pointing to his shouder angle; the charm of Reagan,

noting the ex-presidents smiling eyes; the shiftiness of Nixon, pointing to the furtive tilt of his head. Digging a little deeper into his file, he pulled out Franklin Delano Roosevelt and, pointing to the nose high in the air, Heres the pride of FDR. Its all in the face and the body.

First impressions are indelible. Why? Because in our faspaced, information-overload world of multiple stimuli bombaring us every second, peoples heads are spinning. They must form

quick judgments to make sense of the world and get on with what they have to do. So, whenever people meet you, they take an instant mental snapshot. That image of you becomes the data they deal with for a very long time.

Your Body Shrieks Before Your Lips Can Speak

Are their data accurate? Amazingly enough, yes. Even before your lips part and the first syllable escapes, the essence of YOU has already axed its way into their brains. The way you look and the way you move is more than 80 percent of someones first impresion of you. Not one word need be spoken.

Ive lived and worked in countries where I didnt speak the native language. Yet, without one understandable syllable spoken between us, the years proved my first impressions were on target. Whenever I met new colleagues, I could tell instantly how friendly they felt toward me, how confident they were, and approximately how much stature they had in the company. I could sense, just from seeing them move, who the heavyweights were and who were the welterweights.

I have no extrasensory skill. Youd know, too. How? Because before you have had time to process a rational thought, you get a sixth sense about someone. Studies have shown emotional reations occur even before the brain has had time to register whats causing that reaction.Thus the moment someone looks at you, he or she experiences a massive hit, the impact of which lays the groundwork for the entire relationship. Bob told me he captures that first hit in creating his caricatures.

Deciding to pursue my own agenda for How to Talk to Anone, I asked, Bob, if you wanted to portray somebody really coolyou know, intelligent, strong, charismatic, principled, facinating, caring, interested in other people. . . .

Easy, Bob interrupted. He knew precisely what I was geting at. Just give em great posture, a heads-up look, a confident smile, and a direct gaze. Its the ideal image for somebody whos a Somebody.

How to Look Like a Somebody

My friend Karen is a highly respected professional in the homfurnishings business. Her husband is an equally big name in the communications field. They have two small sons.

Whenever Karen is at a home-furnishings industry event, everyone pays deference to her. Shes a very important person in that world. Her colleagues at conventions jostle for position just to be seen casually chatting with her and, they hope, be phtographed rubbing elbows with her for industry bibles like Home Furnishings Executive and Furniture World.

Yet, Karen complains, when she accompanies her husband to communications functions, she might as well be a nobody. When she takes her kids to school functions, shes just another mom. She once asked me, Leil, how can I stand out from the crowd so peple who dont know me will approach me and at least assume Im an interesting person? The techniques in this section accomplish precisely that. When you use the next nine techniques, you will come across as a special person to everyone you meet. You will stand out as a Somebody in whatever crowd you find yourself in, even if its not your crowd.

Lets start with your smile.

How to Make Your Smile Magically Different

In 1936, one of Dale Carnegies six musts in How to Win Friends and Influence People was SMILE! His edict has been echoed each decade by practically every communications guru who ever put pen to paper or mouth to microphone. However, at the turn of the millennium, its high time we reexamine the role of the smile in high-level human relations. When you dig deeper into Dales dictum, youll find a 1936 quick smile doesnt always work. Espcially nowadays.

The old-fashioned instant grin carries no weight with todays sophisticated crowd. Look at world leaders, negotiators, and coporate giants. Not a smiling sycophant among them. Key players in all walks of life enrich their smile so, when it does erupt, it has more potency and the world smiles with them.

Researchers have catalogued dozens of different types of smiles. They range from the tight rubber band of a trapped liar to the soft squishy smile of a tickled infant. Some smiles are warm while others are cold. There are real smiles and fake smiles. (Youve seen plenty of those plastered on the faces of friends who say theyre delighted you decided to drop by, and presidential candidates viiting your city who say theyre thrilled to be in, uh . . . uh. . . .)

Big winners know their smile is one of their most powerful weapons, so theyve fine-tuned it for maximum impact.

How to Fine-Tune Your Smile

Just last year, my old college friend Missy took over her family business, a Midwestern company supplying corrugated boxes to manufacturers. One day she called saying she was coming to New York to court new clients and she invited me to dinner with seeral of her prospects. I was looking forward to once again seeing my friends quicksilver smile and hearing her contagious laugh. Missy was an incurable giggler, and that was part of her charm.

When her Dad passed away last year, she told me she was taing over the business. I thought Missys personality was a little bubbly to be a CEO in a tough business. But, hey, what do I know about the corrugated box biz?

She, three of her potential clients, and I met in the cocktail lounge of a midtown restaurant and, as we led them into the diing room, Missy whispered in my ear, Please call me Melissa tonight.

Of course, I winked back, not many company presidents are called Missy! Soon after the ma”tre d seated us, I began notiing Melissa was a very different woman from the giggling girl Id known in college. She was just as charming; she smiled as much as ever. Yet something was different. I couldnt quite put my figer on it.

Although she was still effervescent, I had the distinct impresion everything Melissa said was more insightful and sincere. She was responding with genuine warmth to her prospective clients, and I could tell they liked her, too. I was thrilled because my friend was scoring a knockout that night. By the end of the evning, Melissa had three big new clients.

How to Make Your Smile Magically Dif ferent 7

Afterward, alone with her in the cab, I said, Missy, youve really come a long way since you took over the company. Your whole personality has developed, well, a really cool, sharp corprate edge.

Uh uh, only one thing has changed, she said. Whats that? My smile, she said. Your what? I asked incredulously.

My smile, she repeated as though I hadnt heard her. You see, she said, with a distant look coming into her eyes, when Dad got sick and knew in a few years Id have to take over the business, he sat me down and had a life-changing conversation with me. Ill never forget his words. Dad said, Missy, Honey, remember that old song, I Loves Ya, Honey, But Yer Feets Too Big? Well, if youre going to make it big in the box business, let me say, I loves ya,

Honey, but your smiles too quick.

He then brought out a yellowed newspaper article quoting a study hed been saving to show me when the time was right. It cocerned women in business. The study showed women who were slower to smile in corporate life were perceived as more credible.

As Missy talked, I began to think about history-making women like Margaret Thatcher, Indira Gandhi, Golda Meir, Madeleine Albright, and other powerful women of their ilk. Not one was known for her quick smile.

Missy continued, The study went on to say a big, warm smile is an asset. But only when it comes a little slower, because then it has more credibility. From that moment on, Missy explained, she gave clients and business associates her big smile. However, she trained her lips to erupt more slowly. Thus her smile appeared more sincere and personalized for the recipient.

That was it! Missys slower smile gave her personality a richer, deeper, more sincere cachet. Though the delay was less than a second, the recipients of her beautiful big smile felt it was special and just for them.

I decided to do more research on the smile. When youre in the market for shoes, you begin to look at everyones feet. When you decide to change your hairstyle, you look at everyones haicut. Well, for several months, I became a steady smile watcher. I watched smiles on the street. I watched smiles on TV. I watched the smiles of politicians, the clergy, corporate giants, and world leaders. My findings? Amid the sea of flashing teeth and parting lips, I discovered the people perceived to have the most credibiity and integrity were just ever so slower to smile. Then, when they did, their smiles seemed to seep into every crevice of their faces and envelop them like a slow flood. Thus I call the following tecnique The Flooding Smile.

Let us now travel but a few inches north to two of the most powerful communications tools you possess, your eyes.

Technique #1

The Flooding Smile

Dont flash an immediate smile when you greet someone, as though anyone who walked into your line of sight would be the beneficiary. Instead, look at the other persons face for a second. Pause. Soak in their persona. Then let a big, warm, responsive smile flood over your face and overflow into your eyes. It will engulf the recipient like a warm wave. The split-second delay convinces people your flooding smile is genuine and only for them.

How to Strike Everyone as Intelligent and Insightful by Using Your Eyes

Its only a slight exaggeration to say Helen of Troy could launch ships with her eyes and Davy Crockett could stare down a bear. Your eyes are personal grenades that have the power to detonate peoples emotions. Just as martial arts masters register their fists as lethal weapons, you can register your eyes as psychological lethal weapons when you master the following eye-contact techniques.

Beloved people in the game of life look beyond the convetional wisdom that teaches Keep good eye contact. For one, they understand that to certain suspicious or insecure people, intense eye contact can be a virulent intrusion.

When I was growing up, my family had a Haitian houskeeper whose fantasies were filled with witches, warlocks, and black magic. Zola refused to be left alone in a room with Louie, my Siamese cat. Louie looks right through mesees my soul, shed whisper to me fearfully.

In some cultures, intense eye contact is sorcery. In others, staing at someone can be threatening or disrespectful. Realizing this, big players in the international scene prefer to pack a book on cutural body-language differences in their carry-on rather than a Berlitz phrase book. In our culture, however, big winners know exaggerated eye contact can be extremely advantageous, especially

between the sexes. In business, even when romance is not in the picture, strong eye contact packs a powerful wallop between men and women.

A Boston center conducted a study to learn the precise effect.The researchers asked opposite-sex individuals to have a twminute casual conversation. They tricked half their subjects into maintaining intense eye contact by directing them to count the number of times their partner blinked. They gave the other half of the subjects no special eye-contact directions for the chat.

When they questioned the subjects afterward, the unsuspecing blinkers reported significantly higher feelings of respect and fondness for their colleagues who, unbeknownst to them, had siply been counting their blinks.

Ive experienced the closeness intense eye contact engenders with a stranger firsthand. Once, when giving a seminar to several hundred people, one womans face in the crowd caught my attetion. The participants appearance was not particularly unique. Yet she became the focus of my attention throughout my talk. Why? Because not for one moment did she take her eyes off my face. Even when I finished making a point and was silent, her eyes stayed hungrily on my face. I sensed she couldnt wait to savor the next

insight to spout from my lips. I loved it! Her concentration and obvious fascination inspired me to remember stories and make important points Id long forgotten.

Right after my talk, I resolved to seek out this new friend who was so enthralled by my speech. As people were leaving the hall, I quickly sidled up behind my big fan. Excuse me, I said. My fan kept walking. Excuse me, I repeated a tad louder. My admirer didnt vary her pace as she continued out the door. I folowed her into the corridor and tapped her shoulder gently. This time she whirled around with a surprised look on her face. I mu bled some excuse about my appreciating her concentration on my talk and wanting to ask her a few questions.

How to Strike Everyone as Intelligent and Insightful by Using Your Eyes 11

Did you, uh, get much out of the seminar? I ventured.

Well, not really, she answered candidly. I had difficulty understanding what you were saying because you were walking around on the platform facing different directions.

In a heartbeat, I understood. The woman was hearing impaired. I did not captivate her as I had suspected. She was not intrigued by my talk as I had hoped. The only reason she kept her eyes glued on my face was because she was struggling to read my lips!

Nevertheless, her eye contact had given me such pleasure and inspiration during my talk that, tired as I was, I asked her to join me for coffee. I spent the next hour recapping my entire seminar just for her. Powerful stuff this eye contact.

Make Your Eyes Look Even More Intelligent

There is yet another argument for intense eye contact. In addition to awakening feelings of respect and affection, maintaining strong eye contact gives you the impression of being an intelligent and abstract thinker. Because abstract thinkers integrate incoming data more easily than concrete thinkers, they can continue looking into someones eyes even during the silences. Their thought processes are not distracted by peering into their partners peepers.Back to our valiant psychologists. Yale researchers, thinking they had the unswerving truth about eye contact, conducted another study that, they assumed, would confirm the more eye contact, the more positive feelings. This time, they directed sujects to deliver a personally revealing monologue. They asked the listeners to react with a sliding scale of eye

contact while their parners talked.

The results? All went as expected when women told their pesonal stories to women. Increased eye contact encouraged feelings

of intimacy. But, whoops, it wasnt so with the men. Some men felt hostile when stared at too long by another man. Other men felt threatened. Some few even suspected their partner was more interested than he should be and wanted to slug him.

Your partners emotional reaction to your profound gaze has a biological base. When you look intently at someone, it increases their heartbeat and shoots an adrenalinelike substance gushing through their veins.This is the same physical reaction people have when they start to fall in love. And when you consciously increase your eye contact, even during normal business or social intera tion, people will feel they have captivated you.

Men talking to women and women talking to men or women: use the following technique, which I call Sticky Eyes, for the joy of the recipientand for your own advantage. (Guys, Ill have a man-to-man modification of this technique for you in a moment.)

What About Guys Eyes?

Now gentlemen: when talking to men, you, too, can use Sticky Eyes. Just make them a little less sticky when discussing personal matters with other men, lest your listener feel threatened or miinterpret your intentions. But do increase your eye contact slightly

Technique #2

Sticky Eyes

Pretend your eyes are glued to your conversation partners with sticky warm taffy. Dont break eye contact even after he or she has finished speaking. When you must look away, do it ever so slowly, reluctantly, stretching the gooey taffy until the tiny string finally breaks.

more than normal with men on day-to-day communications and a lot more when talking to women. It broadcasts a visceral message of comprehension and respect.

I have a friend, Sammy, a salesman who unwittingly comes across as an arrogant chap. He doesnt mean to, but sometimes his brusque manner makes it look like hes running roughshod over peoples feelings.

Once while we were having dinner together in a restaurant, I told him

about the Sticky Eyes technique. I guess he took it to heart. When the waiter came over, Sammy, uncharacteristically, instead of bluntly blurting out his order with his nose in the menu, looked at the waiter. He smiled, gave his order for the appetizer, and kept his eyes on the waiters for an extra second before looing down again at the menu to choose the main dish. I cant tell you how different Sammy seemed to me just then! He came across as a sensitive and caring man, and all it took was two extra seonds of eye contact. I saw the effect it had on the waiter, too. We received exceptionally gracious service the rest of the evening.

A week later Sammy called me and said, Leil, Sticky Eyes has changed my life. Ive been following it to a T. With women, I make my eyes real sticky and with men slightly sticky. And now everybodys treating me with such deference. I think its part of the reason Ive made more sales this week than all last month!

If you deal with customers or clients in your professional life, Sticky Eyes is a definite boon to your bottom line. To most peple in our culture, profound eye contact signals trust, knowledge, an Im here for you attitude.

Lets carry Sticky Eyes one step further. Like a potent medcine that has the power to kill or cure, the next eye-contact tecnique has the potential to captivate or annihilate.

How to Use Your Eyes to Make Someone Fall in Love with You

Now we haul in the heavy eyeball artillery: very sticky eyes or superglue eyes. Lets call them Epoxy Eyes. Big bosses use Epoxy Eyes to evaluate employees. Police investigators use Epoxy Eyes to intimidate suspected criminals. And clever Romeos use Epoxy Eyes to make women fall in love with them. (If romance is your goal, Epoxy Eyes is a proven aphrodisiac.)

The Epoxy Eyes technique takes at least three people to pull offyou, your target, and one other person. Heres how it works. Usually, when youre chatting with two or more people, you gaze at the person who is speaking. However, the Epoxy Eyes technique suggests you concentrate on the listeneryour targetrather than the speaker. This slightly disorients the target and he or she silently asks, Why is this person looking at me instead of the speaker? Your target senses you are extremely interested in his or her reations. This can be beneficial in certain business situations when it is appropriate that you judge the listener.

Human resources professionals often use Epoxy Eyes, not as a technique, but because they are sincerely interested in a prspective employees reaction

to certain ideas being presented. Attorneys, bosses, police investigators, psychologists, and others

How to Use Your Eyes to Make Someone Fall in Love with You 15

who must examine subjects reactions also use Epoxy Eyes for anlytical purposes.

When you use Epoxy Eyes, it sends out signals of interest blended with complete confidence in yourself. But because Epoxy Eyes puts you in a position of evaluating or judging someone else, you must be careful. Dont overdo it or you could come across as arrogant and brazen.

Sometimes using full Epoxy Eyes is too potent, so here is a gentler, yet effective, form. Watch the speaker but let your glance bounce to your target each time the speaker finishes a point. This way Mr. or Ms. Target still feels you are intrigued by his or her reactions, yet there is relief from the intensity.

Use Epoxy Eyes to Push Their Erotic Button

If romance is on the horizon, Epoxy Eyes transmits yet another message. It says, I cant take my eyes off you or I only have eyes for you. Anthropologists have dubbed eyes the initial organ of romance because studies show intense eye contact plays havoc with our heartbeat.It also releases a druglike substance into our

Technique #3

Epoxy Eyes

This brazen technique packs a powerful punch. Watch your target person even when someone else is talking. No matter who is speaking, keep looking at the man or woman you want to impact.

nervous system called phenylethylamine. Since this is the hormone detected in the human body during erotic excitement, intense eye contact can be a turn-on.

Men, Epoxy Eyes is extremely effective on womenif they find you attractive. The lady interprets her nervous reaction to your untoward gaze as budding infatuation. If she does not like you, however, your Epoxy Eyes is downright obnoxious. (Never use Epoxy Eyes on strangers in public settings or you could get arrested!)

How to Look Like a Big Winner Wherever YouGo

Do you remember the lyrics to the old Shirley Bassey song? The minute you walked in the joint, I could see you were a man of ditinctiona real big spender. Good looking, so refined. Say wouldnt you like to know whats going on in my mind?

The goal of this first section is not to make you look like a real big spender. Rather it is to give you the cachet of a real big Somebody the moment people lay eyes on you. To that end, we now explore the most important technique to make you look like a very important person.

When the doctor smacks your knee with that nasty little hamer, your foot jerks forward. Thus the phrase knee-jerk reaction. Your body has another instinctive reaction. When a big jolt of hapiness hits your heart and you feel like a winner, your head jerks up automatically and you throw your shoulders back. A smile frames your lips and softens your eyes.

This is the look winners have constantly. They stand with assurance. They move with confidence. They smile softly with pride. No doubt about itgood posture symbolizes that you are a man or woman who is used to being on top.

Obviously millions of mothers sticking their knuckles btween their kids shoulder blades, and trillions of teachers telling students, Stand up straight! hasnt done the trick. We are a nation of slouchers. We need a technique more stern than teacers and more persuasive than parents to make us stand like a Somebody.

In one profession, perfect posture, perfect equilibrium, pefect balance is not only desirableits a matter of life and death. One false move, one slump of the shoulders, one hangdog look, can mean curtains for the high-wire acrobat.

Ill never forget the first time Mama took me to the circus. When seven men and women raced into the center ring, the crowd rose as though they were all joined at the hips. They cheered with one thunderous voice. Mama pressed her lips against my ear and reverently whispered these were the Great Walledas, the only troupe in the world to perform the seven-person pyramid without a net.

In an instant, the crowd became hushed. Not a cough or a soda slurp was heard in the big top as Karl and Herman Wallenda shouted cues in German to their trusting relatives. The family meticulously and majestically ascended into the position of a human pyramid. They then balanced precariously on a thin wire hundreds of feet above the hard dirt with no net between them and sudden death. The vision was unforgettable.

To me, equally unforgettable was the beauty and grace of the seven Wallendas racing into the center of the big top to take their bows. Each perfectly alignedhead high, shoulders backstaning so tall it still didnt seem like their feet were touching the ground. Every muscle in their bodies defined

pride, success, and their joy of being alive. (Still!) Here is a visualization technique to get your body looking like a winner who is in the habit of feeling that pride, success, and joy of being alive.

How to Look Like a Big Winner Wherever You Go 19

Your Posture Is Your Biggest Success Barometer

Imagine you are a world-renowned acrobat, master of the iron-jaw act waiting in the wings of the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Baley Circus. Soon you will dart into the center ring to captivate the crowd with the precision and balance of your body.

Before walking through any doorthe door to your office, a party, a meeting, even your kitchenpicture a leather bit haning by a cable from the frame. It is swinging just an inch higher than your head. As you pass through the door, throw your head back and chomp on the imaginary dental grip that first pulls your cheeks back into a smile and then lifts you up. As you ascend high above the gasping crowd, your body is stretched into perfect aligmenthead high, shoulders back, torso out of hips, feet weighless. At the zenith of the tent, you spin like a graceful top to the amazement and admiration of the crowd craning their necks to watch you. Now you look like a Somebody.

One day, to test Hang by Your Teeth, I decided to count how many times I walked through a doorway: sixty times, even at home. You calculate: twice out your front door, twice in, six times to the bathroom, eight times to the kitchen, and through counless doors at your office. It adds up. Visualize anything sixty times a day and it becomes a habit! Habitual good posture is the first mark of a big winner.

You are now ready to float into the room to captivate the crowd or close the sale (or maybe just settle for looking like the most important Somebody in the room).

You now have all the basics Bob the artist needs to portray you as a big winner. Like he said, great posture, a heads-up look, a confident smile, and a direct gaze. The ideal image for sombody whos a Somebody.

Technique #4

Hang by Your Teeth

Visualize a circus iron-jaw bit hanging from the frame of every door you walk through. Take a bite and, with it firmly between your teeth, let it swoop you to the peak of the big top. When you hang by your teeth, every muscle is stretched into perfect posture position.

Now lets put the whole act into motion. Its time to turn your attention outward to your conversation partner. Use the next two techniques to make him or her feel like a million.

How to Win Their Heart by Responding to Their Inner Infant

Remember the old joke? The comic comes onstage and the first words out of his mouth are, Well, how do you like me so far? The audience always cracks up. Why? Because we all silently ask that question. Whenever we meet someone, we know, consciously or subconsciously, how theyre reacting to us.

Do they look at us? Do they smile? Do they lean toward us? Do they somehow recognize how wonderful and special we are? We like those people. They have good taste. Or do they turn away, obviously unimpressed by our magnificence. The cretins!

Two people getting to know each other are like little puppies sniffing each other out. We dont have tails that wag or hair that bristles. But we do have eyes that narrow or widen. And hands that flash knuckles or subconsciously soften in the palms-up I submit position. We have dozens of other involuntary reactions that take place in the first few moments of togetherness.

Attorneys conducting voir dire are exquisitely aware of this. They pay close attention to your instinctive body reactions. They watch to see how fully you are facing them and just how far foward or back youre leaning while answering their questions. They check out your hands. Are they softly open, palms up, signifying acceptance of the ideas theyre expressing? Or are you making a slight fist, knuckles out, signaling rejection? They scrutinize your

face for the split seconds you break eye contact when discussing relevant subjects like your feelings on big awards for damages or the death penalty. Sometimes attorneys bring along a legal assitant whose sole job is to sit on the sidelines and take precise note of your every fidget.

An interesting aside: trial lawyers often choose women to do this twitch-and-turn spying job because, traditionally, females are sharper observers of subtle body cues than males. Women, more sensitive to emotions than men, often ask their husbands, Is something bothering you, Honey? (These supersensitive women accuse their husbands of being so insensitive to emotions that they wouldnt notice anything is wrong until their neckties are drenched in her tears.)

The attorney and the assistant then review your score on the dozens of subconscious signals you flashed. Depending on their tally, you could find yourself on jury duty or twiddling your thumbs back in the jurors waiting room.

Trial lawyers are so conscious of body language that, in the 1960s during the famous trial of the Chicago Seven, defense attoney William Kuntsler actually made a legal objection to Judge Julius Hoffmans posture. During the summation by the prosection, Judge Hoffman leaned forward, which, accused Kuntsler, sent a message to the jury of attention and interest. During his defense summation, complained Kuntsler, Judge Hoffman leaned back, sending the jury a subliminal message of disinterest.

Youre on Trialand You Only Have Ten Seconds

Like attorneys deciding whether they want you on their case, everybody you meet makes a subconscious judgment on whether they want you in their lives. They base their verdict greatly on the same signals, your body-language answer to their unspoken quetion, Well, how do you like me so far?

How to Win Their Heart by Responding to Their Inner Infant 23

The first few moments of your reactions set the stage upon which the entire relationship will be played out. If you ever want anything from the new acquaintance, your unspoken answer to their unspoken question, How do you like me so far? must be, Wow! I really like you.

When a little four year old feels bashful, he slumps, puts his arms up in front of his chest, steps back, and hides behind Mommys skirt. However, when little Johnny sees Daddy come home, he runs up to him, he smiles, his eyes get wide, and he opens his arms for a hug. A loving childs body is like a tiny flower bud unfolding to the sunshine.

Twenty, thirty, forty, fifty years of life on earth make little diference. When forty-year-old Johnny is feeling timid, he slumps and folds his arms in front of his chest. When he wants to reject a salesman or business colleague, he turns away and closes him off with a myriad of body signals. However, when welcoming his loved one home after an absence, big Johnny opens his body to her like a giant daffodil spreading its petals to the sun after a rainstorm.

Treat People Like Big Babies

Once I was at a corporate star-studded party with an attractive, recently divorced friend of mine. Carla had been a copywriter with one of the leading advertising agencies which, like so many companies then, had downsized.

My girlfriend was both out of work and out of a relationship.

At this particular party, the pickings for Carla were good, both personally and professionally. Several times as Carla and I stood talking, one good-looking corporate male beast or another would find himself within a few feet of us. More often than not, one of these desirable males would flash his teeth at Carla. She sometimes graced the tentatively courting male with a quick smile over her shoulder. But then shed turn back to our mundane conversation

as though she were hanging on my every word. I knew she was trying not to look anxious, but inside Carla was crying out, Why doesnt he come speak to us?

Right after one prize corporate Big Cat smiled but, because of Carlas minimal reaction, wandered back into the social jungle, I had to say, Carla, do you know who that was? Hes the head of the Young & Rubicam in Paris. Theyre looking for copywriters willing to relocate. And hes single! Carla moaned.

Just then we heard a little voice down by Carlas left knee. Hello! We looked down simultaneously. Little five-year-old Willie, the hostesss adorable young son, was tugging on Carlas skirt, obviously craving attention.

Well, well, well, Carla cried out, a big smile erupting all over her face. Carla turned toward him. Carla kneeled down, touched little Willies elbow, and crooned, Well, hello there, Willie. How are you enjoying Mommys nice party?

Little Willie beamed.

When little Willie finally trundled off to tug on the garments of the next group of potential attention givers, Carla and I returned to our grown-up conversing. During our chat, corporate beasts continued to stalk Carla with their eyes and she continued casting half smiles at them. She was obviously disappointed none of them was making a further approach. I had to bite my tongue. Finally, when I felt it was going to bleed from the pressure of my teeth, I said, Carla, have you been noticing that four or five men have come over and smiled at you.

Yes, Carla whispered, her eyes darting nervously around the room lest anyone overhear us.

And youve been giving them little half smiles, I continued. Yes, she murmured, now confused at my question. Remember when little Willie came up and tugged on your

skirt? Do you recall how you smiled that beautiful big smile of yours, turned toward him, and welcomed him into our grown-up conversation?

How to Win Their Heart by Responding to Their Inner Infant 25

Yee-es, she answered haltingly.

Well, I have a request, Carla. I want you to give the next man who smiles at you that same big smile you gave Willie. I want you to turn toward him just like you did then. Maybe even reach out and touch his arm like you did Willies, and then welcome him into our conversation.

Oh Leil, I couldnt do that.

Carla, do it! Sure enough, within a few minutes, another attractive man wandered our way and smiled. Carla played her role to perfection. She flashed her beautiful teeth, turned fully toward him, and said, Hello, come join us. He wasted no time acceping Carlas invitation.

After a few moments, I excused myself. Neither noticed my departure because they were in animated conversation. The last glimpse I had of my friend at the party was her floating out the door on the arm of her new friend.

Just then the technique I call The Big-Baby Pivot was born. It is a skill that will help you win whatever your heart desires from whatever type of beasts you encounter in the social or corporate jungle.

Technique #5

The Big-Baby Pivot

Give everyone you meet The Big-Baby Pivot. The instant the two of you are introduced, reward your new acquaintance. Give the warm smile, the total-body turn, and the undivided attention you would give a tiny tyke who crawled up to your feet, turned a precious face up to yours, and beamed a big toothless grin. Pivoting 100 percent toward the new person shouts I think you are very, very special.

Remember, buried deep inside everyone is a big baby who is rattling the crib, wailing out for recognition of how very special he or she is.

The following technique reinforces the big babys suspicion that he or she is, indeed, the center of the universe.

How to Make Someone Feel Like an Old Friend at Once

A very wise man with the funny name of Zigonce told me, Peple dont care how much you know until they know how much you care . . . about them. Zig Ziglar is right. The secret to maing people like you is showing how much you like them!

Your body is a twenty-four-hour broadcasting station reveaing to anyone

within eyeshot precisely how you feel at any given moment. Even if your Hang by Your Teeth posture is gaining their respect, your Flooding Smile and The Big-Baby Pivot are making them feel special, and your Sticky Eyes are capturing their hearts and minds, the rest of your body can reveal any incongruence. Every inchfrom the crinkle of your forehead to the position of your feetmust give a command performance if you want to effectively present an I care about you attitude.

Unfortunately, when meeting someone, our brains are in ovedrive. Remember Shakespeares Julius Caesar? He said of Cassius, he has a lean and hungry look . . . he thinks too much . . . such men are dangerous. So it is with our brains when conversing with a new acquaintance. Our brains become lean. (Some of us are fighting off shyness. Others are frantically sizing up the situation.) And hungry. (Were deciding what, if anything, we want from this potential relationship.) So we think too much instead of responding with candid, unself-conscious friendliness. Such actions are dangerous to impending friendship, love, or commerce.

When our bodies are shooting off ten thousand bullets of stimuli every second, a few shots are apt to misfire and reveal shness or hidden hostility. We need a technique to ensure every shot aims right at the heart of our subject. We need to trick our boies into reacting perfectly.

To find it, lets explore the only time we dont need to worry about any shyness or negativity slipping out through our body laguage. Its when we feel none. That happens when were chatting with close friends. When we see someone we love or feel copletely comfortable with, we respond warmly from head to toe without a thought. Our lips part happily. We step closer. Our arms reach out. Our eyes become soft and wide. Even our palms turn up and our bodies turn fully toward our dear friend.

How to Trick Your Body into Doing Everything Right

Heres a visualization technique that accomplishes all that. It guaantees that everyone you encounter will feel your warmth. I call it Hello Old Friend.

When meeting someone, play a mental trick on yourself. In your minds eye, see him or her as an old friend, someone you had a wonderful relationship with years ago. But somehow you lost track of your friend. You tried so hard to find your good buddy, but there was no listing in the phone book. No information online. None of your mutual friends had a clue.

Suddenly, WOW! What a surprise! After all those years, the two of you are reunited. You are so happy.

Thats where the pretending stops. Obviously, you are not going to try to convince the new person that the two of you are really old friends. You are not going to hug and kiss and say, Great to see you again! or How have you been all these years? You

How to Make Someone Feel Like an Old Friend at Once 29

merely say, Hello, How do you do, I am pleased to meet you. But, inside, its a very different story.

You will amaze yourself. The delight of rediscovery fills your face and buoys up your body language. I sometimes jokingly say if you were a light, youd beam on the other person. If you were a dog, youd be wagging your tail. You make this new person feel very special indeed.

In my seminars, I first have people introduce themselves to another participant before theyve learned the Hello Old Friend technique. The group chats as though at a pleasant semiformal gathering. Later I ask them to introduce themselves to another stranger, imagining they are old friends. The difference is extraodinary. When theyre using Hello Old Friend, the room comes alive. The atmosphere is charged with good feeling. The air sparkles with happier, high-energy people. They are standing closer, laughing more sincerely, and reaching out to one another. I feel like Im attending a terrific bash thats been going on for hours.

Technique #6

Hello Old Friend

When meeting someone, imagine he or she is an old friend (an old customer, an old beloved, or someone else you had great affection for). How sad, the vicisitudes of life tore you two asunder. But, holy macerel, now the party (the meeting, the convention) has reunited you with your long-lost old friend!

The joyful experience starts a remarkable chain reaction in your body from the subconscious softening of your eyebrows to the positioning of your toesand everything between.

Not a Word Need Be Spoken

The Hello Old Friend technique even supersedes language. Wheever youre traveling in countries where you dont speak the native tongue, be sure to use it. If you find yourself with a group of peple who are all speaking a language unknown to you, just imaine them to be a group of your old friends. Everything is fine except they momentarily forgot how to speak English. In spite of the fact you wont understand a word, your whole body still responds

with congeniality and acceptance.

Ive used the Hello Old Friend technique while traveling in Europe. Sometimes my English-speaking friends who live there tell me their European colleagues say I am the friendliest Amercan theyve ever met. Yet, wed never spoken a word between us!

A Self-Fulfilling Prophecy

An added benefit to the Hello Old Friend technique is it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. When you act as though you like someone, you start to really like them. An Adelphi University study called, appropriately, Believing Another Likes or Dislikes You: Behaviors Making the Beliefs Come True proved it.Researchers told vounteers to treat unsuspecting subjects as though they liked them. When surveyed later, the results showed the volunteers wound up genuinely liking the subjects. The unsuspecting subjects were also surveyed. These respondents expressed much higher respect and affection for the volunteers who pretended they liked them. What it boils down to is love begets love, like begets like, respect begets respect. Use the Hello Old Friend technique and you will soon have many new old friends who wind up genuinely liking you.

You now have all the basics to come across to everyone you meet as a Somebody, a friendly Somebody. But your job isnt over yet. In addition to being liked, you want to appear credible, inteligent, and sure of yourself. Each of the next three techniques accomplishes one of those goals.

How to Come Across as 100 Percent Credible to Everyone

My friend Helen is a highly respected headhunter. She makes terific hires for her clients and I once asked her the secret of her sucess. Helen replied, Probably because I can almost always tell when an applicant is lying.

How can you tell?

She said, Well, just last week, I was interviewing a young woman for a position as marketing director for a small firm. Throughout the interview, the applicant had been sitting with her left leg crossed over her right. Her hands were comfortably resing in her lap and she was looking directly at me.

I asked her salary. Without swerving her eyes from mine, she told me. I asked if she enjoyed her work. Still looking directly at me, she said, yes. Then I asked her why she left her previous job.

At that point, her eyes fleetingly darted away before regaiing eye contact with me. Helen continued. Then, while answeing my question, she shifted in her seat and crossed her right leg over her left. At one point, she put her

hands up to her mouth.

Helen said, Thats all I needed. With her words she was telling me she felt her growth opportunities were limited at her previous firm. But her body told me she was not being entirely forthright.

Helen went on to explain the young womans fidgeting alone wouldnt prove she was lying. Nevertheless, it was enough, she said, that she wanted to pursue the subject further.

So I tested it. Helen explained. I changed the subject and went back to more neutral territory. I asked her about her goals for the future. Again, the girl stopped fidgeting. She folded her hands in her lap as she told me how shed always wanted to work in a small company in order to have hands-on experience with more than one project.

Then I repeated my earlier question. I asked again if it was only the lack of growth opportunity that made her leave her prvious position. Sure enough, once again, the woman shifted in her seat and momentarily broke eye contact. As she continued talking about her last job, she started rubbing her forearm.

Helen continued to probe until she finally uncovered the truth. The applicant had been fired because of a nasty disagrement with the marketing director for whom she worked.

Human resources professionals who interview applicants and police officers who interrogate suspected criminals are trained to detect lies. They know specifically what signals to look for. The rest of us, although not knowledgeable about specific clues to deceit, have a sixth sense when someone is not telling us the truth.

Just recently a colleague of mine was considering hiring an ihouse booking agent. After interviewing one fellow she said to me, I dont know. I dont really think he has the success he claims.

You think hes lying to you? I asked.

Absolutely. And the funny thing is I cant tell why. He looked right at me. He answered all my questions directly. There was just something that didnt seem right.

Employers often feel this way. They have a gut feeling about someone but they cant put their finger on it. Because of that, many large companies turn to the polygraph, or lie detector, a mechanical apparatus designed to detect if someone is lying.

How to Come Across as 100 Percent Credible to Everyone 33

Banks, drugstores, and grocery stores rely heavily on it for premployment

screening. The FBI, Justice Department, and most police departments have used the polygraph on suspects. Interesingly, the polygraph is not a lie detector at all! All the machine can do is detect fluctuations in our autonomic nervous system changes in breathing patterns, sweating, flushing, heart rate, blood pressure, and other signs of emotional arousal.

So is it accurate? Well, yes, often it is. Why? Because when the average person tells a lie, he or she is emotionally aroused and bodily changes do take place. When that happens, the individual might fidget. Experienced or trained liars, however, can fool the polygraph.

Beware of the Appearance of Lying Even When Youre Telling the Truth

Problems arise for us when we are not lying but are feeling emtional or intimidated by the person with whom we are talking. A young man telling an attractive woman about his business success might shift his weight. A woman talking about her companys track record to an important client could rub her neck.

More problems arise out of the atmosphere. A businessman who doesnt feel nervous at all could loosen his collar because the room is hot. A politician giving a speech outdoors could blink excessively because the air is dusty. Even though erroneous, these fidgety movements give the listeners the sense something just isnt right or a gut feeling that the speaker is lying.

Professional communicators, alert to this hazard, consciously squelch any signs anyone could mistake for shiftiness. They fix a constant gaze on the listener. They never put their hands on their faces. They dont massage their arm when it tingles or rub their nose when it itches. They dont loosen their collar when its hot or blink because its sandy. They dont wipe away tiny perspiration

beads in public or shield their eyes from the sun. They suffer because they know fidgeting undermines credibility. Consider the infamous September 25, 1960, televised presidential debate between Richard Milhous Nixon and John Fitzgerald Kennedy. Political pundits speculate Nixons lack of makeup, his fidgeting, and mopping his brow on camera lost him the election.

If you want to come across as an entirely credible Somebody, try to squelch all extraneous movement when your communiction counts. I call the technique Limit the Fidget.

Now lets tackle intelligence. What? you ask. Can people come across as more intelligent than they really are? Well, did you ever hear of Hans, the

counting horse? Hans was considered the most intelligent horse in history, and he used the technique Im about to suggest.

Technique #7

Limit the Fidget

Whenever your conversation really counts, let your nose itch, your ear tingle, or your foot prickle. Do not fidget, twitch, wiggle, squirm, or scratch. And above all, keep your paws away from your puss. Hand motions near your face and all fidgeting can give your listener the gut feeling youre fibbing.

How to Read People Like You Have ESP

Hans, a very clever horse, inspires this next technique. Hans was owned by Herr von Osten, a Berliner, who had trained Hans to do simple arithmetic by tapping his right front hoof. So prodigious was Hanss ability that the horses fame quickly spread throughout Europe in the early 1900s. He became known as Clever Hans, the counting horse.

Herr von Osten taught Hans to do more than just add. Soon the horse could subtract and divide. In time, Clever Hans even mastered the multiplication tables. The horse became quite a phnomenon. Without his owner uttering a single word, Hans could count out the size of his audience, tap the number wearing glasses, or respond to any counting question they asked him.

Finally, Hans achieved the ultimate ability that separates man from animallanguage. Hans learned the alphabet. By tapping out hoof beats for each letter, he answered any question about anthing humans had read in a newspaper or heard on the radio. He could even answer common questions about history, geography, and human biology.

Hans made headlines and was the main topic of discussion at dinner parties throughout Europe. The human horse quickly attracted the attention of scientists, psychology professors, veterinarians, even cavalry officers. Naturally they were skeptical, so they established an official commission to decide whether the horse was a case of clever trickery or equine genius. Whatever their supicions, it was obvious to all, Hans was a very smart horse. Copared to other horses, Hans was a Somebody.

Cut to today. Why is it when you talk with certain individals you just know they are smarter than other peoplethat they are a Somebody? Often theyre not discussing highfalutin subjects or using two-dollar words. Nevertheless, everybody knows. Peple say, Shes smart as a whip, He doesnt

miss a trick, She picks up on everything, Hes got the right stuff, Shes got horse sense. Which brings us back to Hans.

The day of the big test arrived. Everyone was convinced it must be a trick orchestrated by Herr von Osten, Hanss owner. It was standing room only in the auditorium filled with scientists, reporters, clairvoyants, psychics, and horse lovers who eagerly awaited the answer. The canny commission members were cofident this was the day they would expose Hans as chicanery because they, too, had a trick up their sleeves. They were going to bar von Osten from the hall and put his horse to the test all alone.

When the crowd was assembled, they told von Osten he must leave the auditorium. The surprised owner departed, and Hans was stranded in an auditorium with a suspicious and anxious audience.

The confident commission leader asked Hans the first matematical question. He tapped out the right answer! A second. He got it right! Then a third. Then the language questions followed. He got them all right!

The commission was befuddled. The critics were silenced.

However, the public wasnt. With a great outcry, they insisted on a new commission. The world waited while, once again, the authorities gathered scientists, professors, veterinarians, cavalry officers, and reporters from around the world.

Only after this second commission put Hans to the test did the truth about the clever horse come out. Commission number two started the enquiry perfunctorily with a simple addition prolem. This time, however, instead of asking the question out loud for all to hear, one researcher whispered a number in Hanss ear, and a second researcher whispered another. Everyone expected Hans to quickly tap out the sum. But Hans remained dumb! Aha! The researchers revealed the truth to the waiting world. Can you guess what that was?

Heres a hint: when the audience or researcher knew the answer, Hans did, too. Now can you guess?

People gave off very subtle body-language signals the moment Hanss hoof gave the right number of taps. When Hans started tapping the answer to a question, the audience would show sutle signs of tension. Then, when Hans reached the right number, they responded by an expulsion of breath or slight relaxation of muscles. Von Osten had trained Hans to stop tapping at that point and therefore appear to give the right answer.

Hans was using the technique I call Hanss Horse Sense. He watched his audiences reactions very carefully and planned his responses accordingly.

If a Horse Can Do It, So Can You

Have you ever been watching TV when the phone rings? Someone asks you to hit the mute button on the television so they can talk. Because theres no sound now, you watch the TV action more carfully. You see performers smiling, scowling, smirking, squinting, and scores of other expressions. You dont miss a bit of the story because, just from their expressions, you can tell what theyre thining. Hanss Horse Sense is just thatwatching people, seeing how theyre reacting, and then making your moves accordingly. Even while youre talking, keep your eyes on your listeners and watch how theyre responding to what youre saying. Dont miss a trick.

Are they smiling? Are they nodding? Are their palms up? They like what theyre hearing.

Are they frowning? Are they looking away? Are their knucles clenched? Maybe they dont.

Are they rubbing their necks? Are they stepping back? Are their feet pointing toward the door? Maybe they want to get away. You dont need a complete course in body language here. Already your lifes experience has given you a good grounding in that. Most people know if their conversation partners step back or look away, theyre not interested in what youre saying. When they think youre a pain in the neck they rub theirs. When they feel

superior to you, they steeple their hands. Well explore more body-language specifics in Technique #77:

Eyeball Selling. For the moment, all you need to do is tune to the silent channel being broadcast by the speaker.

You now have eight techniques to help you come across as a confident, credible, and charismatic person who makes everyone he or she comes in contact with feel like a million. Lets explore one last technique in this section to put it all together and make sure you dont miss a beat.

Technique #8

Hanss Horse Sense

Make it a habit to get on a dual track while talking. Express yourself, but keep a keen eye on how your listener is reacting to what youre saying. Then plan your moves accordingly.

If a horse can do it, so can a human. People will say you pick up on everything. You never miss a trick. Youve got horse sense.

How to Make Sure You Dont Miss a Single Beat

Youve seen professional skiing on television? The athlete at the top of the piste, every muscle primed and poised, waiting for the gun to propel him to ultimate victory. Look deeply into his eyes and youll see he is having an out-of-body experience. In his minds eye, the skier is swooshing down the slope, zapping back and forth between the poles, and sliding across the finish line in faster time than the world thought possible. The athlete is visualizing.

All athletes do it: divers, runners, jumpers, javelin throwers, lugers, swimmers, skaters, acrobats. They visualize their magic before performing it. They see their own bodies bending, twising, flipping, or flying through the air. They hear the sound of the wind, the splash in the water, the whirr of the javelin, the thud of its landing. They smell the grass, the cement, the pool, the dust. Before they move a muscle, professional athletes watch the whole movie, which, of course, ends in their own victory.

Sports psychologists tell us visualization is not just for tolevel competitive athletes. Studies show mental rehearsal helps weekend athletes sharpen their golf, their tennis, their running, whatever their favorite activity. Experts agree if you see the pi tures, hear the sounds, and feel the movements of your body in your mind before you do the activity, the effect is powerful.

Twenty-Six Miles on My Mattress

Psychological mumbo jumbo? Absolutely not! My friend Richard runs marathons. Once, several years ago, a scant three weeks before the big New York marathon, an out-of-control car crashed into Richards and he was taken to the hospital. He was not badly injured. Nevertheless, his friends felt sorry for him because being laid up two weeks in bed would, naturally, knock him out of the big event.

What a surprise when, on that crisp November marathon morning in Central Park, Richard showed up in his little shorts and big running shoes.

Richard, are you crazy? Youre in no shape to run. Youve been in bed these past few weeks! we all cried out.

My body may have been in bed, he replied, but Ive been running.

What? we asked in unison.

Yep. Every day. Twenty-six miles, 385 yards, right there on my mattress. Richard explained that in his imagination he saw himself traversing every step of the course. He saw the sights, heard the sounds, and felt the twitching movements in his mucles. He visualized himself racing in the marathon.

Richard didnt do as well as he had the year before, but the miracle is he

finished the marathon, without injury, without excesive fatigue thanks to his visualization. It works in just about any endeavor you apply it toincluding being a terrific communicator.

Visualization works best when you feel totally relaxed. Only when you have a calm state of mind can you get clear, vivid images. Do your visualization in the quiet of your home or car before leaving for the party, the convention, or the big-deal meeing. See it all in your minds eye ahead of time.

You now have the skills necessary to get you started on the right foot with any new person in your life. Think of yourself in

How to Make Sure You Dont Miss a Single Beat 41

Technique #9

Watch the Scene Before You Make the Scene

Rehearse being the Super Somebody you want to be ahead of time. SEE yourself walking around with Hang by Your Teeth posture, shaking hands, smiling the Flooding Smile, and making Sticky Eyes. HEAR youself chatting comfortably with everyone. FEEL the pleasure of knowing you are in peak form and everyone is gravitating toward you. VISUALIZE yourself a Super Somebody. Then it all happens automatically.

these first moments like a rocket taking off. When the folks at Cape Kennedy aim a spacecraft for the moon, a mistake in the millionth of a degree at the beginning, when the craft is still on the ground, means missing the moon by thousands of miles. Likwise, a tiny body-language blooper at the outset of a relationship may mean you will never make a hit with that person. But with The Flooding Smile, Sticky Eyes, Epoxy Eyes, Hang by Your Teeth, The Big-Baby Pivot, Hello Old Friend, Limit the Fidget, Hanss Horse Sense, and Watch the Scene Before You Make the Scene, youll be right on course to get whatever you eventually want from anybodybe it business, friendship, or love.

We now move from the silent world to the spoken word.

How to Talk to Anyone - 92 Little Tricks...

PART TWO

How to Know What to Say After You Say Hi

Just as the first glimpse should please their eyes, your first words should delight their ears. Your tongue is a welcome mat embossed with either Welcome or Go Away! To make your conversation partner feel welcome, you must master small talk.

Small talk! Can you hear the shudder? Those two little words drive a stake into the hearts of some otherwise fearless and undaunted souls. Invite them to a party where they dont know anyone, and it mainlines queasiness into their veins.

If this sounds familiar, take consolation from the fact that the brighter the individual, the more he or she detests small talk. When consulting for Fortune 500 companies, I was astounded. Top executives, completely comfortable making big talk with their boards of directors or addressing their stockholders, confessed they felt like little lost children at parties where the pratter was less than prodigious.

Small-talk haters take further consolation from the fact that you are in star-studded company. Fear of small talk and stage fright are the same thing. The butterflies you feel in your stoach when youre in a roomful of strangers flutter round the tummies of top performers. Pablo Casals complained of lifelong stage fright. Carly Simon curtailed live performances because of it. A friend of mine who worked with Neil Diamond said he insisted the words to Song Sung Blue, a tune hed been crooning for forty years, be displayed on his teleprompter, lest fear freeze him into forgetfulness.

Is Small-Talk-a-Phobia Curable?

Someday, scientists say, communications fears may be treatable with drugs. Theyre already experimenting with Prozac to change peoples personalities. But some fear disastrous side effects. The good news is that when human beings think, and genuinely feel, certain emotionslike confidence that they have specific tecniques to fall back onthe brain manufactures its own antidotes. If fear and distaste of small talk is the disease, knowing solid tecniques like the ones we explore in this section is the cure.

Incidentally, science is beginning to recognize its not chance or even upbringing that one person has a belly of butterflies and another doesnt. In

our brains, neurons communicate through chemicals called neurotransmitters. Some people have excessive levels of a neurotransmitter called norepinephrine, a chemical cousin of adrenaline. For some children, just walking into a kindegarten room makes them want to run and hide under a table.

As a tot, I spent a lot of time under the table. As a preteen in an all-girls boarding school, my legs turned to linguine every time I had to converse with a male. In eighth grade, I once had to invite a boy to our school prom. The entire selection of dancing males lived in the dormitory of our brother school. And I only knew one resident, Eugene. I had met Eugene at summer camp the year before. Mustering all my courage, I decided to call him.

Two weeks before the dance, I felt the onset of sweaty palms. I put the call off. One week before, rapid heartbeat set in. I put

the call off. Finally, three days before the big bash, breathing became difficult. Time was running out.

The critical moment, I rationalized, would be easier if I read from a script. I wrote out the following: Hi, this is Leil. We met at camp last summer. Remember? (I programmed in a pause where I hoped he would say yes.) Well, National Cathedral Schools prom is this Saturday night and Id like you to be my date. (I programmed in another pause where I prayed hed say yes.)

On Thursday before the dance, I could no longer delay the inevitable. I picked up the receiver and dialed. Clutching the phone waiting for Eugene to answer, my eyes followed perspirtion droplets rolling down my arm and dripping off my elbow. A small salty puddle was forming around my feet. Hello? a sexy, deep male voice answered the dorm phone.

In faster-than-a-speeding-bullet voice, like a nervous novice telemarketer, I shot out, Hi, this is Leil. We-met-at-camplassummer-remember? Forgetting to pause for his assent, I raced on, Well-National-Cathedral-Schools-prom-is-this-Saturday-nigh and-Id-like-you-to-be-my-date.

To my relief and delight, I heard a big, cheerful Oh thats great, Id love to! I exhaled my first normal breath all day. He cotinued, Ill pick you up at the girls dorm at 7:30. Ill have a pink carnation for you. Will that go with your dress? And my name is Donnie.

Donnie? Donnie! Who said anything about Donnie?

Well, Donnie turned out to be the best date I had that decade. Donnie had buckteeth, a head full of tousled red hair, and comunications skills that

immediately put me at ease.

On Saturday night, Donnie greeted me at the door, carnation in hand and grin on face. He joked self-deprecatingly about how he was dying to go to the prom so, knowing it was a case of mitaken identity, he accepted anyway. He told me he was thrilled

when the girl with the lovely voice called, and he took full responsibility for tricking me into an invitation. Donnie made me comfortable and confident as we chatted. First we made small talk and then he gradually led me into subjects I was interested in. I flipped over Donnie, and he became my very first boyfriend.

Donnie instinctively had the small-talk skills that we are now going to fashion into techniques to help you glide through small talk like a hot knife through butter. When you master them, you will be ablelike Donnieto melt the heart of everyone you touch.

The goal of How to Talk to Anyone is not, of course, to make you a small-talk whiz and stop there. The aim is to make you a dynamic conversationalist and forceful communicator. However, small talk is the first crucial step toward that goal.

How to Start Great Small Talk

Youve been there. Youre introduced to someone at a party or busness meeting. You shake hands, your eyes meet . . . and suddenly your entire body of knowledge dries up and thought processes come to a screeching halt. You fish for a topic to fill the awkward silence. Failing, your new contact slips away in the direction of the cheese tray.

We want the first words falling from our lips to be sparkling, witty, and insightful. We want our listeners to immediately reognize how riveting we are. I was once at a gathering where everbody was sparkling, witty, insightful, and riveting. It drove me berserk because most of these same everybodies felt they had to prove it in their first ten words or less!

Several years ago, the Mensa organization, a social group of extremely bright individuals who score in the countrys top 2 pecent in intelligence, invited me to be a keynote speaker at their annual convention. Their cocktail party was in full swing in the lobby of the hotel as I arrived. After checking in, I hauled my bags through the hoard of happy-hour Mensans to the elevator. The doors separated and I stepped into an elevator packed with party goers. As we began the journey up to our respective floors, the el vator gave several sleepy jerks.

Hmm, I remarked, in response to the elevators sluggisness, the elevator seems a little flaky. Suddenly, each elevator occupant, feeling compelled to exhibit his or her 132-plus IQ, pounced forth with a thunderous explanation. Its obviously got poor rail-guide alignment, announced one. The relay contact is not made up, declared another. Suddenly I felt like a grasshoper trapped in a stereo speaker. I couldnt wait to escape the attack of the mental giants.

Afterward, in the solitude of my room, I thought back and reflected that the Mensans answers were, indeed, interesting. Why then did I have an adverse reaction? I realized it was too much, too soon. I was tired. Their high energy and intensity jarred my sluggish state.

You see, small talk is not about facts or words. Its about music, about melody. Small talk is about putting people at ease. Its about making comforting noises together like cats purring, children humming, or groups chanting. You must first match your listeners mood.

Like repeating the note on the music teachers harmonica, top communicators pick up on their listeners tone of voice and duplcate it. Instead of jumping in with such intensity, the Mensans could have momentarily matched my lethargic mood by saying, Yes, it is slow, isnt it? Had they then prefaced their information with, Have you ever been curious why an elevator is slow? I would have responded with a sincere Yes, I have. After a moment of equalized energy levels, I would have welcomed their explantions about the rail-guard alignment or whatever the heck it was. And friendships might have started.

Im sure youve suffered the aggression of a mood mismatch. Have you ever been relaxing when some overexcited, hot-breathed colleague starts pounding you with questions? Or the reverse: youre late, rushing to a meeting, when an associate stops you and starts lazily narrating a long, languorous story. No matter how interesting the tale, you dont want to hear it now.

The first step in starting a conversation without strangling it is to match your listeners mood, if only for a sentence or two. When it comes to small talk, think music, not words. Is your litener adagio or allegro? Match that pace. I call it Make a Mood Match.

Matching Their Mood Can Make or Break the Sale

Matching customers moods is crucial for salespeople. Some years ago, I decided to throw a surprise party for my best friend Stella. It was going to be a triple-whammy party because she was celbrating three events. One, it was

Stellas birthday. Two, she was newly engaged. And three, Stella had just landed her dream job. She had been my buddy since grade school, and I was floating on air over her birthday-engagement-congratulations bash.

I had heard one of the best French restaurants in town had an attractive back room for parties. About 5 p.m. one afternoon, I wafted happily into the restaurant and found the seated ma”tre d languidly looking over his reservation book. I began excitedly babling about Stellas triple-whammy celebration and asked to see that fabulous back room Id heard so much about. Without a smile or moving a muscle, he said, Zee room ees een zee back. You can go zee eet eef you like.

CRASH. What a party pooper! His morose mood kicked all the party spirit out of me, and I no longer wanted to rent his stpid space. Before I even looked at the room, he lost the rental. I left his restaurant vowing to find a place where the management would at least appear to share the joy of the happy occasion.

Every mother knows this instinctively. To quiet a whimpering infant, Mama doesnt just shake her finger and shout, Quiet down. No, Mama picks baby up. Mama cries, Ooh, ooh, oh, sympathetically matching babys misery for a few moments. Mama then gradually transitions the two of them into hush-hush happy

How to Start Great Small Talk 49

sounds. Your listeners are all big babies! Match their mood if you want them to stop crying, start buying, or otherwise come round to your way of thinking.

Technique #10

Make a Mood Match

Before opening your mouth, take a voice sample of your listener to detect his or her state of mind. Take a psychic photograph of the expression to see if your listener looks buoyant, bored, or blitzed. If you ever want to bring people around to your thoughts, you must match their mood and voice tone, if only for a moment.

How to Sound Like Youve Got a Super Personality (No Matter What Youre Saying!)

Once while at a party, I spotted a fellow surrounded by a fan club of avid listeners. The chap was smiling, gesticulating, and obvously enthralling his audience. I went over to hearken to this facinating speaker. I joined his throng of admirers and eavesdropped for a minute or two. Suddenly, it dawned on

me: the fellow was saying the most banal things! His script was dull, dull, dull. Ah, but he was delivering his prosaic observations with such passion, and therefore, he held the group spellbound. It convinced me that its not all what you say, its how you say it.

Whats a Good Opening Line When I Meet People?

I am often asked this question, and I give them the same answer a woman who once worked in my office always gave me. Dottie often stayed at her desk to work through lunch. Sometimes, as I was leaving for the sandwich shop, Id ask her, Hey Dottie, what can I bring you back for lunch?

Dottie, trying to be obliging, would say, Oh anything is fine with me.

No, Dottie! I wanted to scream. Tell me what you want. Ham n cheese on rye? Bologna on whole wheat, hold the mayo? Peanut butter n jelly with sliced bananas? Be specific. Anything is a hassle.

Frustrating though it may be, my answer to the opening-line question is Anything! because almost anything you say really is OKas long as it puts people at ease and sounds passionate.

How do you put people at ease? By convincing them they are OK and that the two of you are similar. When you do that, you break down walls of fear, suspicion, and mistrust.

Why Banal Makes a Bond

Samuel I. Hayakawa was a college president, U.S. senator, and brilliant linguistic analyst of Japanese origin. He tells us this story that shows the value of, as he says, unoriginal remarks. 11

In early 1943after the attack on Pearl Harbor at a time when there were rumors of Japanese spiesHayakawa had to wait seeral hours in a railroad station in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. He noticed others waiting in the station were staring at him suspiciously. Because of the war, they were apprehensive about his presence. He later wrote, One couple with a small child was staring with spcial uneasiness and whispering to each other.

So what did Hayakawa do? He made unoriginal remarks to set them at ease. He said to the husband that it was too bad the train should be late on so cold a night. The man agreed.

I went on, Hayakawa wrote, to remark that it must be espcially difficult to travel with a small child in winter when train schedules were so uncertain. Again the husband agreed. I then asked the childs age and remarked that their child looked very big

and strong for his age. Again agreement, this time with a slight smile. The tension was relaxing.

After two or three more exchanges, the man asked Hayakawa, I hope you dont mind my bringing it up, but youre Japanese, arent you? Do you think the Japs have any chance of winning this war?

Well, Hayakawa replied, your guess is as good as mine. I dont know any more than I read in the papers. But the way I fiure it, I dont see how the Japanese, with their lack of coal and steel and oil . . . can ever beat a powerfully industrialized nation like the United States.

Hayakawa went on, My remark was admittedly neither oriinal nor well informed. Hundreds of radio commentators . . . were saying much the same thing during those weeks. But just because they were, the remark sounded familiar and was on the right side so that it was easy to agree with.

The Wisconsin man agreed at once with what seemed like genuine relief. His next remark was, Say, I hope your folks arent over there while the war is going on.

Yes, they are, Hayakawa replied. My father and mother and two young sisters are over there.

Do you ever hear from them? the man asked. How can I? Hayakawa answered. Both the man and his wife looked troubled and sympathetic.

Do you mean you wont be able to see them or hear from them until after the war is over?

There was more to the conversation but the result was, within ten minutes they had invited Hayakawawhom they initially may have suspected was a Japanese spyto visit them sometime in their city and have dinner in their home. And all because of this brilliant scholars admittedly common and unoriginal small talk. Top communicators know the most soothing and appropriate first words should be, like Senator Hayakawas, unoriginal, even banal.

But not indifferent. Hayakawa delivered his sentiments with sicerity and passion.

Ascent from Banality

It is not necessary, of course, to stay with mundane remarks. If you find your company displays cleverness or wit, you match that. The conversation then escalates naturally, compatibly. Dont rush it or, like the Mensans, you seem like youre showing off. The bo tom line on your first words is to have the courage of your own triteness. Because, remember, people tune in to your

tone more than your text.

Anything, Except Liverwurst!

Back to Dottie waiting for her sandwich at her desk. Sometimes as I walked out the door scratching my head wondering what to bring her, shed call after me, Anything, except liverwurst, that is. Thanks, Dottie, thats a little bit of help.

Heres my anything, except liverwurst on small talk. Anthing you say is fine as long as it is not complaining, rude, or

Technique #11

Prosaic with Passion

Worried about your first words? Fear not, because 80 percent of your listeners impression has nothing to do with your words anyway. Almost anything you say at first is fine. No matter how prosaic the text, an empathetic mood, a positive demeanor, and passionate delivery make you sound exciting.

unpleasant. If the first words out of your mouth are a complaint BLAMpeople label you a complainer. Why? Because that coplaint is your new acquaintances 100 percent sampling of you so far. You could be the happiest Pollyanna ever, but how will they know? If your first comment is a complaint, youre a griper. If your first words are rude, youre a creep. If your first words are unpleaant, youre a stinker. Open and shut.

Other than these downers, anything goes. Ask them where theyre from, how they know the host of the party, where they bought the lovely suit theyre wearingor hundreds of etceteras. The trick is to ask your prosaic question with passion to get the other person talking.

Still feel a bit shaky on making the approach to strangers? Lets take a quick detour on our road to meaningful communicating. Ill give you three quickie techniques to meet people at parties then nine more to make small talk not so small.

How to Make People Want to Start a Conversation with You

Singles proficient at meeting potential sweethearts without the benefit of introduction (in the vernacular, making a pickup), have developed a deliciously devious technique that works equally well for social or corporate networking purposes. The technique requires no exceptional skill on your part, only the courage to sport a simple visual prop called a Whatzit.

Whats a Whatzit? A Whatzit is anything you wear or carry that is

unusuala unique pin, an interesting purse, a strange tie, or an amusing hat. A Whatzit is any object that draws peoples attention and inspires them to approach you and ask, Uh, whats that? Your Whatzit can be as subtle or overt as your personality and the occasion permit.

I wear around my neck an outmoded pair of glasses that resebles a double monocle. Often the curious have approached me at a gathering and asked, Whatzit? I explain its a lorgnette left to me by my grandmother, which, of course, paves the way to discuss hatred of glasses, aging eyes, love or loss of grandmothers, adortion of antique jewelryanywhere the inquisitor wants to take it.

Perhaps, unknowingly, you have fallen prey to this soon-tbe-legendary technique. At a gathering, have you ever noticed

someone you would like to talk to? Then youve racked your brain to conjure an excuse to make the approach. What a bounty it was to discover that he or she was wearing some weird, wild, or woderful something you could comment on.

The Whatzit Way to Love

Your Whatzit is a social aid whether you seek business rewards or new romance. My friend Alexander carries Greek worry beads with him wherever he goes. Hes not worried. He knows any woman who wants to talk to him will come up and say, Whats that?

Think about it, gentlemen. Suppose youre at a party. An attractive woman spots you across the room. She wants to talk to you but shes thinking, Well, Mister, youre attractive. But, golly, what can I say to you? You just aint got no Whatzit.

Be a Whatzit Seeker, Too

Likewise, become proficient in scrutinizing the apparel of those you wish to approach. Why not express interest in the handkechief in the tycoons vest pocket, the brooch on the bosom of the rich divorcŽe, or the school ring on the finger of the CEO whose company you want to work for?

The big spender who, you suspect, might buy a hundred of your widgets has a tiny golf-club lapel pin? Say, Excuse me, I couldnt help but notice your attractive lapel pin. Are you a golfer? Me, too. What courses have you played?

Your business cards and your Whatzit are crucial socializing artifacts. Whether you are riding in the elevator, climbing the doorstep, or traversing

the path to the party, make sure your Whatzit is hanging out for all to see.

Technique #12

Always Wear a Whatzit

Whenever you go to a gathering, wear or carry something unusual to give people who find you the delightful stranger across the crowded room an excuse to approach. Excuse me, I couldnt help but notice your . . . what IS that?

The next quickie technique was originated by doggedly dtermined politicians who dont let one partygoer escape if they think he or she could be helpful to their campaigns. I call it the Whoozat technique.

How to Meet the People You Want to Meet

Say you have scrutinized the body of the important business cotact you want to meet. Youve searched in vain from the tip of his cowlick to the toes of his boots. Hes not sporting a single Whatzit.

If you strike out on finding something to comment on, resort to the Whoozat technique. Like a persistent politician, go to the party giver and say, That man/woman over there looks interesing. Who is he/she? Then ask for an introduction. Dont be heitant. The party giver will be pleased you find one of the guests interesting.

If, however, you are loath to pull the party giver away from his or her other guests, you still can perform Whoozat. This time, dont ask for a formal introduction. Simply pump the party giver for just enough information to launch you. Find out about the strangers jobs, interests, and hobbies.

Suppose the party giver says, Oh, thats Joe Smith. Im not sure what his job is, but I know he loves to ski. Aha, youve just been given the icebreaker you need. Now you make a beeline for Joe Smith. Hi, youre Joe Smith, arent you? Susan was just telling me what a great skier you are. Where do you ski? You get the idea.

Technique #13

Whoozat

Whoozat is the most effective, least used (by nopoliticians) meeting-people device ever contrived. Simply ask the party giver to make the introduction, or pump for a few facts that you can immediately turn into icebreakers.

Now the third in our little trio of meeting-who-you-want tricks.

How to Break into a Tight Crowd

The woman youve decided you MUST meet is wearing no Whatzit? Cant

find the host for the Whoozat technique? To make matters worse, shes deep in conversation with a group of her friends. Seems quite hopeless that you will maneuver a meeting, doesnt it? You cant just say, Excuse me, I just thought Id eavedrop in and say Hello.

No obstacle blocks the resolute politician, who always has a trick or ten up his or her sleeve. A politico would resort to the Eavesdrop In technique. Eavesdropping, of course, conjures images of clandestine activitieswiretapping, Watergate breains, or spies skulking around in the murky shadows. Eavesdroping has historical precedent with politicians so, in a pinch, it naturally comes to mind.

At parties, stand near the group of people you wish to infitrate. Then wait for a word or two you can use as a wedge to break into the group. Excuse me, I couldnt help overhearing that you . . . and then whatever is relevant here. For example I couldnt help overhearing your discussion of Bermuda. Im going there next month for the first time. Any suggestions?

Now you are in the circle and can direct your comments to your intended.

Technique #14

Eavesdrop In

No Whatzit? No host for Whoozat? No problem! Just sidle up behind the swarm of folks you want to infitrate and open your ears. Wait for any flimsy excuse and jump in with Excuse me, I couldnt help but overhear. . . .

Will they be taken aback? Momentarily. Will they get over it? Momentarily. Will you be in the conversation? Absolutely!

Let us now hop back on the train that first explored Small Talk City and travel to the land of Meaningful Communicating.

How to Make Where Are You From? Sound Exciting

You wouldnt dream of going to a party naked. And I hope you wouldnt dream of letting your conversation be exposed naked and defenseless against the two inevitable assaults Where are you from? and What do you do?

When asked these questions, most people, like clunking a frzen steak on a china platter, drop a brick of frozen geography or baffling job title on the askers conversational platter. Then they slap on the muzzle.

Youre at a convention. Everyone you meet will, of course, ask And where are you from? When you give them the short-form naked-city answer Oh, Im from Muscatine, Iowa (or Mill nocket, Maine; Winnemucca, Nevada; or anywhere they havent heard of), what can you expect except a blank stare? Even if youre a relatively big city slicker from Denver, Colorado; Detroit,

Michgan; or San Diego, California, youll receive a panicked look from all but American history professors. Theyre rapidly racking their brains thinking What do I say next? Even the names of worlclass burgs like New York, Chicago, Washington, and Los Angles inspire less-than-riveting responses. When I tell people Im from New York City, what are they expected to say? Duh, seen any good muggings lately?

Do humanity and yourself a favor. Never, ever, give just a onsentence response to the question, Where are you from? Give the asker some fuel for his tank, some fodder for his trough. Give the hugry communicator something to conversationally nibble on. All it takes is an extra sentence or two about your citysome interesting fact, some witty observationto hook the asker into the conversation.

Several months ago, a trade association invited me to be its keynote speaker on networking and teaching people to be better conversationalists. Just before my speech, I was introduced to Mrs. Devlin, who was the head of the association.

How do you do? she asked. How do you do? I replied. Then Mrs. Devlin smiled, anxiously awaiting a sample of my

stimulating conversational expertise. I asked her where she was from. She plunked a frozen Columbus, Ohio and a big expectant grin on my platter. I had to quickly thaw her answer into digestible conversation. My mind thrashed into action. Leils thought patern: Gulp, Columbus, Ohio. Ive never been there, hmm. Criiny, what do I know about Columbus? I know a fellow named Jeff, a successful speaker who lives there. But Columbus is too big to ask if she knows him . . . and besides only kids play the Do-yoknow-so-and-so game. My panicked silent search continued. I think its named after Christopher Columbus . . . but Im not sure, so I better keep my mouth shut on that one. Four or five other possibilities raced through my mind but I rejected them all as too obvious, too adolescent, or too off-the-wall.

I realized by now that seconds had passed, and Mrs. Devlin was still standing there with a slowly dissipating smile on her face. She was waiting for me (the expert who, within the hour, was expected to teach her trade association lessons on scintillating coversation) to spew forth words of wit or wisdom.

Oh, Columbus, gee, I mumbled in desperation, watching her face fall into the worried expression of a patient being asked by the surgeon, knife poised in hand, Wheres your appendix?

I never came up with stimulating conversation on Columbus. But, just then, under the knife, I created the following technique for posterity. I call it Never the Naked City.

Different Bait for Shrimp or Sharks

A fisherman uses different bait to bag bass or bluefish. And you will obviously throw out different conversational bait to snag siple shrimp or sophisticated sharks. Your hook should relate to the type of person youre speaking with. Im originally from Wasington, D.C. If someone at, say, an art gallery asked me where I was from, I might answer Washington, D.C.designed, you know, by the same city planner who designed Paris. This opens the conversational possibilities to the artistry of city planning, Paris, other cities plans, European travel, and so forth.

At a social party of singles Id opt for another answer. Im from Washington, D.C. The reason I left is there were seven women to every man when I was growing up. Now the convesation can turn to the ecstasy or agony of being single, the peceived lack of desirable men everywhere, or even flirtatious possibilities.

Technique #15

Never the Naked City

Whenever someone asks you the inevitable, And where are you from? never, ever, unfairly challenge their powers of imagination with a one-word answer.

Learn some engaging facts about your hometown that conversational partners can comment on. Then, when they say something clever in response to your bait, they think youre a great conversationalist.

In a political group, Id cast a current fact from the constantly evolving political face of Washington. No need to speculate on the multitude of conversational possibilities that unlocks.

Where do you get your conversational bait? Start by phoning the chamber of commerce or historical society of your town. Search the World Wide Web and click on your town, or open an old-fashioned encyclopediaall rich sources for future stimulaing conversations. Learn some history, geography, business statitics, or perhaps a few fun facts to tickle future friends funny bones.

The Devlin debacle inspired further research. The minute I got home, I called the Columbus chamber of commerce and the historical society. Say

you, too, are from Columbus, Ohio, and your new acquaintance lays it on you: Where are you from? When you are talking with a businessperson, your answer could be, Im from Columbus, Ohio. You know many major corpor tions do their product testing in Columbus because its so comercially typical. In fact, its been called the most American city in America. They say if it booms or bombs in Columbus, it booms or bombs nationally.

Talking with someone with a German last name? Tell her about Columbuss historic German Village with the brick streets and the wonderful 1850s-style little houses. Its bound to inspire stories of the old country. Your conversation partners surname is Italian? Tell him Genoa, Italy, is Columbuss sister city.

Talking with an American history buff ? Tell him that Colubus was, indeed, named after Christopher Columbus and that a replica of the Santa Maria is anchored in the Scioto River. Taling with a student? Tell her about the five universities in Columbus.

The possibilities continue. You suspect your conversation parner has an artistic bent? Ah, you throw out casually, Columbus is the home of artist George Bellows.

Columbusites, prepare some tasty snacks for askers even if you know nothing about them. Heres a goodie. Tell them you

How to Make Where Are You From? Sound Exciting 67

always have to say Columbus, Ohio because there is also a Clumbus, Arkansas; Columbus, Georgia; Columbus, Indiana; Columbus, Kansas; Columbus, Kentucky; Columbus, Mississippi; Columbus, Montana; Columbus, Nebraska; Columbus, New Jesey; Columbus, New Mexico; Columbus, North Carolina; Colubus, North Dakota; Columbus, Pennsylvania; Columbus, Texas; and Columbus, Wisconsin. That spreads the conversational possbilities to fifteen other states. Remember, as a quotable notable once said, No man would listen to you talk if he didnt know it was his turn next.

A postscript to the hellish experience I had with Columbus. Months later, I mentioned the trauma to my speaker friend from Columbus, Jeff. Jeff explained his house was really in a smaller town just minutes outside Columbus.

What town, Jeff ?

Gahanna, Ohio. Gahanna means hell in Hebrew, he said, and then went on to explain why he thought ancient Hebrew hitorians were clairvoyant.

Thanks, Jeff, I knew youd never lay a naked city on any of your listeners.

How to Come Out a Winner Every Time They Ask, And What Do You Do?

Third only to death and taxes is the assurance a new acquaintance will soon chirp, And what do you do? (Is it fitting and proper they should make that query? Well pick up that sticky wicket later.) For the moment, these few defensive moves help you keep your crackerjack communicator credentials when asked the inevitable question.

First, like Never the Naked City, dont toss a short-shrift answer in response to the askers breathless inquiry. You leave the poor fish flopping on the deck when you just say your title: Im an actuary/an auditor/an author/an astrophysicist. Have mercy so he or she doesnt feel like a nincompoop outsider asking, What, er, kind of actuizing (auditing, authoring, or astrophysizing) do you do?

Youre an attorney. Dont leave it to laymen to try to figure out what you really do. Flesh it out. Tell a little story your converstion partner can get a handle on. For example, if youre talking with a young mother say, Im an attorney. Our firm specializes in employment law. In fact, now Im involved in a case where a comHow to Come Out a Winner Every Time They Ask, And What Do You Do? 69

Technique #16

Never the Naked Job

When asked the inevitable And what do you do, you may think Im an economist/an educator/an engineer is giving enough information to engender good conversation. However, to one who is not an economist, educator, or an engineer, you might as well be saying Im a paleontologist/psychoanalyst/pornographer.

Flesh it out. Throw out some delicious facts about your job for new acquaintances to munch on. Otherwise, theyll soon excuse themselves, preferring the snacks back at the cheese tray.

pany actually discharged a woman for taking extra maternity leave that was a medical necessity. A mother can relate to that.

Talking with a business owner? Say Im an attorney. Our firm specializes in employment law. My current case concerns an employer who is being sued by one of her staff for asking personal questions during the initial job interview. A business owner can relate to that.

Painful Memories of Naked Job Flashers

I still harbor painful recollections of being tongue-tied when cofronted by naked job flashers. Like the time a fellow at a dinner party told me, Im a nuclear scientist. My weak Oh, that must be fascinating reduced me to a mental molecule in his eyes.

The chap on my other side announced, Im in industrial abrsives, and then paused, waiting for me to be impressed. My Well, er, golly, you must have to be a shrewd judge of character to be in

industrial abrasives didnt fly either. We three sat in silence the rest of the meal.

Just last month a new acquaintance bragged, Im planning to teach Tibetan Buddhism at Truckee Meadows Community Colege, and then clammed up. I knew less about Truckee Meadows than I did about Tibetan Buddhism. Whenever people ask you what you do, give them some mouth-to-ear resuscitation so they can catch their breath and say something.

How to Introduce People Like the Host(ess) with the Most(est)

It is important to help newlymets through their first nervous moments.

Susan, Id like you to meet John Smith. John, this is Susan Jones. Duh, what do you expect John and Susan to say?

Smith? Umm, thats S-M-I-T-H, isnt it? Uh, er, golly, Susan, well, now, theres an interesting name. Nice-try-forget-it. Dont blame John or Susan for being less

than scintillating. The fault lies with the person who introduced the two the way most people introduce their friends to each otherwith naked names. They cast out a line with no bait for people to sink their teeth into.

Big winners may not talk a lot, but conversation never dies unwillingly in their midst. They make sure of it with techniques like Never the Naked Introduction. When they introduce peple, they buy an insurance policy on the conversation with a few simple add-ons: Susan, Id like you to meet John. John has a woderful boat we took a trip on last summer. John, this is Susan Smith. Susan is editor in chief of Shoestring Gourmet magazine.

Padding the introduction gives Susan the opportunity to ask what kind of boat John has or where the group went. It gives John an opening to discuss his love of writing. Or of cooking. Or of

food. The conversation can then naturally expand to travel in geeral, life on boats, past vacations, favorite recipes, restaurants, bugets, diets, magazines, editorial policyto infinity.

If youre not comfortable mentioning someones job during the

introduction, mention their hobby or even a talent. The other day at a gathering, the hostess introduced a man named Gilbert. She said, Leil, Id like you to meet Gilbert. Gilberts gift is sculping. He makes beautiful wax carvings. I remember thinking, Giftnow thats a lovely way to introduce someone and induce conversation.

Armed with these two personality enhancers, three converstion igniters, and three small extenders, it is time to take a step up the communications ladder. Let us now rise from small talk and seek the path to more meaningful dialogue. The next technique is guaranteed to make the exchange engrossing for your converstion partner.

Technique #17

Never the Naked Introduction

When introducing people, dont throw out an unbaited hook and stand there grinning like a big clam, leaving the newlymets to flutter their fins and fish for a topic. Bait the conversational hook to get them in the swim of things. Then youre free to stay or float on to the next networking opportunity.

How to Resuscitate a Dying Conversation

Even a well-intentioned husband who might ask his wife while making love, Is it good for you, too, Honey? knows not to ask a colleague, Is the conversation good for you, too? Yet he woders . . . we all do. With the following technique, set your mind at rest. You can definitely make the conversation hot for anyone with whom you speak. Like my prom date, Donnie, you will miraculously find subjects to engross your listeners.

Be a Sleuth on Their Slips of the Tongue

No matter how elusive the clue, Sherlock Holmes is confident hell soon be staring right at it through his magnifying glass. Like the unerring detective, big winners know, no matter how elusive the clue, theyll find the right topic. How? They become word detectives.

I have a young friend, Nancy, who works in a nursing home. Nancy cares deeply about the elderly but often grumbles about how crotchety and laconic some of her patients are. She laments she has difficulty relating to them.

Nancy told me about one especially cantankerous old woman named Mrs. Otis, whom she could never get to open up to her.

One day, Nancy confided, right after all those rainstorms we had last week, just to make conversation, I remarked to Mrs. Otis, Terrible storms we had last week, dont you think? Well, Nancy continued, Mrs. Otis practically jumped down my throat. She said in a snippy voice, Its been good for the

plants. I asked Nancy how she responded to that.

What could I say? Nancy answered. The woman was obvously cutting me off.

Did you ever think to ask Mrs. Otis if she liked plants? Plants? Nancy asked. Well, yes, I suggested. Mrs. Otis brought the subject up.

I asked Nancy to do me a favor. Ask her, I begged. Nancy rsisted, but I persisted. Just to quiet me down, Nancy promised to ask cantankerous old Mrs. Otis if she liked plants.

The next day, a flabbergasted Nancy called me from work. Leil, how did you know? Not only did Mrs. Otis love plants, but she told me shed been married to a gardener. Today I had a diferent problem with Mrs. Otis. I couldnt shut her up! She went on and on about her garden, her husband. . . .

Top communicators know ideas dont come out of nowhere. If Mrs. Otis thought to bring up plants, then she must have some relationship with them. Furthermore, by mentioning the word, it meant subconsciously she wanted to talk about plants.

Suppose, for example, instead of responding to Nancys coment about the rain with Its good for the plants, Mrs. Otis had said, Because of the rain, my dog couldnt go out. Nancy could then ask about her dog. Or suppose she grumbled, Its bad for my arthritis. Can you guess what old Mrs. Otis wants to talk about now?

When talking with anyone, keep your ears open and, like a good detective, listen for clues. Be on the lookout for any unusual references: any anomaly, deviation, digression, or invocation of

another place, time, person. Ask about it because its the clue to what your conversation partner would really enjoy discussing.

If two people have something in common, when the shared interest comes up, they jump on it naturally. For example, if somone mentions playing squash (bird-watching or stamp collecting) and the listener shares that passion, he or she pipes up, Oh, youre a squasher (or birder or philatelist), too!

Heres the trick: theres no need to be a squasher, birder, or philatelist to pipe up with enthusiasm. You can simply Be a Word Detective. When you pick up on the reference as though it excites you, too, it parlays you into conversation the stranger thrills to. (The subject may put your feet to sleep, but thats another story.)

Now that youve ignited stimulating conversation, lets explore a technique to keep it hot.

Technique #18

Be a Word Detective

Like a good gumshoe, listen to your conversation partners every word for clues to his or her preferred topic. The evidence is bound to slip out. Then spring on that subject like a sleuth on to a slip of the tongue. Like Sherlock Holmes, you have the clue to the subject thats hot for the other person.

How to Enthrall Em with Your Choice of TopicThem!

Several years ago, a girlfriend and I attended a party saturated with a hodgepodge of swellegant folks. Everyone we talked to seemed to lead a nifty life. Discussing the party afterward, I asked my friend, Diane, of all the exciting people at the party, who did you enjoy talking to most?

Without hesitation she said, Oh by far, Dan Smith. What does Dan do? I asked her. Uh, well, Im not sure, she answered. Where does he live?

Uh, I dont know, Diane responded. Well, what is he interested in? Well, we really didnt talk about his interests. Diane, I asked, what did you talk about? Well, I guess we talked mostly about me. Aha, I thought. Diane has just rubbed noses with a winner. As it turns out, I had the pleasure of meeting Big-Winner Dan

several months later. Dianes ignorance about his life piqued my curiosity so I grilled him for details. As it turns out, Dan lives in Paris, has a beach home in the south of France, and a mountain home in the Alps. He travels around the world producing sound and light shows for pyramids and ancient ruinsand he is an avid hang

glider and scuba diver. Does this man have an interesting life or what? Yet Dan, when meeting Diane, said nothing about himself.

I told Dan about how pleased Diane was to meet him yet how little she learned about his life. Dan simply replied, Well, when I meet someone, I learn so much more if I ask about their life. I always try to turn the spotlight on the other person. Truly cofident people often do this. They know they grow more by listeing than talking. Obviously, they also captivate the talker.

Sell Yourself with a Top Sales Technique

Several months ago at a speakers convention, I was talking with a colleague Brian Tracy. Brian does a brilliant job of training top salespeople. He tells his students of a giant spotlight that, when shining on their product,

is not as interesting to the prospect. When they shine the spotlight on the prospect, they make the sale.

Salespeople, this technique is especially crucial for you. Keep your Swiveling Spotlight aimed away from you, only lightly on your product, and most brightly on your buyer. Youll do a much better job of selling yourself and your product.

Technique #19

The Swiveling Spotlight

When you meet someone, imagine a giant revolving spotlight between you. When youre talking, the spotlight is on you. When the new person is speaking, its shining on him or her. If you shine it brightly enough, the stranger will be blinded to the fact that you have hardly said a word about yourself. The longer you keep it shining away from you, the more interesting he or she finds you.

How to Never Need to Wonder, What Do I Say Next?

Moments arise, of course, when even conversationalists extraordnaire hit the wall. Some folks monosyllabic grunts leave slim picings even for masters of the Be a Word Detective technique.

If you find yourself futilely fanning the embers of a dying conversation (and if you feel for political reasons or human copassion that the conversation should continue), heres a foolproof trick to get the fire blazing again. I call it Parroting after that beautiful tropical bird that captures everyones heart simply by repeating other peoples words.

Have you ever, puttering around the house, had the TV in the background tuned to a tennis game? You hear the ball going back and forth over the netklink-klunk, klink-klunk, klink . . . this time you dont hear the klunk. The ball didnt hit the court. What happened? You immediately look up at the set.

Likewise in conversation, the conversational ball goes back and forth. First you speak, then your partner speaks, you speak . . . and so it goes, back and forth. Each time, through a series of nods and comforting grunts like um hum, or umm, you let your co versation partner know the ball has landed in your court. Its your I got it signal. Such is the rhythm of conversation.

How to Never Need to Wonder, What Do I Say Next? 79

What Do I Say Next?

Back to that frightfully familiar moment when it is your turn to speak but your mind goes blank. Dont panic. Instead of signaing verbally or nonverbally that you got it, simply repeator parrotthe last two or three words

your companion said, in a sympathetic, questioning tone. That throws the conversational ball right back in your partners court.

My friend Phil sometimes picks me up at the airport. Usually I am so exhausted that I rudely fall asleep in the passenger seat, relegating Phil to nothing more than a chauffeur.

After one especially exhausting trip some years ago, I flung my bags in his trunk and flopped onto the front seat. As I was dozing off, he mentioned hed gone to the theater the night before. Usually I would have just grunted and wafted into unconsciouness. However, on this particular trip, I had learned the Paroting technique and was eager to try it. Theater? I parroted quizzically.

Yes, it was a great show, he replied, fully expecting it to be the last word on the subject before I fell into my usual sleepy stupor.

Great show? I parroted. Pleasantly surprised by my interest, he said, Yes, its a new show by Stephen Sondheim called Sweeney Todd.

Sweeney Todd ? I again parroted. Now Phil was getting fired up. Yeah, great music and an unbelievably bizarre story. . . .

Bizarre story? I parroted. Well, thats all Phil needed. For the next half an hour, Phil told me the shows story about a Lodon barber who went around murdering people. I half dozed, but soon decided his tale of Sweeney Todds cutting off peoples heads was disturbing my sleepy reverie. So I simply backed up and paroted one of his previous phrases to get him on another track.

You said it had great music?

That did the trick. For the rest of the forty-five-minute trip to my home, Phil sang me Pretty Women, The Best Pies in Lodon, and other songs from Sweeney Toddmuch better accopaniment for my demi-nap. Im sure, to this day, Phil thinks of that trip as one of the best conversations we ever had. And all I did was parrot a few of his phrases.

Salespeople, why go on a wild goose chase for a customers real objections when its so easy to shake them out of the trees with Parroting?

Parroting Your Way to Profits

Parroting is also a can opener to pry open peoples real feelings. Star salespeople use it to get to their prospects emotional objetions, which they often dont even articulate to themselves. A friend of mine, Paul, a used-car salesman, told me he credits a recent sale of a Lamborghini to Parroting.

Paul was walking around the lot with a prospect and his wife, who had

expressed interest in a sensible car. He was showing them every sensible Chevy and Ford on the lot. As they were looing at one very sensible family car, Paul asked the husband what he thought of it. Well, he mused, Im not sure this car is right

Technique #20

Parroting

Never be left speechless again. Like a parrot, simply repeat the last few words your conversation partner says. That puts the ball right back in his or her court, and then all you need to do is listen.

for me. Instead of moving on to the next sensible car, Paul paroted Right for you? Pauls questioning inflection signaled the prospect that he needed to say more.

Well, er, yeah, the prospect mumbled. Im not sure it fits my personality.

Fits your personality? Paul again parroted. You know, maybe I need something a little more sporty. A little more sporty? Paul parroted. Well, those cars over there look a little more sporty. Aha! Pauls parrot had ferreted out which cars to show the customer. As they walked over toward a Lamborghini on the lot, Paul saw the prospects eyes light up. An hour later, Paul had pocketed a fat commission.

Want to take a rest from talking to save your throat? This next technique gets your conversation partner off and running so all you have to do is listen (or even sneak off unnoticed as he or she chats congenially away).

How to Get Em Happily Chatting (So You Can Slip Away if You Want To!)

Every father smiles when his little tyke beseeches him at bedtime, Daddy, Daddy, tell me the story again of the three little pigs (or the dancing princesses or how you and Mommy met). Daddy knows Junior enjoyed the story so much the first time, he wants to hear it again and again.

Junior inspires the following technique called Encore! which serves two purposes. Encore! makes a colleague feel like a hapy dad, and its a great way to give dying conversation a heart transplant.

I once worked on a ship that had Italian officers and mostly American passengers. Each week, the deck officers were required to attend the captains cocktail party. After the captains address in charmingly broken English, the officers invariably clumped together yakking it up in Italian. Needless to say, most of the pasengers grasp of Italian ended at macaroni, spaghetti, salami,

and pizza.

As cruise director, it fell on my shoulders to get the officers to mingle with the passengers. My not-so-subtle tactic was to grab one of the officers arms and literally drag him over to a smiling throng of expectant passengers. I would then introduce the offcer and pray that either the cat would release his tongue, or a pasHow to Get Em Happily Chatting (So You Can Slip Away if You Want To!) 83

senger would come up with a more original question than Gee, if all you officers are here, who is driving the boat? Never hapened. I dreaded the weekly captains cocktail party.

One night, sleeping in my cabin, I was awakened by the ship rocking violently from side to side. I listened and the engines were off. A bad sign. I grabbed my robe and raced up to the deck. Through the dense fog, I could barely discern another ship not half a mile from us. Five or six officers were grasping the starboard guardrail and leaning overboard. I rushed over just in time to see a man in the moonlight with a bandage over one eye struggling up our violently rocking ladder. The officers immediately whisked him off to our ships hospital. The engines started again and we were on our way.

The next morning I got the full story. A laborer on the other ship, a freighter, had been drilling a hole in an engine cylinder. While he was working, a sharp, needle-thin piece of metal shot like a missile into his right eye. The freighter had no doctor on board so the ship broadcast an emergency signal.

International sea laws dictate that any ship hearing a distress signal must respond. Our ship came to the rescue and the seaman, clutching his bleeding eye, was lowered into a lifeboat that brought him to our ship. Dr. Rossi, our ships doctor, was successfully able to remove the needle from the workmans eye, thus saving his eyesight.

Tell Em About the Time You . . .

Cut to the next captains cocktail party. Once again I was faced with the familiar challenge of getting officers to mingle and make small talk with the passengers. I made my weekly trek to the laconic officers throng to drag one or two away and, this time, my hand fell on the arm of the ships doctor. I hauled him over to the nearest group of grinning passengers and introduced him. I then

said, Just last week Dr. Rossi saved the eyesight of a seaman on another ship after a dramatic midnight rescue. Dr. Rossi, Im sure these folks would

love to hear about it.

It was like a magic wand. To my amazement, it was as though Dr. Rossi was blessed instantly with the tongues of angels. His prviously monosyllabic broken English became thickly accented elquence. He recounted the entire story for the growing group of passengers gathering around him. I left the throng that Dr. Rossi enraptured to pull another officer over to an awaiting audience.

I grabbed the captains stripe-covered arm, dragged him over to another pack of smiling passengers and said, Captain Cafiero, why dont you tell these folks about the dramatic midnight rescue you made last week? The cat released Cafieros tongue and he was off and running.

Back to the throng to get the first officer for the next group. By now I knew I had a winner. Signor Salvago, why dont you tell these folks how you awakened the captain at midnight last week for the dramatic midnight rescue?

By then it was time to go back to extract the ships doctor from the first bevy and take him to his next pack of passengers. It worked even better the second time. He happily commenced his Encore! for the second audience. As he chatted away, I raced back to the captain to pull him away for a second telling with another throng. I felt like the circus juggler who keeps all the plates spinning on sticks. Just as I got one conversation spinning, I had to race back to the first speaker to give him a whirl at another audience.

The captains cocktail parties were a breeze for me for the rest of the season. The three officers loved telling the same story of their heroism to new people every cruise. The only problem was I noticed the stories getting longer and more elaborate each time. I had to adjust my timing in getting them to do a repeat perfomance for the next audience.

How to Get Em Happily Chatting (So You Can Slip Away if You Want To!) 85

Play It Again, Sam

Encore! is what appreciative audiences chant when they want another song from the singer, another dance from the dancer, another poem from the poet, and in my case, another storytelling from the officers. Encore! is the technique you can use to request a repeat story from a prospect, potential employer, or valued acquaintance. While the two of you are chatting with a group of people, simply turn to him and say, John, I bet everyone would love to hear about the time you caught that thirty-pound striped bass. Or, Susan, tell everyone that story you just told me of how you rescued the kitten from

the tree. He or she will, of course, demure. Insist! Your conversation partner is secretly loving it. The subtext of your request is That story of yours was so terrific, I want my other friends to hear it. After all, only crowd pleasers are asked to do an Encore!

Technique #21

Encore!

The sweetest sound a performer can hear welling up out of the applause is Encore! Encore! Lets hear it again! The sweetest sound your conversation partner can hear from your lips when youre talking with a group of people is Tell them about the time you . . .

Whenever youre at a meeting or party with someone important to you, think of some stories he or she told you. Choose an appropriate one from their repertoire that the crowd will enjoy. Then shine the spotlight by requesting a repeat performance.

The added benefit of this technique is that, once youve got them up and running with their conversation, you can sneak off and find more interesting company!

One word of warning: make sure the story you request is one in which the teller shines. No one wants to retell the time they lost the sale, cracked up the car, or broke up the bar and spent the night in jail. Make sure your requested Encore! is a positive story where they come out the big winner, not the buffoon.

The full beauty of this technique will hit you like a happy thunderbolt the first time you use it with someone who is telling a long and wearisome tale. You simply tiptoe away and let the bore spin the story on and on with your friend. (Of course, your friend may never speak to you again. But thats not germaine to this chapter!)

The next technique deals with sharing some positive stories of your life.

How to Come Across as a Positive Person

Often people think when they meet someone they like, they should share a secret, reveal an intimacy, or make a confession of sorts to show they are human too. Airing your youthful battle with bed-wetting, teeth grinding, or thumb suckingor your present struggle with gout or a goitersupposedly endears you to the masses.

Well, sometimes it does. One study showed that if someone is above you in stature, their revealing a foible brings them closer to you.The holes in the bottom of presidential candidate Adlai Stevensons shoes charmed a nation, as

did George H. W. Bushs shocking admission that he couldnt stomach broccoli.

If youre on sure footing, say a superstar who wants to become friends with a fan, go ahead and tell your devotees about the time you were out of work and penniless. But if youre not a superstar, better play it safe and keep the skeletons in the closet until later. People dont know you well enough to put your foible in context.

Later in a relationship, telling your new friend youve been thrice married, you got caught shoplifting as a teenager, and you got turned down for a big job may be no big deal. And that may be the extent of what could be construed as black marks on an otherwise flawless life of solid relationships, no misdemeanors, and

an impressive professional record. But very early in a relationship, the instinctive reaction is What else is coming? If he shares that with me so quickly, what else is he hiding? A closetful of espouses, a criminal record, walls papered with rejection letters? Your new acquaintance has no way of knowing your confession was a generous act, a well-intentioned revelation, on your part.

So far, in this section, you have found assertive methods for meeting people and mastering small talk. The next is both an assertive and defensive move to help spare you that pasty smile we tend to sport when we have no idea what people are talking about.

Technique #22

Ac-cen-tu-ate the Pos-i-tive

When first meeting someone, lock your closet door and save your skeletons for later. You and your new good friend can invite the skeletons out, have a good laugh, and dance over their bones later in the relationship. But nows the time, as the old song says, to ac-cen-tu-ate the pos-i-tive and elim-i-nate the neg-a-tive.

How to Always Have Something Interesting to Say

Youve heard folks whine, I cant go to the party, I havent got a thing to wear. When was the last time you heard, I cant go to the party, I havent got a thing to say?

When going to a gathering with great networking possibilties, you naturally plan your outfit and make sure your shoes will match. And, of course, you must have just the right tie or correct color lipstick. You puff your hair, pack your business cards, and youre off.

Whoa! Wait a minute. Didnt you forget the most important thing? What about the right conversation to enhance your image? Are you actually going to say anything that comes to mindor doesntat the moment? You wouldnt don the first outfit your groping hand hits in the darkened closet, so you shouldnt leave your conversing to the first thought that comes to mind when faing a group of expectant, smiling faces. You will, of course, folow your instincts in conversation. But at least be prepared in case inspiration doesnt hit.

The best way to ensure youre conversationally in the swing of things is to listen to a newscast just before you leave. Whats hapening right now in the worldall the fires, floods, air disasters, toppled governments, and stock market crashespulverizes into

great conversational fodder, no matter what crowd youre circlating in.

It is with some embarrassment that I must attribute the folowing technique to a businesswoman in the worlds oldest prfession. For a magazine article I was writing, I interviewed one of the savviest operators in her field, Sidney Biddle Barrows, the famed Mayflower Madam.

Sidney told me she had a house rule when she was in business. All of her female independent contractors were directed to keep up with the daily news so they could be good conversationalists with their clients. This was not just Sidneys whim. Feedback from her employees had revealed that 60 percent of her girls work hour was spent in chatting and only 40 percent in satisfying the cutomers needs. Thus she instructed them to read the daily newpaper or listen to a radio broadcast before leaving for an

Technique #23

The Latest News . . . Dont Leave Home Without It

The last move to make before leaving for the party even after youve given yourself final approval in the mirroris to turn on the radio news or scan your newspaper. Anything that happened today is good material. Knowing the big-deal news of the moment is also a defensive move that rescues you from putting your foot in your mouth by asking what everybodys talking about. Foot-in-mouth is not very tasty in public, especially when its surrounded by egg-on-face.

appointment. Sidney told me when she initiated this rule, her busness increased significantly. Reports came back from her clients complimenting her on the fascinating women she had working for her. The consummate businesswoman, Ms. Barrows always strove to exceed her customers

expectations.

Ready for the big leagues of conversation? Lets go.

How to Talk to Anyone - 92 Little Tricks...

PART THREE

How to Talk
Like a VIP

Welcome to the human jungle. When two tigers prowling through the jungle chance upon one another in a clearing, they look at each other. They freeze. Instinctively they calculate, If our staring came to hissingcame to scratchingcame to clawingwho would win? Which of us has the stronger survival skills?

Tigers in the wilderness differ little from the urban upright animals inhabiting the corporate jungle (or singles jungle or social jungle). Humans start the process by looking at each other and talking. In the business world, while smiling and uttering How do you do? Hello, Howdy, or Hi, they are, like tigers, instinctively, instantaneously, sizing each other up.

Theyre not calculating the length of each others claws or the sharpness of their teeth. Theyre judging each other on a weapon far more powerful to survival as they have defined it. Humans are judging each others communications skills. Although they may not know the names of the specific studies first proving it, they sense the truth: 85 percent of ones success in life is directly due to communications skills. 13

They may not be familiar with the U.S. Census Bureaus recent survey showing employers choose candidates with good communications skills and attitude way over education, experience, and training.But they know communications skills get peple to the top. Thus, by observing each other carefully during casual conversing, it becomes almost immediately evident to both which is the bigger cat in the human jungle.

It doesnt take long for people to recognize who is an impotant person. One clichŽ, one insensitive remark, one overanxious reaction, and you can be professionally or personally demoted. You can lose a potentially important friendship or business contact. One stupid move and you can tumble off the corporate or social ladder.

The techniques in this section will help ensure that you make all the right moves so this doesnt happen. The following comunications skills give you a leg up to start your ascent to the top of any ladder you choose.

How to Find Out What They Do (Without Even Asking!)

To size each other up, the first question little cats flat-pawedly ask each

other is, And what do you do? Hmm? Then they crouch there, quivering their whiskers and twitching their noses, with an obvious Im going to pronounce silent judgment on you after you answer look on their pusses.

Big cats never ask outright, What do you do? (Oh they find out, all right, in a much more subtle manner.) By not asking the question, the big boys and big girls come across as more princpled, even spiritual. After all, their silence says, a man or woman is far more than his or her job.

Resisting the tempting question also shows their sensitivity. With so much downsizing, rightsizing, and capsizing of corportions these days, the blunt interrogation evokes uneasiness. The job question is not just unpleasant for those who are between engagements. I have several gainfully employed friends who hate being asked, And what do you do? (One of these folks cuts cadavers for autopsies, the other is an IRS collection agent.)

Additionally, millions of talented and accomplished women have chosen to devote themselves to motherhood. When the cruel corporate question is thrust at them, they feel guilty. The rude interrogation belittles their commitment to their families. No matter how the women answer, they fear the asker is only going to hear a humble Im just a housewife.

Big boys and big girls should avoid asking, What do you do? for another reason: their abstinence from the question leads liteners to believe that they are in the habit of soaring with a higflying crowd. Recently I attended a posh party on Easy Street. (I suspect they invited me as their token working-class person.) I noticed no one was asking anyone what they didbecause these swells didnt do anything. Oh, some might have a ticker tape on the bed table of their mansion to track investments. But they deinitely did not work for a living.

The final benefit to not asking, What do you do? is it throws people off guard. It convinces them you are enjoying their copany for who they are, not for any crass networking reason.

The Right Way to Find Out

So how do you find out what someone does for a living? (I thought youd never ask.) You simply practice the following eight words. All together now: How . . . do . . . you . . . spend . . . most . . . of ...your...time?

Technique #24

What Do You DoNOT!

A sure sign youre a Somebody is the conspicuous asence of the question, What do you do? (You detemine this, of course, but not with those four dirty

words that label you as either a ruthless networker, a social climber, a gold-digging husband or wife hunter, or someone whos never strolled along Easy Street.)

How to Find Out What They Do (Without Even Asking!) 97

How do you spend most of your time? is the gracious way to let a cadaver cutter, a tax collector, or a capsized employee off the hook. Its the way to reinforce an accomplished mothers choice. Its the way to assure a spiritual soul you see his or her inner beauty. Its a way to suggest to a swell that you reside on Easy Street, too.

Now, suppose youve just made the acquaintance of someone who does like to talk about his or her work? Asking, How do you spend most of your time? also opens the door for workaholics to spout off, Oh golly, they mock moan, I just spend all my time working. That, of course, is your invitation to grill them for details. (Then theyll talk your ear off.) Yet the new wording of your question gives those who are somewhere between at leisure and work addicted the choice of telling you about their job or not. Finally, asking How do you spend most of your time? instead of And what do you do? gives you your big cat stripes right off.

How to Know What to Say When They Ask, What Do You Do?

Now, 99 percent of the people you meet will, of course, ask And what do you do? Big winners, realizing someone will always ask, are fully prepared for the interrogation.

Many folks have one written rŽsumŽ for job seeking. They type it up and then trudge off to the printer to get a nice neat stack to send to all prospective employers. The rŽsumŽ lists their previous positions, dates of employment, and education. Then, at the bottom, they might as well have scribbled, Well, thats me. Take it or leave it. And usually they get left. Why? Because prspective employers do not find enough specific points in the rŽsumŽ that relate directly to what their firm is seeking.

Boys and girls in the big leagues, however, have bits and bytes of their entire work experience tucked away in their computers. When applying for a job, they punch up only the appropriate data and print it out so it looks like it just came from the printer.

My friend Roberto was out of work last year. He applied for two positions:a sales manager of an ice cream company and head of strategic planning for a fast-food chain. He did extensive research and found the ice cream company had deep sales diffculties and the food chain had long-range

international aspirations.

How to Know What to Say When They Ask, What Do You Do? 99

Did he send the same rŽsumŽ to each? Absolutely not. His rŽsumŽ never deviated one iota from the truth of his background. Hoever, for the ice cream company, he highlighted his experience turning a small company around by doubling its sales in three years. For the food chain, he underscored his experience working in Europe and his knowledge of foreign markets.

Both firms offered Roberto the job. Now he could play them off against each other. He went to each, explaining hed like to work for them but another firm was offering a higher salary or more perks. The two firms started bidding against each other for Roberto. He finally chose the food chain at almost double the salary they originally offered him.

To make the most of every encounter, personalize your verbal rŽsumŽ with just as much care as you would your written curiculum vitae. Instead of having one answer to the omnipresent What do you do? prepare a dozen or so variations, depending on whos asking. For optimum networking, every time someone asks about your job, give a calculated oral rŽsumŽ in a nutshell. Before you submit your answer, consider what possible interest the asker could have in you and your work.

Heres How My Life Can Benefit Yours

Top salespeople talk extensively of the benefit statement. They know, when talking with a potential client, they should open their conversation with a benefit statement. When my colleague Brian makes cold calls, instead of saying Hello, my name is Brian Tracy. Im a sales trainer, he says, Hello, my name is Brian Tracy from the Institute for Executive Development. Would you be interested in a proven method that can increase your sales from 20 to 30 pecent over the next twelve months? That is his benefit statement. He highlights the specific benefits of what he has to offer to his prospect.

My hairdresser Gloria, I discovered, gives a terrific benefit statement to everyone she meets. Thats probably why she has so many clients. In fact, thats how she got me as a client. When I met Gloria at a convention, she told me she was a hairdresser who specialized in flexible hairstyles for the businesswoman. She casally mentioned she has many clients who choose a conservative hairstyle for work that they can instantly convert to a feminine style for social situations. Hey, thats me, I said to myself, figering my stringy little ponytail. I asked for her card and Gloria became my hairdresser.

Then, several months later, I happened to see Gloria at another event. I

overheard her chatting with a stylish grey-haired woman at the buffet table. Gloria was saying . . . and we specialize in a wonderful array of blue rinses. Now that was news to me! I didnt remember seeing one grey head in her salon.

As I was leaving the party, Gloria was out on the lawn talking animatedly with the hosts teenage daughters. Oh yeah, she was saying, like we specialize in these really cool up-to-the-minute styles. Good for you, Gloria!

Like Gloria the hairdresser, give your response a once-over before answering the inevitable What do you do? When somone asks, never give just a one-word answer. Thats for forms. If business networking is on your mind, ask yourself, How could my professional experience benefit this persons life? For example, here are some descriptions various people might put on their tax return:

Real estate agent Financial planner Martial arts instructor Cosmetic surgeon Hairdresser

How to Know What to Say When They Ask, What Do You Do? 101

Any practitioner of the above professions should reflect on the benefit his or her job has to humankind. (Every job has some beefit or you wouldnt get paid to do it.) The advice to the folks above is

Dont say real estate agent. Say I help people moving into our area find the right home.

Dont say financial planner. Say I help people plan their financial future.

Dont say martial arts instructor. Say I help people defend themselves by teaching martial arts.

Dont say cosmetic surgeon. Say I reconstruct peoples faces after disfiguring accidents. (Or, if youre talking with a woman of a certain age, as the French so gracefully say, tell her, I help people to look as young as they feel through cometic surgery.)

Dont say hairdresser. Say I help a woman find the right hairstyle for her particular face. (Go, Gloria!)

Putting the benefit statement in your verbal Nutshell RŽsumŽ brings your job to life and makes it memorable. Even if your new acquaintance cant use your services, the next time he or she meets someone moving into the area, wanting to plan their financial future, thinking of self defense, considering cosmetic sugery, or needing a new hairstyle, who comes to mind? Not the unimaginative people who gave the tax-return description of their jobs, but the big winners who painted a picture of helping people with needs.

A Nutshell RŽsumŽ for Your Private Life

The Nutshell RŽsumŽ works in nonbusiness situations, too. Since the new acquaintances will always ask you about yourself, prepare

a few exciting stock answers. When meeting a potential friend or loved one, make your life sound like you will be a fun person to know.

As a young girl, I wrote novels in my mind about my life. Leil, squinting her eyes against the torrential downpour, bravely reached out the window into the icy storm to pull the shutters tight and keep the family safe from the approaching hurricane. Big dealMama asked me to close the windows when it started to rain. Still, marching toward the open window, I fancied myself the familys brave savior.

You dont need to be quite so melodramatic in your self-image, but at least punch up your life to sound interesting and dedicated.

Technique #25

The Nutshell RŽsumŽ

Just as job-seeking top managers roll a different written rŽsumŽ off their printers for each position theyre applying for, let a different true story about your professional life roll off your tongue for each listener. Before responding to What do you do? ask yourself, What possible interest could this person have in my answer? Could he refer business to me? Buy from me? Hire me? Marry my sister? Become my buddy?

Wherever you go, pack a nutshell about your own life to work into your communications bag of tricks.

How to Sound Even Smarter Than You Are

Did you ever hear someone try to say a word that was just too darn big for his tongue? By the smile on the speakers face and the gleam in his eye as the word limped off his lips, you knew he was really proud of it. (To make matters worse, he probably used the word incorrectly, inappropriately, and maybe even mispronounced it. Ouch.)

The world perceives people with rich vocabularies to be more creative, more intelligent. People with larger vocabularies get hired quicker, promoted faster, and listened to a whole lot more. So big winners use rich, full words, but they never sound inappropriate. The phrases slide gracefully off their tongues to enrich their coversation. The words fit. With the care that they choose their tie or their blouse, big players in life choose words to match their pesonalities and their points.

The startling good news is that the difference between a respected

vocabulary and a mundane one is only about fifty words! You dont need much to sound like a big winner. A mere few dozen wonderful words will give everyone the impression that you have an original and creative mind.

Acquiring this super vocabulary is easy. You neednt pore over vocabulary books or listen to tapes of pompous pontificators with

impossible British accents. You dont need to learn two-dollar words that your grandmother, if she heard, would wash out of your mouth with soap.

All you need to do is think of a few tired, overworked words you use every daywords like smart, nice, pretty, or good. Then grab a thesaurus or book of synonyms off the shelf. Look up that common word even you are bored hearing yourself utter every day. Examine your long list of alternatives.

For example, if you turn to the word smart, youll find dozens of synonyms. Some words are colorful and rich like ingenious, resourceful, adroit, shrewd, and many more. Run down the list and say each out loud. Which ones fit your personality? Which ones seem right for you? Try each on like a suit of clothes to see which feel comfortable. Choose a few favorites and practice saying them aloud until they become a natural staple of your vocabulary. The next time you want to compliment someone on being smart, say, youll be purring

Oh, that was so clever of you. My how resourceful. That was ingenious. Or maybe, How astute of you.

And Now, for Men Only

Gentlemen, we women spend a lot of time in front of the mirror (as if you didnt know). When I was in college, it used to take me a full fifteen minutes to fix myself up for a date. Every year since, Ive had to add a few minutes. Im now up to an hour and a half gussying myself up for an evening out.

Gentlemen, when your wife comes down the staircase all dolled up for a night out, or you pick a lady up for dinner, what do you say? If you make no comment except, Well, are you ready to go? how do you think that makes the lady feel?

How to Sound Even Smarter Than You Are 105

My friend Gary is a nice gentleman and he occasionally takes me to dinner. I met him about twelve years ago, and Ill never foget the first time he arrived on my doorstep for our date. He said, Leil, you look great. I adored his reaction!

I saw Gary a month or so later. On my doorstep again, Leil, you look

great. The precise same words as the first time, but I still appreciated it.

Its been twelve long years now that this gentleman and I have been friends. I see him about once every two months, and every darn time its the same old comment, Leil, you look great. (I think Ill show up one evening in a flannel nightshirt and a mud pack on my face. I swear Gary will say, Leil, you look great.)

During my seminars, to help men avoid Garys mistake, I ask every male to think of a synonym for pretty or great. Then I bring up one woman and several men. I ask each to pretend he is her husband. She has just come down the stairs ready to go out to diner. I ask each to take her hand and deliver his compliment.

Darla, one says, you look elegant. Ooh! Every woman in the room sighs. Darla, says another, taking her hand, you look stunning. Ooh! Every woman in the room swoons. Darla, says the third, putting her hand between his, you

look ravishing. Ooooh! By now every woman in the room has gone limp. Pay attention men! Words work on us women.

More Unisex Suggestions

Suppose youve been at a party and it was wonderful. Dont tell the hosts it was wonderful. Everybody says that. Tell them it was a splendid party, a superb party, an extraordinary party. Hug the hosts and tell them you had a magnificent time, a remarkable time, a glorious time.

The first few times you say a word like glorious, it may not roll comfortably off your tongue. Yet you have no trouble with the word wonderful. Hmm, glor-i-ous doesnt have any more syllables than won-der-ful. Neither does it have any more difficult sounds to pronounce. Vocabulary is all a matter of familiarity. Use your new favorite words a few times and, just like breaking in a new pair of shoes, youll be very comfortable wearing your glorious new words.

Technique #26

Your Personal Thesaurus

Look up some common words you use every day in the thesaurus. Then, like slipping your feet into a new pair of shoes, slip your tongue into a few new words to see how they fit. If you like them, start making permanent replacements.

Remember, only fifty words makes the difference between a rich, creative vocabulary and an average, middle-of-the-road one. Substitute a word a day for two months and youll be in the verbally elite.

How to Not Sound Anxious (Let Them Discover Your Similarity)

Tigers prowl with tigers; lions lurk with lions; and little alley cats scramble around with other little alley cats. Similarity breeds attraction. But in the human jungle, big cats know a secret. When you delay revealing your similarity, or let them discover it, it has much more punch. Above all, you dont want to sound anxious to have rapport.

Whenever someone mentions a common interest or experence, instead of jumping in with a breathless, Hey, me, too! I do that, too or I know all about that, let your conversation parner enjoy talking about it. Let her go on about the country club before you tell her youre a member, too. Let him go on analyzing the golf swing of Arnold Palmer before you start casually coparing the swings of golf greats Greg, Jack, Tiger, and Arnie. Let her tell you how many tennis games shes won before you just hapen to mention your USTA ranking.

Several years ago, I was telling a new acquaintance how much I love to ski. He listened with interest as I indulged in a detailed travelogue of places Id skied. I raved about the various resorts. I analyzed the various conditions. I discussed artificial versus nat ral snow. It wasnt until near the end of my monologue that I

finally had the sense to ask my new acquaintance if he skied. He replied, Yes, I keep a little apartment in Aspen.

Cool! If hed jumped in and told me about his ski pad right after I first told him how much I liked skiing, Id have been impressed. Mildly. However, waiting until the end of our convesationand then revealing he was such an avid skier that he kept an Aspen ski padmade it unforgettable.

Heres the technique I call Kill the Quick Me, Too! Wheever people mention an activity or interest you share, let them enjoy discussing their passion. Then, when the time is right, casally mention you share their interest.

Oh, I Must Have Been Boring You

I waited weeks for the opportunity to try it out. Finally the moment presented itself at a convention. A new contact began telling me about her recent trip to Washington, D.C. (She had no idea that Washington was where I grew up.) She told me all about the Capitol, the Washington Monument, the Kennedy Center, and how she and her husband went bicycling in Rock Creek Park. (Momentarily I forgot I was keeping my mouth shut to practice my new

technique. I was genuinely enjoying hearing about these familiar sights from a visitors perspective.)

I asked her where she stayed, where she dined, and if she had a chance to get into any of the beautiful Maryland or Virginia suurbs. At one point, obviously pleased by my interest in her trip, she said, You sound like you know a lot about Washington.

Yes, I replied. Its my hometown, but I havent been back there in ages.

Your hometown! she squealed. My goodness, why didnt you tell me? I must have been boring you.

Oh, not at all, I replied honestly. I was enjoying hearing about your trip so much, I was afraid youd stop if I told you. Her

How to Not Sound Anxious (Let Them Discover Your Similarity) 109

big smile and barely audible Oh gosh let me know I had won a new friend.

When someone starts telling you about an activity he has done, a trip she has made, a club he belongs to, an interest she hasanything that you sharebite your tongue. Let the teller relish his or her own monologue. Relax and enjoy it, too, secretly knowing how much pleasure your conversation partner will have when you reveal you share the same experience. Then, when the moment is ripe, casually disclose your similarity. And be sure to mention how much you enjoyed hearing about his or her shared interest.

Technique #27

Kill the Quick Me, Too!

Whenever you have something in common with someone, the longer you wait to reveal it, the more moved (and impressed) he or she will be. You emerge as a confident big cat, not a lonely little stray, hungry for quick connection with a stranger.

P.S.: Dont wait too long to reveal your shared interest or it will seem like youre being tricky.

HowtoBeaYoFirstie to Gain Their Respect and Affection

SEX! Now that I have your attention. . . . Two-bit comics have been using that gag from the days when two bits bought a foursquare meal. However, big winners know theres a three-letter word more potent then SEX to get peoples attention. That word is YOU.

Why is you such a powerful word? Because when we were infants, we thought we were the center of the universe. Nothing mattered but ME, MYSELF, and I. The rest of the shadowy forms stirring about us (which we

later learned were other people) existed solely for what they could do for us. Self-centered little tykes that we were, our tiny brains translated every action, every word, into, How does that affect ME?

Big winners know we havent changed a bit. Adults camouflage their self-centeredness under a mask of civilization and politeness. Yet the human brain still immediately, instinctively, and unfailingly translates everything into terms of How does that affect ME?

For example, suppose, gentlemen, you want to ask a colleague, Jill, if she would like to join you for dinner. So you say to her, Theres a really good new Indian restaurant in town. Will you join me there for dinner tonight?

Before answering, Jill is thinking to herself, By good does he mean the food or the atmosphere or both? Her reverie cotinues, Indian cuisine, Im not sure. He says its good. However, will I like it? While thinking, Jill hesitates. You probably take her hesitation personally, and the joy of the exchange diminishes.

Suppose, instead, you had said to her, Jill, you will really love this new Indian restaurant. Will you join me there this evening for dinner? Phrasing it that way, youve already subliminally answered Jills questions and shes more apt to give you a quick yes.

The pleasure-pain principle is a guiding force in life. Pschologists tell us everyone automatically gravitates toward that which is pleasurable and pulls away from that which is painful. For many people, thinking is painful.

So big winners (when they wish to control, inspire, be loved by, sell to people, or get them to go to dinner) do the thinking for them. They translate everything into the other persons terms by starting as many sentences as they can with that powerful little three-letter word, you. Thus, I call the technique Comm-YOU-nication.

Comm-YOU-nicate When You Want a Favor

Putting you first gets a much better response, especially when youre asking a favor, because it pushes the askers pride button. Suppose you want to take a long weekend. You decide to ask your boss if you can take Friday off. Which request do you think he or she is going to react to more positively? Can I take Friday off, Boss? Or this one: Boss, can you do without me Friday?

In the first case, Boss had to translate your Can I take Friday off ? into

Can I do without this employee Friday? Thats an extra thought process. (And you know how some bosses hate to think!)

However, in the second case, Boss, can you do without me Friday, you did Bosss thinking for her. Your new wording made managing without you a matter of pride for Boss. Of course, she said to herself. I can manage without your help Friday.

Comm-YOU-nicate Your Compliments

Comm-YOU-nication also enriches your social conversation. Getlemen, say a lady likes your suit. Which woman gives you warmer feelings? The woman who says, I like your suit. Or the one who says, You look great in that suit.

Big players who make business presentations use ComYOU-nication to excellent advantage. Suppose youre giving a talk and a participant asks a question. He likes to hear you say, Thats a good question. However, consider how much better he feels when you tell him, Youve asked a good question.

Salespeople, dont just tell your prospects, Its important that . . . . Convince them by informing them, Youll see the impotance of. . . .

When negotiating, instead of, The result will be . . . let them know, Youll see the result when you. . . .

Starting sentences with you even works when talking to strangers on the street. Once, driving around San Francisco hoplessly lost, I asked people walking along the sidewalk how to get to the Golden Gate Bridge. I stopped a couple trudging up a hill. Excuse me, I called out the window, I cant find the Golden Gate Bridge. The pair looked at each other and shrugged with that How stupid can these tourists get look on their faces. That direction, the husband mumbled, pointing straight ahead.

Still lost, I called out to the next couple I encountered. Excuse me, wheres the Golden Gate Bridge? Without smiling, they pointed in the opposite direction.

How to Be a You-Firstie to Gain Their Respect and Af fection 113

Then I decided to try Comm-YOU-nication. When I came upon the next strolling couple, I called out the window, Excuse me, could you tell me where the Golden Gate Bridge is?

Of course, they said, answering my question literally. You see, by phrasing the question that way, it was a subtle challenge. I was asking, in essence, Are you able to give me directions? This hits them in the pride button. They walked over to my car and gave me explicit instructions.

Hey, I thought. This you stuff really works. To test my hypothesis, I tried it a few more times. I kept asking passersby my three forms of the question. Sure enough, whenever I asked, Could you tell me where . . . people were more pleasant and helful than when I started the question with I or where.

Im sure when they recover the flight box from the Fall of Man under a fig leaf in the Garden of Eden, it will convince the world of the power of the word you. Eve did not ask Adam to eat the apple. She did not command him to eat the apple. She didnt even

Technique #28

Comm-YOU-nication

Start every appropriate sentence with you. It immedately grabs your listeners attention. It gets a more positive response because it pushes the pride button and saves them having to translate it into me terms.

When you sprinkle you as liberally as salt and pepper throughout your conversation, your listeners find it an irresistible spice.

say, Adam, I want you to eat this apple. She phrased it (as all big winners would), You will love this apple. Thats why he bit.

Comm-YOU-nication Is a Sign of Sanity

Therapists calculate inmates of mental institutions say I and me twelve times more often than residents of the outside world. As patients conditions improve, the number of times they use the personal pronouns also diminishes.

Continuing up the sanity scale, the fewer times you use I, the more sane you seem to your listeners. If you eavesdrop on big winers talking with each other, youll notice a lot more you than I in their conversation.

The next technique concerns a way big winners are silently you-oriented.

How to Make Them Feel You Dont Smile at Just Anybody

Have you ever seen those low-budget, mail-order fashion catlogues that use the same model throughout? Whether she is engulfed in a wedding gown or partially clad in a bikini, her face sports the same plastic smile. Looking at her, you get the feeling if you rapped on her forehead, a tiny voice would come back saing Nobodys in here.

Whereas models in more sophisticated magazines have matered a myriad of different expressions: a flirtatious Ive got a secret smile on one page; a quizzical I think Id like to get to know you but Im not sure smile on the next; and a mysterious Mona Lisa smile on the third. You feel theres a brain running the operation somewhere inside that beautiful head.

I once stood in the receiving line of the ship I worked on, along with the

captain, his wife, and several other officers. One passenger with a radiant smile started shaking hands down our line. When he got to me, he flashed a shimmering smile, reveaing teeth as even and white as keys on a new piano. I was tranfixed. It was as though a brilliant light had illuminated the dim ballroom. I wished him a happy cruise and resolved to find this charming gentleman later.

115

Then he was introduced to the next person. Out of the coner of my eye, I saw his identical glistening grin. A third person, the same grin. My interest began to dwindle.

When he gave his fourth indistinguishable smile to the next person, he started to resemble a Cheshire cat. By the time he was introduced to the fifth person, his consistent smile felt like a strobe light disturbing the ambience of the ballroom. Strobe Man went on flashing everybody the same smile down the line. I had no futher interest in talking with him.

Why did this mans stock shoot high in my ticker one minute and plummet the next? Because his smile, although charming, reflected no special reaction to me. Obviously, he gave the same smile to everybody and, by that, it lost all its specialness. If Strobe Man had given each of us a slightly different smile, he would have appeared sensitive and insightful. (Of course, if his smile had been just a tad bigger for me than for the others, I couldnt have waited for the formalities to be over to seek him out in the crowded ballroom.)

Review Your Repertoire of Smiles

If your job required you to carry a gun, you would, of course, learn all about the moving parts before firing it. And before taking aim, you would carefully consider whether it would murder, maim, or merely wound your target. Since your smile is one of your biggest communications weapons, learn all about the moving parts and the effect on your target. Set aside five minutes. Lock your bedroom or bathroom door so your family doesnt think youve gone off the deep end. Now stand in front of the mirror and flash a few smiles. Discover the subtle differences in your repertoire.

Just as you would alternate saying Hello, How do you do, and I am pleased to meet you when being introduced to a group

How to Make Them Feel You Dont Smile at Just Anybody 117

of people, vary your smile. Dont use the same on each. Let each of your smiles reflect the nuances of your sentiment about the recipient.

In Defense of the Quickie

There are times, I discovered, when the quick put-on smile works. For example, when you want to engineer the acquaintance of someone to whom you have not had the opportunity to be intrduced. (In the vernacular, thats pick them up.)

The smiles pickup power was proven for posterity by solemn researchers at the University of Missouri. They conducted a highly controlled study titled Giving Men the Come-On: Effect of Eye Contact and Smiling in a Bar Environment.(I kid you not.) To prove their hypothesis, female researchers made eye contact with unsuspecting male subjects enjoying a little libation in a local drinking establishment. Sometimes, the female researchers folowed their glance with a smile. In other cases, no smile.

Technique #29

The Exclusive Smile

If you flash everybody the same smile, like a Confeerate dollar, it loses value. When meeting groups of people, grace each with a distinct smile. Let your smiles grow out of the beauty big players find in each new face.

If one person in a group is more important to you than the others, reserve an especially big, flooding smile just for him or her.

The results? I quote the study: The highest approach behaior, 60 percent, was observed in the condition in which there was smiling. That translates into laymans English: The guy came over 60 percent of the time when the lady smiled. Without the smile, he made the approach only 20 percent of the time. So, yes, a smile works for those who wish to pick somebody up.

However, in situations where the stakes are higher, try The Flooding Smile from the first section and now The Exclusive Smile.

How to Avoid Sounding Like a Jerk

Do you remember that scene from the movie classic Annie Hall where Diane Keaton is first meeting Woody Allen? As shes chating with him, we hear her private thoughts. Shes musing to heself, Oh I hope hes not a jerk like all the others.

One of the quickest ways to make a big winner think you are, well, a jerk, is to use a clichŽ. If youre chatting with a top comunicator and even innocently remark Yes, I was tired as a dog, or She was cute as a button, youve unknowingly laid a linguitic bomb.

Big winners silently moan when they hear someone mouth a trite overworn phrase. Oh sure, just like the rest of us, big winers find themselves feeling fit as a fiddle, happy as a lark, or high as a kite. Like the rest of

humanity, they consider some of their acquaintances crazy as a loon, nutty as a fruitcake, or blind as a bat. Because many of them work hard, many of them are as busy as a bee and get rich as Croesus.

Yet would any of them describe themselves in those words? Not in a coons age! Why? Because when a big winner hears your clichŽ, you might as well be saying, My powers of imagination are impoverished. I cant think of anything original to say, so I must fall back on these trite overworn phrases. Mouthing a com119

mon clichŽ around uncommonly successful people brands you as uncommonly common.

Technique #30

Dont Touch a ClichŽ with a Ten-Foot Pole

Be on guard. Dont use any clichŽs when chatting with big winners. Dont even touch one with a ten-foot pole. Never? Not even when hell freezes over? Not unless you want to sound dumb as a doorknob.

Instead of coughing up a clichŽ, roll your own clever phrases by using the next technique.

How to Use Motivational Speakers Techniques to Enhance Your Conversation

They say the pen is mightier than the sword. It is, but the tongue is even mightier than the pen. Our tongues can bring crowds to laughter, to tears, and often to their feet in shouting appreciation. Orators have moved nations to war or brought lost souls to God. And what is their equipment? The same eyes, ears, hands, legs, arms, and vocal chords you and I have.

Perhaps a professional athlete has a stronger body or a profesional singer is blessed with a more beautiful singing voice than the one we were doled out. But the professional speaker starts out with the same equipment we all have. The difference is, these ja smiths use it all. They use their hands, they use their bodies, and they use specific gestures with heavy impact. They think about the space theyre talking in. They employ many different tones of voice, they invoke various expressions, they vary the speed with which they speak . . . and they make effective use of silence.

You may not have to make a formal speech anytime soon, but chances are sometime (probably very soon) youre going to want

121

people to see things your way. Whether its persuading your faily to spend their next vacation at Grandmas, or convincing the stockholders in your

multimillion-dollar corporation that its time to do a takeover, do it like a pro. Get a book or two on public speaking and learn some of the tricks of the trade. Then put some of that drama into your everyday conversation.

A Gem for Every Occasion

If stirring words help make your point, ponder the impact of poerful phrases. Theyve helped politicians get elected (Read my lips: no new taxes.) and defendants get acquitted (If it doesnt fit, you must acquit.).

If George H. W. Bush had said, I promise not to raise taxes, or Johnny Cochran, during O. J. Simpsons criminal trial, had said, If the glove doesnt fit, he must be innocent, their bulky setences would have slipped in and out of the voters or jurors cosciousness. As every politician and trial lawyer knows, neat phrases make powerful weapons. (If youre not careful, your enemies will later use them against youread my lips!)

One of my favorite speakers is a radio broadcaster named Barry Farber who brightens up late-night radio with sparkling siiles. Barry would never use a clichŽ like nervous as a cat on a hot tin roof. Hed describe being nervous about losing his job as I felt like an elephant dangling over a cliff with his tail tied to a daisy. Instead of saying he looked at a pretty woman, hed say, My eyeballs popped out and dangled by the optic nerve.

When I first met him, I asked, Mr. Farber, how do you come up with these phrases?

My daddys Mr. Farber. Im Barry, he chided (his way of saing, Call me Barry). He then candidly admitted, although some of his phrases are original, many are borrowed. (Elvis Presley used

How to Use Motivational Speakers Techniques to Enhance Your Conversation 123

to say, My daddys Mr. Presley. Call me Elvis.) Like all profesional speakers, Barry spends several hours a week gleaning through books of quotations and humor. All professional speakers do. They collect bon mots they can use in a variety of situations most especially to scrape egg off their faces when something unepected happens.

Many speakers use authors and speakers agent Lilly Walterss face-saver lines from her book, What to Say When Youre Dying on the Platform.If you tell a joke and no one laughs, try That joke was designed to get a silent laughand it worked. If the micrphone lets out an agonizing howl, look at it and say, I dont undestand. I brushed my teeth this morning. If someone asks you a question you dont want to answer, Could you save that question until

Im finishedand well on my way home? All pros think of holes they might fall into and then memorize great escape lines. You can do the same.

Look through books of similes to enrich your day-to-day coversations. Instead of happy as a lark try happy as a lottery winer or happy as a baby with its first ice cream cone. Instead of bald as an eagle, try bald as a new marine or bald as a bulfrogs belly. Instead of quiet as a mouse, try quiet as an eel swimming in oil or quiet as a fly lighting on a feather duster.

Find phrases that have visual impact. Instead of a clichŽ like sure as death and taxes, try as certain as beach traffic in July or as sure as your shadow will follow you. Your listeners cant see death or taxes. But they sure can see beach traffic in July or their shadow following them down the street.

Try to make your similes relate to the situation. If youre riing in a taxi with someone, as sure as that taxi meter will rise has immediate impact. If youre talking with a man walking his dog, as sure as your dog is thinking about that tree adds a touch of humor.

Make Em Laugh, Make Em Laugh, Make Em Laugh

Humor enriches any conversation. But not jokes starting with, Hey didja hear the one about . . . ? Plan your humor and make it relevant. For example, if youre going to a meeting on the buget, look up money in a quotation book. In an uptight business situation, a little levity shows youre at ease.

Once, during an oppressive financial meeting, I heard a top executive say, Dont worry, this company has enough money to stay in business for yearsunless we pay our creditors. He broke the tension and won the appreciation of all. Later I saw a similar quote in a humor book attributed to Jackie Mason, the comedian. So what? The exec still came across as a cool communicator with his clever comment.

Big players who want to be quoted in the media lie awake at night gnawing the pillow trying to come up with phrases the press will pick up. A Michigan veterinarian named Timothy, a heavy hitter in his own field but completely unknown outside it, made national headlines when he planned to attach a pair of feet to a rooster who lost his to frostbite. Why? Because he called it a drumstick transplant.

I dont know if a French woman, Jeanne Calment, then offcially the worlds oldest person, was looking for publicity on her 122nd birthday. But she made international headlines when she told the media, Ive only ever had one wrinkle, and Im sitting on it.

Mark Victor Hansen, a big player in his own field but once reatively

unknown outside of it, was propelled into national promnence when he came up with a catchy name for his book coauthored with Jack Canfield, Chicken Soup for the Soul. He told me his original title was 101 Pretty Stories. How far would that have gone? Soon the world was lapping up, among others, his Chicken

How to Use Motivational Speakers Techniques to Enhance Your Conversation 125

Soup for the Womans Soul, Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul, Chicken Soup for the Mothers Soul, Chicken Soup for the Christian Soul, plus second, third, and fourth servings of chicken soup in hardcover, paperback, audiocassette, videocassette, and calendars.

A Word of Warning

No matter how good your material is, it bombs if it doesnt fit the situation. I learned this the hard way during my cruise ship days. On a cruise to England I decided to give my passengers a reading of the English love poems of Elizabeth Barrett and Robert Browing. You know, How do I love thee? Let me count the ways. It was a BIG hit. The passengers loved it and raved for days. I couldnt walk out on deck without some passenger turning to me and affectionately echoing, How do I love thee?

Technique #31

Use Jawsmiths Jive

Whether youre standing behind a podium facing thousands or behind the barbecue grill facing your family, youll move, amuse, and motivate with the same skills.

Read speakers books to cull quotations, pull pearls of wisdom, and get gems to tickle their funny bones. Find a few bon mots to let casually slide off your tongue on chosen occasions. If you want to be notable, dream up a crazy quotable.

Make em rhyme, make em clever, or make em funny. Above all, make em relevant.

Naturally I got a pretty swollen head over this performance and fancied myself an eminent poetry reader. I decided to reward the passengers on the next cruise (which was a cruise to the Caribbean and didnt go anywhere in the neighborhood of England) with my spectacular reading of the English love poems. WHAT A BOMB! Passengers avoided me on the deck for the rest of the cruise. How did you bore me? Let me count the ways.

How to Banter Like the Big Shots Do (Big Winners Tell It Like It Is)

If you stepped into an elevator full of people speaking Hungaian, you might not recognize they were Hungarian unless you spoke their language. However, the minute you opened your mouth, theyd recognize youre not Hungarian.

Its the same with the big cats. If you overhear several of them speaking, you might not recognize theyre big cats. However, the minute you opened your mouth theyd recognize youre not a big cat, unless you spoke their lingo.

What are some differences between a big cats growl and a litle cats insignificant hiss? One of the most blatant is euphemisms. Big cats arent afraid of real words. They call a spade a spade. Words like toilet paper dont scare them. Little cats hide behind bathroom tissue. If somebody is rich, big cats call it rich. Little cats, oh so embarrassed at the concept of talking about money in polite company, substitute the word wealthy. When little cats use a substitute word or euphemism, they might as well be saying, Whoops, you are better than I am. Im in polite company now and so Ill use the nicey-nice word.

Big cats are anatomically correctno cutesy words for body parts. Theyll say breasts when they mean breasts. When they

say knockers, they mean decorative structures that hang on the front door. And family jewels are in the safe on the wall.

If a big cat is ever in doubt about a word, he or she simply resorts to French. If they feel the word buttocks is debatable, deriere will do quite nicely, thank you.

Technique #32

Call a Spade a Spade

Dont hide behind euphemisms. Call a spade a spade. That doesnt mean big cats use tasteless four-letter words when perfectly decent fivand six-letter ones exist. Theyve simply learned the Kings English, and they speak it.

Heres another way to tell the big players from the little ones just by listening to a few minutes of their conversation.

How to Avoid the Worlds Worst Conversational Habit

Once I was at a small dinner party given by the president of an advertising agency, Louis, and his wife, Lillian. The evening started with cocktails, followed by a gourmet meal accompanied by a selection of excellent wines. The conversation had been covivial, the cuisine delicious, and the wine very fine. And very pletiful. At the end of the evening, Louis

raised his glass to make a toast. A few wine droplets sloshed out of his glass onto the tablecloth.

A pretty young woman who was the date of a new art diretor named Bob giggled and said, I can tell youre feeling no pain. Shock waves went around the table. Everyone froze. The host was indeed a bit inebriated. However, alluding to Louis being a little looped, even in jest, was as though the woman had suddenly smashed the crystal chandelier above the table with her dinner

plate. One guest quickly covered the girls horrifying gaffe by lifting her glass and saying None of us is. No one in the company of Louis and Lillian could ever feel any pain. Heres to a truly woderful evening.

Louis then continued with his toast to the wonderful copany, and no one was feeling pain any longer. Except Bob. He

knew his dates innocent teasing was a black mark, if not in his personnel file, on his personal file.

The next sure sign of a little cathood is teasing. Little cats go around patting their friends paunches and saying, Enjoying that cheesecake, huh? Or looking at their balding heads and saying, Hey, hair today, gone tomorrow, huh? They think its hilarious to make a quip at someone elses expense and say You dont have an inferiority complex. You are inferior! Hardy har har.

Technique #33

Trash the Teasing

A dead giveaway of a little cat is his or her proclivity to tease. An innocent joke at someone elses expense may get you a cheap laugh. Nevertheless, the big cats will have the last one. Because youll bang your head against the glass ceiling they construct to keep little cats from stepping on their paws.

Never, ever, make a joke at anyone elses expense. Youll wind up paying for it, dearly.

How to Give Them the Bad News (and Have Them Like You All the More)

In ancient Egypt, the pharaoh treated the humblest message runer like a prince when he arrived at the palace, if he brought good news. However, if the exhausted runner had the misfortune to bring the pharaoh unhappy news, his head was chopped off.

Shades of that spirit pervade todays conversations. Once a friend and I packed up some peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for an outing. As we

waltzed happily out the door, picnic basket in hand, a smiling neighbor, rocking away on his porch, looked up at the sky and said, Oh boy, bad day for a picnic. The newcast says its going to rain. I wanted to rub his face in my peanut butter and jelly sandwich. Not for his gloomy weather report, for his smile.

Several months ago I was racing to catch a bus. As I breatlessly shoved my handful of cash across the Greyhound counter, the grinning sales agent gushed, Oh that bus left five minutes ago. Dreams of decapitation!

Its not the news that makes someone angry. Its the unsypathetic attitude with which its delivered. Everyone must give bad

131

news from time to time, and winning professionals do it with the proper attitude. A doctor advising a patient she needs an opertion does it with compassion. A boss informing an employee he didnt get the job takes on a sympathetic demeanor. Grief couselors at airports after fatal crashes share the grief-stricken sentment of relatives. Big winners know, when delivering any bad news, they should share the sentiment of the receiver.

Unfortunately, many people are not aware of this sensitivity. When youre weary from a long flight, has a hotel clerk cheerfully chirped that your room isnt ready yet? When you had your heart set on the roast beef, has your waiter merrily warbled that he just served the last piece? When you needed cash for the weekend, has your bank teller gleefully told you your account is overdrawn? It makes you as traveler, diner, or depositor want to put your fist right through their insensitive grins.

Had my neighbor told me of the impending rainstorm with sympathy, I would have appreciated his warning. Had the Grehound salesclerk sympathetically informed me that my bus had already left, I probably would have said, Oh, thats all right.

Technique #34

Its the Receivers Ball

A football player wouldnt last two beats of the time clock if he made blind passes. A pro throws the ball with the receiver always in mind.

Before throwing out any news, keep your receiver in mind. Then deliver it with a smile, a sigh, or a sob. Not according to how you feel about the news, but how the receiver will take it.

Ill catch the next one. Big winners, when they bear bad news, deliver bombs with the emotion the bombarded person is sure to have.

Big winners know how to give bad news to people. They also know how not to give any news to anyone, even when people are pressuring them. Lets explore that next.

How to Respond When You Dont Want to Answer (and Wish Theyd Shut the Heck Up)

One of my clients Barbara, a ministar in the furniture business, recently separated from her husband and business partner, Frank, a megastar in the furniture business. They suffered a long and messy divorce that resulted in them keeping the business jointly but not having to deal with each other.

Soon after the divorce, I was at an industry convention with Barbara. Since she and Frank were both beloved in the industry, people were curious about what had happened and how it affected their company. But, of course, no one dared ask outright. And Babara was offering no explanations.

I was seated next to Barbara at the gala farewell dinner. Appaently one of her colleagues at the table couldnt contain her curioity any longer. During dessert, she leaned over to Barbara and in a hushed voice asked, Barbara, what happened with you and Frank?

Barbara, unruffled by the rude question, simply took a spooful of her cherries jubilee and said, Weve separated, but the copany is unaffected.

Not satisfied with that answer, the woman pumped harder. Are you still working together?

Barbara took another bite of her dessert and repeated in prcisely the same tone of voice, Weve separated, but the company is unaffected.

The frustrated interrogator was not going to give up easily. Are you both still working in the company?

Barbara, appearing not the least disturbed by the womans incontinent insistence, scooped the last cherry out of her dish, smiled, looked directly at her, and said in the identical tone of voice, Weve separated, but the company is unaffected.

That shut her up. Barbara had shown her big winners badge by using The Broken Record technique, the most effective way to curtail an unwelcome cross-examination.

Technique #35

The Broken Record

Whenever someone persists in questioning you on an unwelcome subject, simply repeat your original response. Use precisely the same words in precisely the same tone of voice. Hearing it again usually quiets them down. If your rude interrogator hangs on like a leech, your next repetition never fails to flick them off.

HowtoTalktoa Celebrity

Suppose youve just settled in for dinner at a nice restaurant. You look over at the next table, and who do you see? Is it really he? Could it possibly be? Its gotta be a look-alike. No, it isnt! It really is . . . Woody Allen. (Substitute any celebrity here: your favorite movie star, politician, broadcaster, boss who owns the company that owns the company you work for.) And there the celestial body is in the flesh, sitting not ten feet from you. What should you do?

Nothing! Big shots dont slobber over stars. Let the luminary enjoy a brief moment of anonymity. If he or she should cast a glance in your direction, give a smile and a nod. Then waft your gaze back to your dining companion. You will be a lot cooler in the eyes of your dinner partner if you take it all in your stride.

Now, if you just cant resist this once-in-a-lifetime opportnity to press the flesh of the megastar and tell him or her of your admiration, heres how to do it with grace. Wait until you or the luminary are leaving the restaurant. After the check has been paid and you will obviously not be taking much of his or her time, you may make your approach. Say something like, Mr. Allen, I just want to tell you how much pleasure your wonderful films have given me over the years. Thank you so much.

Did you pick up the subtlety here? You are not complimening his work. After all, he might well ask himself, who are you to judge whether I am a great filmmaker or not? You can only speak from your own perspective. You do this by telling him how much pleasure his work has given you.

If its your bosss bosss bosss boss whom the fates have sent to bask in your adulation, do the same. Do not say Bill or Mr. Gates, you really run a great company.

Lowly geek, he thinks, who are you to judge? Instead, tell him what an honor it is to work for him. Obviously this is not the moment to detail the intricacies of your improvements on imagediting software for digitizing

photographs.

Then let your body language express that if Woody or Bill or the other megastar wants to leave it at that, you are happy with the exchange. If, however, the megastar is captivated by you (or has had so much liquid merriment that he or she has decided to mingle with the masses tonight), then all bets are off. Youre on your own. Enjoy! Until you pick up the first body-language sign that they would like to end it. Think of yourself as a ballroom dance student waltzing with your teacher. He leads, you follow. And he tells you when the waltz is over.

Incidentally, if the megastar is with a companion and your conversation goes on for more than a few moments, direct some comments at the companion. If the satellite is in such stellar copany, he or she is probably also an accomplished person.

Felicia, a friend of mine, is a talented trial lawyer who is maried to a local TV-show host. Because Tom is on television, peple recognize him wherever they go, and Felicia gets ignored. Felicia tells me how frustrating it is, even for Tom. Whenever they go to a party, people gush all over Tom, and Felicias fascinating work hardly ever gets mentioned. She and Tom used to love going out to dinner, but now they hide out at home in the evenings.

How to Talk to a Celebrity 137

Why? Because they cant stand the interruptions of overly effevescent fans.

I Love What You Used to Be [You Has-Been]

Another sensitivity: the film star is probably obsessed with his last film, the politician with her last election, a corporate mogul with his last takeover, an author with her last noveland so forth. So when discussing the stars, the politicians, the moguls, the authors, or any VIPs work, try to keep your comments to current or recent work. Telling Woody Allen how much you loved his 1980 film Stardust Memories would not endear you to him. What about all my wonderful films since? thinks he. Stick to the present or very recent past if possible.

A final celebrity codicil: Suppose you are fortunate enough to have one at your party. To shine some star light on your party, dont ask the TV host to say a few words. Dont ask the singer

Technique #36

Big Shots Dont Slobber

People who are VIPs in their own right dont slobber over celebrities.

When you are chatting with one, dont compliment her work, simply say how much pleasure or insight its given you. If you do single out any one of the stars accomplishments, make sure its a recent one, not a memory thats getting yellow in her scrapbook.

If the queen bee has a drone sitting with her, find a way to involve him in the conversation.

to sing a song. What looks effortless to the rest of us because they seem so comfortable performing is work for them. You wouldnt ask an accountant guest to look over your books. Or a dentist to check out your third left molar. Let the dignitary drink. Let the luminary laugh. Celebrities are people, too, and they like their time off.

How to Make Them Want to Thank You

To wrap up our section on sounding like the big boys and big girls, here is a simple and gracious little maneuver. It not only signals people youre a top communicator, but it encourages them to keep doing nice things for you. Or complimenting you. Or doing bus ness with you. Or loving you. It is very short. It is very sweet. It is very simple. You can use it with everyone in your life. When it becomes instinctive, youll find yourself using it every day.

Very simply, never let the phrase thank you stand naked and alone. Always make it thank you for something. People use the bare exposed thank you so often that people dont even hear it anymore. When we buy the morning newspaper, we flash a naked thank you at the vendor when he gives us our nickels change. Is that the same thank you you want to give a valued customer who makes a big purchase in your store? Or a loved one who cooks you a delicious dinner?

Whenever the occasion warrants more than an unconscious acknowledgment, dress up your thank you with the reason:

Thank you for coming. Thank you for being so understanding.

Thank you for waiting. Thank you for being such a good customer. Thank you for being so loving.

Often, when I disembark an airplane, the captain and first officer are standing by the cockpit door to bid the passengers farewell. I say, Thanks for getting us here. Admittedly, thats carying Never the Naked Thank You technique to extremes, but it has a surprising effect. They fall all over

themselves with Oh, thanks for flying with us!

Thank you for reading this section of How to Talk to Anyone! Now let us move on to another conversation challenge, how to talk knowledgeably with everyonefrom groups of accountants to Zen Buddhistsno matter how little you might have in common.

Technique #37

Never the Naked Thank You

Never let the phrase thank you stand alone. From A to Z, always follow it with for: from Thank you for asking to Thank you for zipping me up.

How to Talk to Anyone - 92 Little Tricks...

PART FOUR

How to Be an Insider in Any Crowd

What Are They All Talking About?

Has it ever happened to you? Everyone at the party is speaking gobbledygook. Theyre all discussing faulty audits, code costraints, or the library marketand you have no idea what theyre talking about. Its because everybody at the party is an accoutant, an architect, or a publisherand youre not.

So you stand there with a pasty smile on your face, not opeing your mouth. If you do, you fear the wrong thing will come out. Paranoia sets in. Everybody will snicker at you. Youre an ousider. So you suffer in silence.

In high school I suffered a massive case of Silent Outsider Syndrome, especially around males. All they wanted to talk about was cars. I knew nothing about cars. The only time Id ever set foot in a body shop was to get a suntan.

Well, one fateful day, Mama came home with a gift for me that transformed my teenage existence from shy to sociable. It was a book on all the current model cars and their differences over and under the hood. One reading, and I became fluent in Fords, Chevys, and Buicks. I no longer hyperventilated when boys said words like carburetor, alternator, camshaft, or exhaust manifold. I

didnt need to learn a lot, just enough to ask the right questions to get the guys talking. When Id learned to speak car with the boys, it worked wonders for my social life.

Cut to today. We grown-up boys and girls also have our favorite topics that usually involve our work or our hobbies. When were with people in our own field or who share our interests, we open up like small-town gossips. (Even engineers who have a costant case of cat-got-their-tongue start gabbing about greasy tubines and various projects when theyre together.) To outsiders, our conversation sounds like gobbledygook. But we know precisely what its about. Its our own jobbeldygook or hobbydygook.

You fear youll find yourself in a party of squash players when youre the type of person whod rather be in court than on court? Dont panic hearing words like lobbing and hitting rails roll off the squash players tongues. So

what if the only experience youve ever had with squash was the mashed acorn variety on your plate next to the turkey last Thanksgiving. All you need is the few techniques that follow.

Just as anglers throw out a dragonfly to get the fish to bite, all you have to do is throw out the right questions to get people to open up. Dale Carnegies adage, show sincere interest and people will talk, only goes so far. As they say in poker, it takes jacks or better to open. And in conversation, it takes cursory knowledge or better about their field to get them to really open up. You must have knowledgeable curiosity, the kind that makes you sound like youre worth talking to.

In this section, we explore techniques that are Open Sesames to get people gabbing with you like an insider.

How to Be a ModerDay Renaissance Man or Woman

Whenever friends visit my hometown, New York City, I warn them Never ask anyone riding in the subway for directions.

Because Ill get mugged? they fearfully ask.

No, just because youll never get where youre going! Most Big Apple subway riders know only two things about the subway: where they get on and where they get off. They know nothing about the rest of the system. Most people are like NYC strap-hangers when it comes to their hobbies and interests. They know their own pastimes, but all the others are like unvisited stations.

My unmarried (and wishing she werent) friend Rita has a bad case of bowlers thumb. Every Wednesday night shes bowling up a storm with her friends. She is forever discussing her scores, her averages, and her high game. Another single and searching friend Walter is into white-water rafting. He talks endlessly with his padling friends about which rivers hes run, which outfitters hes gone with, and which class rapids he prefers. Thinking my two single friends might hit it off, I introduced Walter the paddler to Rita the bowler and mentioned their respective passions.

Oh youre a bowler! said Walter.

Yes, Rita smiled demurely, awaiting more questions about her big bowling turn-on. Walter was silent.

Masking her disappointment, Rita said, Uh, Leil tells me youre into water rafting. Walter smiled proudly, awaiting further friendly interrogation on paddling. Uh, that must be exciting. Isnt it dangerous? was the best Rita

could do.

No, its not dangerous, Walter patronizingly responded to her typical outsiders question. Then the conversation died.

During the deafening silence, I remember thinking, if Rita had run just one river, if Walter had bowled just one game, their lives might be different now. Conversation could have flowed, and who knows what else might have flowered.

Go Fly a Kite!

The Scramble Therapy technique is salvation from such disapointing encounters. It will transform you into a modern-day Renaissance man or woman who comfortably can discuss a varety of interests.

Scramble Therapy is, quite simply, scrambling up your life and participating in an activity youd never think of indulging in. Just one out of every four weekends, do something totally out of your pattern. Do you usually play tennis on weekends? This weekend, go hiking. Do you usually go hiking? This weekend, take a tenis lesson. Do you bowl? Leave that to your buddies this time. Instead, go white-water rafting. Oh, you were planning on runing some rapids like you do every warm weekend? Forget it, go bowling.

Go to a stamp exhibition. Go to a chess lecture. Go ballooing. Go bird-watching. Go to a pool hall. Go kayaking. Go fly a kite! Why? Because it will give you conversational fodder for the rest of your life. From that weekend on, youll sound like an insider with all the hikers, stamp collectors, ballooners, birders, billiards players, kayakers, and kitists you ever meet. Just by doing their activity once.

How to Be a Modern-Day Renaissance Man or Woman 147

If you take a piece of blue litmus paper and dip it in a huge vat of acid, the tip turns pink. If you take another blue litmus paper and dip it into just one minuscule drop of acid on a glass slide, the tip turns just as pink. Compare this to participating in an activity just one time. A sampling gives you 80 percent of the converstional value. You learn the insiders questions to ask. You start using the right terms. Youll never be at a loss again when the subject of extracurricular interests comes upwhich it always does.

Do You Speak Scuba?

Im not a certified scuba diver. However, six years ago in Bermuda I saw a sign: Resort Dives, $25, no Scuba experience necessary. In just three hours, I received the best crash course in talking with scuba divers the world offers.

First I was given a quick lesson in the pool. Then, struggling to stay erect under the weight of my oxygen tank, regulator, buoancy compensator, and weight belt, I went clumping out to the dive boat. Sitting there on the rocking dinghy, fondling my mask and fins like worry beads, I overheard the certified divers asking each other insider questions:

Where were you certified? Where have you dived? Do you prefer wrecks or reefs? Ever done any night diving? Are you into underwater photography? Do you dive on a computer?

Whats your longest bottom time? Did you ever get the bends?

Why the italicized words? Those are scuba lingo. I now speak scuba. To this day, whenever I meet divers, I have the right quetions to ask and subjects to discuss. And the right ones to avoid. (Like how much I like seafood. Thats like telling a cat lover how much you love tender barbecued kitten.) I can now ask my new friends which of the scuba hot spots theyve been toCozumel, Cayman, Cancun. Then, if I want to really show off, I ask if theyve been to Truk Lagoon in the Far Pacific, the Great Barrier Reef in Australia, or the Red Sea.

All the insider terms now roll comfortably off my tongue. Before my Scramble Therapy experience Id be calling their beloved wrecks and reefs sunken ships and coral. Unde standable words, but not scuba words. Not insider words. Upon meeting a scuba diver, I probably would have asked, Oh scuba diving. That must be interesting. Uh, arent you afraid of sharks? Not a good way to get off on the right fin with a diver.

Think about it! Suppose at a dinner party, the table converstion turns to scuba diving. If you, too, had done your one-timonly dive, youd ask your diving dinner companion if he likes night diving or whether he prefers diving on wrecks or reefs. (Hell never

Technique #38

Scramble Therapy

Once a month, scramble your life. Do something youd never dream of doing. Participate in a sport, go to an exhibition, hear a lecture on something totally out of your experience. You get 80 percent of the right lingo and insider questions from just one exposure.

believe it when you tell him the deepest water youve ever sumerged yourself in is your own bathtub.)

Then you turn to the bungee jumper seated on your left and ask him, Do

you prefer chest-waist jumps or ankle jumps? If the conversation then changes to tennis, or martial arts, or chess, or coin collecting, or even bird-watching, you can keep up and keep the conversation going. What a guy! What a gal!

How to Sound Like You Know All About Their Job or Hobby

Even more insidious than hobby-talk is job-speak, or Jobbledgook. I still harbor social nightmares of the evening I attended a party thrown by a couple who worked in computer database maagement. As I walked in the door, I overheard one chap saying to another, When the domain relational calculus is restricted to safe expressions, its equivalent to the turple relational. . . .

Thats all I stayed around for. I knew I wasnt going to undestand one bit or byte of conversation the rest of the evening. It made me long for the days when a mouse meant the furry little fellow who loves cheese, windows were the kind you bought drapes for, and the web was something spiders trapped flies in. I knew I was going to need some technical support if I was going to be compatible with this crowd.

I decided then and there to learn some of the opening quetions database management types ask each other. Which I did. Now I cant wait for a second chance at that crowd because Im armed with questions like What raid level are you using? and What data warehousing product do you use?

All you need are a few insider opening questions to get you started with any group. You ask questions, listen to the responses, and indulge in elementary on-target conversation with them for a

moment or two about their field. (Then change the subject ASAP! You dont want to fake you are more knowledgeable about their field than you really are.)

Its All in the Opening Question

A tennis player can tell immediately from just appraising your opening serve how good a player you are. Is it going to be great playing with you or a real bore? Its the same in communicating. Just from your verbal opening serve, someone knows if its going to be interesting talking with you about their life or interestsor dull, dull, dull.

For example, suppose Im introduced to someone and the first words out of her mouth are, Oh, youre a writer. When are you going to write the great American novel? Yikes, I know Im taling with someone who is unfamiliar

with my world. Well chat, but I prefer to change the subject. And soon, my conversation partner.

If, however, my new acquaintance says, Oh youre a writer. Do you write fiction or nonfiction? Bingo! Now I know Im with a person who knows about my world. Why? Because that is the first question all writers ask each other. I enjoy talking to this inquisitor because I presume she has more insights into the wriing world. Even if we quickly get off the subject of writing, she has come across as a well-informed individual.

Every job, every sport, every interest has insider opening quetions that everybody in the same field asksand its dumb ousider questions that they never ask each other. When an astronaut meets another astronaut, he asks, What missions have you been on? (Never How do you go to the bathroom up there?) A detist asks another dentist, Are you in general practice or do you have a specialty? (Never Heard any good pain jokes lately?)

The good news is beginning Jobbledygook is an easy language. You dont need to master buzzwords, only a few opening questions

to make you sound like an insider. Thenheres the fun part when you tell them youre not connected to their field, theyre all the more impressed. What a knowledgeable person! they say to themselves.

Help! Everybody There Will Be an Artist

Its not hard to harvest good Jobbledygook. Lets say youve been invited to a gallery opening where youll be meeting many artists. If you dont speak artist, go through your Rolodex to see if you have an artist friend or two.

Aha, you found one. Well, sort of. Your friend Sally attended art school. You call her up and ask, Sally, I know this sounds silly but Ive been invited to an event where Im bound to be talking with a lot of artists. Could you give me a few good questions to ask? Sally might find your query a tad unusual, but your diligence should impress her.

Maybe shell say, Well, ask artists what medium they work in. Medium? you ask. Sure, shell tell you. Thats the insiders way to ask if they

work with acrylics, oil, charcoal, pen, and so forth. Oh.

Dont ask artists to describe their work, she warns. They feel theirs is a visual medium that cant be described.

Oh. And dont ask them if their work is in a gallery. Oh? That could be a sore point. Instead ask Is there anyplace I

might see your work? Theyll love that because, even if theyre not represented by a gallery, they can invite you to their studio to possibly buy

their work.

How to Sound Like You Know All About Their Job or Hobby 153

Technique #39

Learn a Little Jobbledygook

Big winners speak Jobbledygook as a second language. What is Jobbledygook? Its the language of other professions.

Why speak it? It makes you sound like an insider.

How do you learn it? Youll find no Jobbledygook cassettes in the language section of your bookstore, but the lingo is easy to pick up. Simply ask a friend who speaks the lingo of the crowd youll be with to teach you a few opening questions. The words are few and the rewards are manifold.

Thats all you need to get startedtwo good opening art questions and a warning against the most-asked dumb outsider question.

Lets say youve given a great opening serve with the right question on their job. Youve slammed a swift ball dead center into their conversational court. Happily, thinking theyre with an ace player, they answer your question. Then they put a little spin on the ball and send it lobbing right back into your court and its time for a follow-up question. Whoops, what to do now?

If you dont want to come out of the bluffers closet just yet, you must master the next technique, Baring Their Hot Button.

How to Bare Their Hot Button (Elementary Doc-Talk)

My friend John, a physician, recently married a charming Japnese woman, Yamika. John told me the first time they were invited to a party to meet many of Johns colleagues, Yamika was panistricken. She wanted to make a good impression, yet she was tense about talking to American doctors. John was the only one shed ever met, and during their romance they didnt spend a whole lot of time discussing medicine.

John told her, Dont worry about it, Yami. They all ask each other the same old questions. When you meet them, just ask, Whats your specialty and Are you affiliated with a hospital?

Then, to get into deeper conversation, he continued, throw out questions like Hows your relationship with your hospital? or Hows the current medical environment affecting you? These are hot issues with doctors because everythings changing in health care.

John said Yamika delivered the lines verbatim. She circulated the party asking the various doctors specialties and inquiring about their affiliations and relationships with their hospitals. As a result, she was the hit of the party.

Many of Johns colleagues later congratulated him on having found such a charming and insighful woman.

154

How to Bare Their Hot Button (Elementary Doc-Talk) 155

Getting the Real Grabber

Its not just doctors. Every profession has concerns that are all the buzz within the industry. The rest of the world, however, knows little about these fixations. For example, independent booksellers constantly complain that big superstore chains are taking over the industry. Accountants lie awake nights worrying about liability insurance for faulty audits. And dentists grind their teeth over OSHA and EPA regulations. Oh, us writers, too. Were always bellyaching about magazines not paying us for electronic rights to our precious words.

Suppose some hapless soul were unlucky enough to find hiself in a party of writers. Making conversation with these folks (who seldom know what they think until they see what they say) is no easy task for one who is accustomed to communicating in the spoken word. However, if before the party the nonwriter had called just one writer acquaintance and asked about the burning issues, hed have had hot conversation with the wordsmiths all ev ning. I call the technique Baring Their Hot Button.

Back to the art show youre about to attend. You cant let Sally hang up yet. Shes given you the two best opening questions for

Technique #40

Baring Their Hot Button

Before jumping blindly into a bevy of bookbinders or a drove of dentists, find out what the hot issues are in their fields. Every industry has burning concerns the outside world knows little about. Ask your informant to bare the industry buzz. Then, to heat the conversation up, push those buttons.

artists. But dont let her go until you get the real conversational grabber. Ask her the hottest issues going on in the art world. She might think a minute and then say, Well, theres always art prices.

Art prices? you ask.

Yes, she explains. For example, in the 1980s the art world was very market-driven. Prices went sky-high because some investors and status seekers paid exorbitant amounts. We feel that kind of took art away from the masses.

Wow, now youre really armed with some good insider art talk!

See You at the Big One!

While youre at it, dont forget to grill your informant for special insider greetings to use when youre with their gang. For example, actresses cringe if they hear good luck before a show, but they smile at well-wishers who say Break a leg!

Break a leg, however, is not appropriate for runners before a marathon. Thats the last thought they want to have! The only thing they want to break is their personal record. Try Have a pesonal best!

Firefighters who work on shift seldom see each other except, of course, at the biggest blazes. Thus the firefighters greeting See ya at the big one!

Once, driving in a sleepy town youd have to work at getting lost in, I succeeded. I was hopelessly turned around. Happily, I spotted the firehouse and a couple of bored firefighters lounging out front.

Excuse me, can you tell me the way back to Route 50? I called out the window. I could tell from their attitude they thought I was an idiot. Nevertheless, they lethargically pointed me in the right direction. As I drove off, I called out, Thanks guys, see ya at the big one! In the rearview mirror I saw huge smiles break out on their faces as they stood up in unison and waved good-bye. The disoriented dizzy blond driving off had won their respect with their insider salute.

How to Secretly Learn About Their Lives

Lets say your paper carrier has just hurled the newspaper from his bike to your front door. You pour a cup of coffee and get cofortable to catch up on whats happening in the world. Your world, that is. Do you flip first to the international news? The fashion se tion? The sports page? The entertainment section? Maybe the comics?

Whichever section you usually flip to first, tomorrow DONT. Turn to any other section, preferably one you hardly ever read. Why? Because it will familiarize you with other worlds so that you can soon discuss anything with anybody, no matter how little you have in common.

How about the real estate section? Yawn. Maybe you dont find real estate especially engrossing. However, sooner or later youre going to find yourself with a group of people who are dicussing properties, deals, and todays market. Scanning the real estate section just once every few weeks will keep you au courant with their conversation.

The advertising column? Maybe you think the world would be a far, far better place without Madison Avenue. But your botom line wont be better off

if you cant hold your own discussing matters with the marketing maven youve just contracted to adver157

tise your companys widgets. Just a few peeks at the advertising news section and youll soon be chatting about campaigns and crative people, and doing print or TV. Instead of saying words, youll be saying copy. Instead of the agency, youll be bandying about real insider terms like the shop.

Using outsider words is one of the biggest giveaways that you are not in the know. On the ship, if a passenger asked any of my staff, How long have you been working on the boat? theyd squelch a groan. Cruise staffers proudly worked on a ship, and the word boat revealed the passenger as a real landlubber.

The right word can perform conversational miracles. In the receiving line, whenever passengers asked our laconic captain, When did you first become a master? or What was your first command? he would hold up the entire line of people snaking around the ballroom waiting to shake his hand. Captain Cafiero would enthusiastically recount his naval history to the savvy inquirer who might have just learned the words master or comand last week in the newspaper shipping notices. (If the passeger had simply said, How long have you been a captain? or What was your first boat? he or she would have gotten the ca tains usual Italian gentlemans version of the bums rush.)

Soon youll become addicted to the high that establishing raport with so many people gives you. All it takes is reading diffeent sections of the newspaper.

Pump Their Pulp for Even More Fuel

Then, when you crave a bigger hit of insider lingo, start reading trade journals. Those are the closed-circulation magazines that go to members of various industries. Ask your friends in different jobs to lend you one so youll have even more fuel for the convers tional fire.

All industries have one or two. Youll see big glossy rags with names like Automotive News, Restaurant Business, Pool and Spa

How to Secretly Learn About Their Lives 159

News, Trucking Industry, and even Hogs Today for people in the pig business. (Excuse me, they call themselves swine practitioners. Hey, you never know when, to make your next big sale, it will help to speak pig.) Any one issue will give you a sample of their lingo and inform you of the hottest issues in that field.

When it comes to peoples hobbies and interests, browse through

magazines on running, working out, bicycling, skiing, swimming, and surfing. Large magazine stores carry biker rags, boxer rags, bowler rags, even bull-riding rags. Youll find thousands of special-interest magazines published every month.

Several years ago, I got hooked on buying a different one each week. It paid off quickly when a potential consulting client invited me to dinner at her home. She had a beautiful garden and, thanks to Flower and Garden Magazine, I could throw out insider terms like ornamentals, annuals, and perennials. I could even keep up when the discussion turned to the advantages of growing from seeds or bulbs.

Because I was so fluent in flower, she invited me to take a longer walk with her to see her private back gardens. As we

Technique #41

Read Their Rags

Is your next big client a golfer, runner, swimmer, surfer, or skier? Are you attending a social function filled with accountants or Zen Buddhistsor anything in between? There are untold thousands of monthly magazines serving every imaginable interest. You can dish up more information than youll ever need to sound like an insider with anyone just by reading the rags that serve their racket. (Have you read your latest copy of

Zoonooz yet?)

strolled, I gradually changed the subject from chrysanthemums to the consulting work I could do for her company. Who was leaing whom down the garden path?

Is the world getting smaller, or are we getting bigger? Todays Renaissance man or woman is comfortable and confident anwhere. The next technique helps you be an insider wherever you find yourself on the planet, and it saves you from fulfilling the worlds fantasy of the ugly American.

How to Talk When Youre in Other Countries

Say youre traveling abroad on business and you want to be a global insider. Whats the first thing on your to-do list? Get a passport and a phrase book, right? After all, who wants to wander around Rome not knowing how to ask for a restroom? Or be thirsty in Kuala Lumpur not knowing how to ask for a soda? Hoever, theres something most of us forget to pack, often with dire consequencesa book on international customs.

A friend of mine, a fellow speaker named Geraldine, was excited about her first speech in Japan. To be comfy on her long flight to Tokyo, she

donned her favorite designer jeans and a casual jacket. Fourteen hours and 6,737 miles later, four impeccably dressed Japanese gentlemen greeted her at Narita Airport. Smiing and bowing low, they handed her their business cards. With her carry-on bag in one hand, Geri took their cards with the other. She thanked them, glanced briefly at the cards, and packed them safely into her back pocket. She then pulled one of her business cards out of her purse and, sensitive to the fact that they might have difficulty pronouncing Geraldine, wrote her nickname Geri above her printed name. The gentlemen hovered over her card, turning it over to examine it a few times, before one of them put it in his briefcase.

When the five of them arrived at the hotel, they invited Geri for tea in the lobby. While sipping tea, the gentlemen presented her with a small gift which she eagerly opened. One of Geris most charming qualities is her instinctive warmth and effusiveness. She was thrilled with the gift and, in typical Geri style, she squealed, Oh, its beautiful! as she gave each of the gentlemen a little hug.

At this point, the four Japanese gentlemen stood up in unson like four frowning Siamese twins and, bowing only very slightly, mumbled Sayonara and promptly left. Poor Geri was flabbergasted. What did she do wrong?

Everything! First, the jeans. Even if youre coming off a biccle in Asia, you do not meet clients casually dressed. The second mistake was Geris vulgar handling of their business cards. In Asia, the business card is one of the most important protocol tools. It is always presented and accepted reverently with both hands. (Except in Moslem Asia where the left hand is considered unclean.)

Geri then put their cards away much too quickly. In Asia, peple use business cards as a conversation starter. You chat about each others cards and work and do not put theirs away until they getly and respectfully place yours in safekeeping. Shoving it into her back jeans pocket was the ultimate disrespect.

Geri didnt discover her fourth gaffe until she returned home. One of her colleagues Bill, a seasoned business traveler, analyzed the fiasco for her. Bill told her the reason the gentlemen had turned Geraldines card over and over when she gave it to them at the ai port was to find her name, title, and company printed in Japanese on the other side. The flip side of Geris card was, of course, blank.

Then, fifth horror of horrors, Geri should not have written on the card. Cards in Asia are not exactly sacred, but one should never deface them with messy handwriting.

The sad tale of Geri and the Japanese gets worse. Bill broke the bad news to her: she should not have opened the gift in front

How to Talk When Youre in Other Countries 163

of her clients. Why? Because in a land where saving face is critcal, it would be embarrassing to discover the gift they gave was not as nice as the one they received. (Yikes, Geri hadnt even given them a gift!) Gaffe number seven.

Geris little squeal when receiving the gift was also a boo-boo. In Asia, the lower the tone of voice, the higher the rank. The final flub was, of course, giving the gentlemen a thank-you hug. Huging, highly revered in certain parts of the world is, in Japan, abs lutely unacceptable with a new client.

Needless to say, Geri has not been invited back to Japan. However, she does have a gig coming up in El Salvador. This time shes smart. Shes studying up on the customs there. Happily, shes finding she can hug to her hearts content. However she shouldnt use her (or anybody elses) first name. Oh, and she must not intrduce herself as an American. After all, Salvadorans are Amercans, too!

The differences round the world go on and on. Whenever I travel, I have to hit myself over the head and realize Im not in the anything-goes ol USA. I love to travel in jeans, Im an incurable hugger, and I cant wait to see whats in a gift box anybody gives me. However, whenever I plan to leave Uncle Sams shores, I check on foreign customs to see how much of myself I can be.

Technique #42

Clear Customs

Before putting one toe on foreign soil, get a book on dos and taboos around the world. Before you shake hands, give a gift, make gestures, or even compliment anyones possessions, check it out. Your gaffe could gum up your entire gig.

There are some excellent books on international customs. Youll find the names of a few in the notes. 1719

Dont be like another hapless colleague of mine who almost blew a big business deal with a Brazilian. Just before signing the contract, he gave the OK sign with his thumb and forefinger. Litle did he know he was telling his new business partner to go have intercourse with himself. You never know

until its too late.

Now we come to where being an insider shows immediate, tangible, and calculable rewards. And where being an outsider really hurtsright in your pocket or purse.

How to Talk Them into Getting the Insiders Price (on Practically Anything You Buy)

Never underestimate human ingenuity when it comes to getting what you want. Many people expand the adage, Alls fair in love and war to All is fair in love, war, and buying what I want. To get a table at a posh restaurant on a busy night, using a celebrity name is an old ploy. My favorite ma”tre d told me he gets a lot of Robert De Niros phoning in a reservation. When their party of six or eight arrives, he hears, Im so sorry, Rob wasnt feeling well this evening.

One woman, frustrated when her fake celebrity name didnt work, shouted at him, Look, who the hell do I have to be to get a table? Ill be anyone you want me to be, Goldie Hawn, Steffi Graf, Fergiejust tell me. Some people try a last-minute approach. They simply walk up to the ma”tre d at an overbooked restaurant, point to any name on the reservation book and say, Thats us.

Youll witness the same cunning at overbooked hotels. Several months ago I was checking into a popular hotel for which, fortnately, I had a confirmed reservation. A loudmouthed man in front

of me in line shouted at the desk clerk, Whaddaya mean, no room? Im staying in this hotel tonight. If you dont have a room, Im sleeing right here on the floor. His temper tantrum was not working.

And I warn you, he continued, I sleep in the nude! He got a room. These crafty childish tactics are not recommended. Rather, I

suggest a more principled technique called Bluffing for Bargains. It was born one afternoon sitting with an insurance broker Mr. Carson. He was trying to sell me a homeowners policy. Of course I wanted the most coverage for the least cash. Carson was a smooth operator and he was patiently explaining to me in laymans terms the benefits of certain riders he was pushing.

Just as he started discussing disasters like wars and hurricanes, his phone rang. With apologies, he picked up the receiver. It was one of his colleagues. Suddenly a metamorphosis took place before my eyes. The sophisticated

salesman became a palsy-walsy, reglar, down-home kinda guy chatting it up with his old buddy about umbrellas. I thought they were discussing the weather.

Then the conversation turned to floaters. I now assumed they were talking about an eye problem. It took a while for me to reaize that umbrella policies and floaters were part of the insurancese they were speaking.

A few minutes later, Carson said, Yeah, OK, so long, buddy, and put the phone down. He cleared his throat and again tranmogrified back into the formal sales agent patiently defining daages and deductibles to a na•ve client.

Sitting there listening to bafflegab like subrogation and pro rata liability, I began to ponder, If Carsons colleague who just called wanted to buy insurance, he would have gotten a much better policy, much cheaper. In practically every industry, vedors give two prices on goods or servicesone to insiders and one to you and me.

How to Talk Them into Getting the Insiders Price 167

Before I let myself get angry about this, I thought it through. Is it unfair? Not really. If the vendor doesnt have to spend time being salesman or psychologist answering the endless stream of novice questions, he can afford to give his best price. Carson wouldnt have had to take twenty minutes explaining to his coleague (as he did to me) why, if a tornado takes your house, its considered an act of God. Therefore, you lose. When know edgeable associates buy products, the vendor is happily reduced to nothing more than a purchasing agent. For very little work, he makes a small profit and is satisfied.

A little bit of knowledge goes a long way when youre buying something. If you have insight into your real estate brokers botom line, hes more apt to give you the better price. If you are facile with the insider words caterers and car salesmen use to pad their profits, if youre savvy to techniques moving companies and mechanics use to bilk the unsuspecting, if you are on the lookout for lawyers methods of fattening feesin short, if you know the ropes, you will not get ripped off. You dont need to know a lot, just a few insider terms. The pro assumes, since you are convesant in some esoteric industry terms, you also know the best deal and rock-bottom price.

No one put it better than my housepainter, Iggy. Sure, he told me, you gotta know how to talk to a painter. Not me, but a lotta them other guys, theyre gonna get whatever they can. Its only human nature. Especially if youre a woman and you deal with em smart, like Im gonna tell you how, their

hair will stand on end. Theyll say to themselves, Hey, dis is no babe in the woods. I beter deal straight.

OK, Iggy, how?

He said, Tell them guys, Look the walls need very little preping. Youre not going to have to spend much time scraping and spackling. Its a clean job. Iggy told me these few sentences alone

can save you hundreds of dollars. Why? Right away the painter knows you know the score and that the most time-consuming part for him is preparing the surface (prepping in painterese). Therfore, its his biggest markup item.

Then, Iggy continued, when you tell em there will be no cutting in [painting two colors next to each other], your price goes down again. Be sure and tell em not to leave any holidays [unpainted or sparsely painted spots] and you get a more careful job. Im only sorry I dont have an Iggy in every field to give me a crash course in how to deal.

How to Deal When Theres No Iggy in Your Life

Heres how to get the best price and the best deal from anyone. Find your Iggy Informer. If you have a friend in the business, get the lingo from him. If not, instead of going straight to the vendor you want to buy from, visit several others first. Talk with them. Learn a little lingo from each.

For instance, suppose you want to buy a diamond. Instead of going right to your favorite jewelry shop and asking dumbbell dimond questions, go to the competition. Make friends with the salesclerk and pick up a few gems of diamondese. Youll learn jeelers say stones, not diamonds. When youre talking about the top of the stone, they say table; the widest part is the girdle; the botom is the cutlet. If the stone looks yellow, dont say yellow, say cape. If you see flaws, dont say flaws, say inclusions or gletz. If you still dont like the stone, dont say Id like to see something beter, say finer. (Dont ask me why. Thats just the way the diamond crowd talks.)

Then, when youve got your lingo down, go to where you want to buy. Because you now speak diamond, you get a much better price.

How to Talk Them into Getting the Insiders Price 169

Technique #43

Bluffing for Bargains

The haggling skills used in ancient Arab markets are alive and well in contemporary America for big-ticket items. Your price is much lower when you know how to deal.

Before every big purchase, find several vendorsa few to learn from and one to buy from. Armed with a few words of industryese, youre ready to head for the store where youre going to buy.

Soon youll be asking furriers where the skins were dressed, moving companies for their ICC performance record, and lawyers the hourly rate of paralegals and associates. Then these folks, like Iggy the painter, will say to themselves, Hey, dis is no babe in the woodsI better deal straight.

Let us now delve deeper into the world of being an insider. This time we explore how to give your conversation partner the sense that you share not only experiences but the heavy stuff. You share beliefs and values in life.

How to Talk to Anyone - 92 Little Tricks...

PART FIVE

How to Sound Like Youre Peas in a Pod

Why, Were Just Alike!

If you squint your eyes and look up carefully at a flight of birds, youll see finches flying with finches, swallows soaring with swalows, and yellow birds winging it with yellow birds. The avian apartheid escalates. Youll never see a barn swallow with a bank swallow, or even a yellow bird hanging out with a yellow finch. Somebody said it shorter: Birds of a feather flock together.

Happily, humans are smarter than birds. In one respect, at least: we have brains capable of overcoming bias. Really smart human beings work together, play together, and break bread together. Does that mean their comfort level is high? Well, that depends on the human being. Our purpose here is not to exaine the absurdity of apartheid. It is to leave no stone unturned in making sure people are completely comfortable doing business or pleasure with you.

It has been proven beyond a doubt, people are most recetive to those they feel have the same values in life. In one study,

171

individuals were first given a personality and beliefs test.They were then paired off with a partner and told to go spend time together. Before meeting, half the couples were told they were very similar in beliefs to their partner. The other half were told they were dissimilar. Neither statement was true.

However, when quizzed afterward on how much they liked each other, partners who believed they were similar liked each other a lot more than the couples who thought themselves to be dissimilar, demonstrating we have a predisposition toward people we believe are just like us. We are most comfortable giving our business and friendship to those we feel share our values and beliefs in life. To that end I offer six techniques to create senstions of similarity with everyone you wish.

Along with making more profound rapport with customers, friends, and associates, using the following techniques develops a deeper understanding and empathy with people of all races and backgrounds. It also opens doors that might otherwise be closed to you.

How to Make Them Feel Youre of the Same Class

Just like the finch flaps its wings faster than the gliding eagle, peple of

different backgrounds move differently. For example, Weserners used to the wide-open plains stand farther from each other. Easterners, systematically sardined into subways and crowded busses, stand closer. Asian Americans make modest movements. Italian Americans make massive ones.

At teatime, the finishing-school set genuflects and gracefully lowers derrieres onto the sofa. When the ladies reach for a cup, they hold the saucer in one hand and the cup in the other, pinkie ever so slightly extended. Folks who never finished any manners school make a fanny dive in the middle of the sofa and clutch the cup with both hands.

Is one right? Is the other wrong? No. However, top commnicators know when doing business with a derriere-dipping pinkie extender or a fanny-plopping, two-fisted mug grabber, they darn well should do the same. People feel comfortable around people who move just like they do.

I have a friend who travels the country giving an outrageous seminar called How to Marry the Rich. Genie was once in a Las Vegas casino when a television reporter asked if she could tell the real rich from the great pretenders.

173

Of course, Genie answered.

All right, challenged the reporter. Who is the wealthiest man in this room? Convened at the next table were three men in tailored suits (Hayward of Mayfair, London, no doubt), hanmade shirts (Charvet of Place Vend™me in Paris, no doubt), and sipping scotch (single-malt Laphroaig from the Scottish island of Islay, no doubt). The reporter, naturally, assumed Genie would choose one of these likely candidates.

Instead, with the scrutiny of a hunting dog, Genies eyes scanned the room. Like a trained basset hound, she instinctively pointed a long red fingernail at a fellow in torn jeans at a corner table. She murmured, Hes very rich.

Flabbergasted, the reporter asked Genie, How can you tell?

He moves like old money, she said. You see, Genie went on to explain, theres moving like old money. Theres moving like new money. And theres moving like no money. Genie could tell the unlikely chap in the corner was obviously sitting on big assets and all because of the way he moved.

Technique #44

Be a Copyclass

Watch people. Look at the way they move. Small movements? Big

movements? Fast? Slow? Jerky? Fluid? Old? Young? Classy? Trashy?

Pretend the person you are talking to is your dance instructor. Is he a jazzy mover? Is she a balletic mover? Watch his or her body, then imitate the style of movement. That makes your conversation partner subliminally real comfy with you.

How to Make Them Feel Youre of the Same Class 175

Theyre Buying You, Too

If youre in sales, copy not only your customers class but the class of your product as well. I live in a section of New York City called Soho, which is a few blocks above the famous-for-being-trashy Canal Street. Often, clutching my purse tightly and dodging the crowds on Canal Street, Ill pass a pickpocket-turned-salesmafor-the-day. He furtively looks around and flashes a greasy hankerchief at me with a piece of jewelry on it. Psst, wanna buy a gold chain? His nervous thiefs demeanor alone could get him arrested.

Now, about sixty blocks uptown, youll find the fashionable and very expensive Tiffanys jewelry store. Occasionally, clutching my fantasies of being able to afford something therein, I stroll through the huge gilt doors. Imagine one of the impeccably dressed sales professionals behind the beveled glass counters furtively looking around and saying to me, Psst, wanna buy a diamond?

No sale!

Match your personality to your product. Selling handmade suits? A little decorum please. Selling jeans? A little cool, please. Selling sweat suits? A little sporty, please. And so on for whatever youre selling. Remember, you are your customers buying experence. Therefore you are part of the product theyre buying.

How to Make Them Feel That Youre Like Family

Have you ever been gabbing with a new acquaintance and, after a few moments, youve said to yourself, This person and I think alike! Were on the same wavelength. Its a fabulous feeling, almost like falling in love.

Lovers call it chemistry. New friends talk of instant raport, and businesspeople say a meeting of minds. Yet its the same magic, that sudden sense of warmth and closeness, that strange sensation of Wow, we were old friends at once!

When we were children, making friends was easier. Most of the kids we met grew up in the same town and so they were on our wavelength. Then the years went by. We grew older. We moved away. Our backgrounds, our

experiences, our goals, our lifestyles became diverse. Thus, we fell off each others wavelengths.

Wouldnt it be great to have a magic surfboard to help you hop right back on everybodys wavelength whenever you wanted? Here it is, a linguistic device that gets you riding on high rapport with everyone you meet. If you stand on a mountain cliff and shout hello-oh across the valley, your identical hello-oh thuders back at you. I call the technique Echoing because, like the mountain, you echo your conversation partners precise words.

176

How to Make Them Feel That Youre Like Family 177

It All Started Across the Ocean

In many European countries, youll hear five, ten, or more laguages within the language. For example, in Italy, the Sicilians from the south speak a dialect that seems like gobbledygook to northern Italians. In an Italian restaurant, I once overheard a diner discover his waiter was also from Udine, a town in northeastern Italy where they speak the Friulano dialect. The diner stood up and hugged the waiter like he was a long-lost brother. They started babbling in a tongue that left the other Italian waiters shrugging.

In America we have dialects, too. We just arent conscious of them. In fact we have thousands of different words, depending on our region, our job, our interests, and our upbringing. Once, when traveling across the country, I tried to order a soda like a Coke or 7-Up in a highway diner. It took some explaining before the wairess understood I wanted what she called a pop. Perhaps because the English-speaking world is so large, Americans have a wider choice of words for the same old stuff than any language Ive encountered.

Family members find themselves speaking alike. Friends use the same words, and associates in a company or members in a club talk alike. Everyone you meet will have his or her own language that subliminally distinguishes them from outsiders. The words are all English, but they vary from area to area, industry to indutry, and even family to family.

The Linguistic Device That Says Were on the Same Wavelength

When you want to give someone the subliminal feeling youre just alike, use their words, not yours. Suppose you are selling a car to a young mother who tells you she is concerned about safety because she has a young toddler. When explaining the safety features of the car, use her word. Dont use whatever word you call your kids. Dont even say child-protection lock, which

was in your sales manual. Tell your prospect, No toddler can open the widow because of the drivers control device. Even call it a toddle protection lock. When Mom hears toddler coming from your lips, she feels you are family because thats how all her relatives refer to her little tyke. Suppose your prospect had said kid or infant. Fine, echo any word she used. (Well, almost any word. If shed said my brat, you might want to pass on Echoing this time.)

Echoing at Parties

Lets say you are at a party. Its a huge bash with many different types of people. You are first chatting with a lawyer who tells you her profession is often maligned. When it comes your turn to speak, say profession too. If you say job, it puts a subconscious barrier between you.

Next you meet a construction worker who starts talking about his job. Now youre in trouble if you say, Well, in my profession . . . hed think you were being hoity-toity.

After the lawyer and the construction worker, you talk to seeral freelancersfirst a model, then a professional speaker, finally a pop musician. All three of these folks will use different words for their work. The model brags about her bookings. The professional speaker might say bookings, but he is more apt to boast of his speaing engagements. A pop musician might say, Yeah, man, I get a lot of gigs. Its tough to memorize what they all call their work. Just keep your ears open and echo their word after they say it.

Echoing goes beyond job names. For example if you are chating with a boat owner and you call his boat an it, he labels you a real landlubber. (He reverently refers to his beloved boat, of course, as a she.) If you listen carefully, you hear language sutleties you never dreamed existed. Would you believe using the wrong synonym for a seemingly uncomplicated word like have

labels you a know-nothing in somebody elses world? For exaple, cat lovers purr about having cats. But horse people would say owning horses. And fish folk dont own fish. They talk about keeing fish. Hey, no big deal. But if you use the wrong word, your conversation partner will assume, correctly, that you are a stranger in his or her hobbyland.

The Peril of Not Echoing

Sometimes you lose out by not Echoing. My friend Phil and I were talking with several guests at a party. One woman proudly told the group about the wonderful new ski chalet she had just puchased. She was looking

forward to inviting her friends up to her little chalet in the mountains.

Thats wonderful, said Phil, secretly hoping for an invittion. Where exactly is your cabin? KERPLUNK! There went Phils chances for an invitation to the ladys chalet.

I couldnt resist. After the conversation, I whispered to my friend, Phil, why did you insult that woman by calling her chalet a cabin? Phil scratched his head and said, What do you mean insult her? Cabin is a beautiful word. My family has a cabin in Cape Cod and I grew up loving the word, the associations, the joy of a cabin. (In other words, the connotations of cabin.) Well, fine, Phil. The word cabin may be beautiful to you, but obviously the skier preferred the word chalet.

Professional Echoing

In todays sales environment, customers expect salespeople to be problem solvers, not just vendors. They feel you dont grasp their industrys problems if you dont speak their language.

I have a friend, Penny, who sells office furniture. People in publishing, advertising, broadcasting, and a few lawyers are among her clients. Pennys sales manual says office furniture. However, she

told me, if she used the word office with all of her clients, theyd assume she knew nothing about their respective industries.

She told me her client, the purchasing officer in advertising, talks about his advertising agency. Pennys publishing client says publishing house. The lawyers talk about furniture for their firm, and her radio clients use the word station instead of office. Hey, Penny says, its their salt mine. They can call it whatever the heck they please. And, she added, if I want to make the sale, Id beter call it the same thing.

Echoing Is Politically Correct Insurance

Heres a quiz: Youre talking with a pharmacist and you ask her, How long have you worked at the drugstore? Whats wrong with that question?

Give up? Its the word drugstore. Pharmacists abhor the word because it conjures up many industry problems. Theyre used to hearing it from outsiders, but its a tip-off that they are unaware of, or insensitive to, their professional problems. They prefer pharmacy.

Technique #45

Echoing

Echoing is a simple linguistic technique that packs a powerful wallop. Listen to the speakers arbitrary choice of nouns, verbs, prepositions,

adjectivesand echo them back. Hearing their words come out of your mouth creates subliminal rapport. It makes them feel you share their values, their attitudes, their interests, their experiences.

How to Make Them Feel That Youre Like Family 181

Recently, at a reception, I introduced one of my friends, Susan, as a day-care worker. Afterward Susan begged, Leil, pueeze do not call me a day-care worker. Were child-care workers. Whoops! Time and recent history quickly make certain terms archaic.

A groups intense preference for one word is not arbitrary. Cetain jobs, minorities, and special-interest groups often have a hitory the public is not sensitive to. When that history has too much pain attached to it, people invent another word that doesnt have bitter connotations.

I have a dear friend, Leslie, who is in a wheelchair. She says whenever anyone says the word handicapped, she cringes. Leslie says it makes her feel less than whole. We prefer you say person with a disability. She then gave a moving explanation. We peple with disabilities are the same as every other able-bodied peson. We say AB, she added. ABs go through life with all the same baggage we do. We just carry one extra piece, a disability.

Its simple. Its effective. To show respect and make people feel close to you, Echo their words. It makes you a more sensitive comunicatorand keeps you out of trouble every time.

How to Really Make It Clear to Them

I recently had to make a presentation to fifteen men in a corprate meeting. OK, I said to myself as I stood up, fifteen Matians and one Venusian. No problem! Id read Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus. Id explored neurological differences in mens and womens brains. I knew all about gender-specific bodlanguage signals. Hey, I teach communications differences. I was well prepared to talk to these men, get my point across, and fend any questions.

Everything started out fine. Id conceived my presentation clearly and concisely, developed each theme, and presented it flalessly. Then, I sat down and confidently invited questions and open discussion.

Thats when it fell apart. All I remember is a horrifying barage of questions couched in football analogies.

Do you think we dropped the ball on that one? one man asked.

Yeah, another responded. But can we make a fumble recovery?

Those two I understood. However, when it got to pass coerage and

intentional grounding, I started to lose it. When one

guy raved about a Hail Mary pass being needed to save the deal, I suffered the ultimate humiliation. I had to ask, Uh, what does that mean? The guys looked at each other knowingly and then smiled condescendingly as they explained it to me.

That night I had sadistic fantasies of fifteen women running the company and one man left scratching his head as we bandied about childbirth analogies.

We wont get his new proposal til the third trimester, reports the account exec.

Yeah, but thats six months away. Lets get it by C-section, responds the comptroller.

Why bother? asks the marketing VP. All his ideas are deveoped in vitro anyway.

Im about to go into postpartum depression, murmurs the CEO. The lone male employee is left as confused and humiliated as I was in the face of football analogies.

Ahem, the aim of this book is not to feed fiendish fantasies, but to improve communications. To that end, I offer the folloing technique based on analogies, not just football analogies. Because old-boy analogies are unsportsman-like conduct with the girls.

On-Target Analogies Hit Bulls-Eye

Analogies can be an effective communications toolif you evoke images from the life of the person you are talking to. Men dont use football analogies to obfuscate matters or to confuse women but to clarify situations for each other. Analogies from the sport bring situations to life for men because generally they watch more football than women.

Moving on to other sports analogies: everyone knows what the speaker means when he or she hears, Well never strike out

with this solution. Nevertheless, the image would be more copelling to a baseball fan as would analogies like caught on the fly, hitting the dirt, or throwing a spit ball.

Youve heard people say, This solution is right on target. We all understand it. But the phrasing would be more dramatic for archery enthusiasts. If your listener were a bowler, speaking of gutter balls or big

splits would bring whatever you were dicussing to life. If your business buddies were basketball fans, analogies like hook shot or air ball would land right in their basket. If your client wrestles, saying feints and scissor holds would be the way to grab him.

These analogies might sound far-fetched to you. But they are potent communications tools when they evoke your conversation partners world. Why not use the most powerful terms possible to get your point across and make the sale? I call the technique Potent Imaging.

Technique #46

Potent Imaging

Does your customer have a garden? Talk about sowing the seeds for success. Does your boss own a boat? Tell him or her about a concept that will hold water or stay afloat. Maybe he is a private pilot? Talk about a concept really taking off. She plays tennis? Tell her it really hits the sweet spot.

Evoke your listeners interests or lifestyle and weave images around it. To give your points more power and punch, use analogies from your listeners world, not your own. Potent Imaging also tells your listeners you think like them and hints you share their interests.

How to Really Make It Clear to Them 185

Pardon me while I return momentarily to my sadistic fantasies of the hopelessly confused lone male employee. The all-female management team is now arguing the corporate strategy using, not football of course, but ballet analogies.

I say lets do the corporate takeover allegro, she suggests.

Nah, you gotta go adagio in these matters, her colleague responds.

But what if they do a tour jetŽ while were poised in fifth? Cmon did you ever see a good pas seul from their president? The top woman settles it. I say lets just give him a little

rŽvŽrence, and then a grand battement in the balls.

How to Make Them Feel You Empathize (Without Just Saying Yep, Uh Huh, Yeah)

While listening to someone talk, we often vocalize uh huh or purr throaty little umm sounds to reassure the speaker we have heard their words. In fact, with some its such a habit, the noises escape their throats unconsciously. My friend Phil is a consumate, constant, and incontinent ummer whenever Im talking. Occasionally, if Im feeling contentious after hes given one of his agreeable umms in response to something Ive said, I challenge him with, OK,

Phil, what did I say?

Uh, well, gosh . . . Phil has no idea. Its not his fault. Hes male. Men are especially guilty of the not-really-listening umm habit. Once, when I was on a monologue about nothing in paticular, Phil was on a real umm roll. To test his listening skills, I slipped in, Yes, this afternoon I think Ill go out and get tattooed all over my body.

Phil nodded his habitual uh huh.

Well, umming is better than a blank stare. However, its not the choice of top communicators. Try replacing your umms with full-blown empathizers.

What Are Empathizers?

Empathizers are simple, short, supportive statements. Unlike uh huh, they are complete sentences such as I can appreciate you decided to do that, or That really is exciting. Empathizers can be one-sentence positive critiques like Yes, that was the honoable thing to do, or Its charming you felt that way.

When you respond with complete sentences instead of the usual grunts, not only do you come across as more articulate, but your listener feels that you really understand.

Of course, you pay a price. To use the right empathizers, you do need to listen.

Now lets fine-tune this technique and explore advanced empathizing.

Technique #47

Employ Empathizers

Dont be an unconscious ummer. Vocalize complete sentences to show your understanding. Dust your dialogue with phrases like I see what you mean. Sprinkle it with sentimental sparklers like Thats a lovely thing to say. Your empathy impresses your listeners and encourages them to continue.

How to Make Them Think You See/Hear/Feel It Just the Way They Do

About ten years ago, I had a roommate named Brenda. Brenda was a tap dance teacher who didnt just tap dance to make a liing. She lived to tap. Posters of Bill Bojangles Robinson and Charles Honi Coles plastered her walls. She didnt walk around the house. She tapped her way from room to room. It was noisy, but at least, when a phone call came for Brenda, I never had troble finding her.

Once I asked Brenda when she got interested in tap. She said, From the moment I first opened my ears. Her ears? I thought, thats strange. Most

people say from the moment I opened my eyes. At that moment, I realized Brenda saw the world more through her ears than her eyes.

We all perceive the world through five senses. We see the world. We hear the world. We feel the world. We smell the world. And we taste the world. Therefore, we talk in terms of those five senses. Proponents of neurolinguistic programming (NLP) tell us, for each person, one sense is stronger than others. For Brenda, it was her hearing.

Brenda told me she grew up in a dark apartment below street level in New York City. She remembers, as an infant, hearing the pitter-patter of feet walking just above her crib on the sidewalk.

As a toddler, her tiny ears were bombarded with honking horns, shrieking sirens, and tire chains slapping the icy streets. She espcially remembers the clumpety-clomp of police horses hoofs on the pavement outside her window. Her first perceptions of the ouside world came to her through her ears. To this day, sound doinates her life. Brenda, the tap dancer, is an auditory person.

Since neurolinguists suggest invoking our listeners strongest sense, I tried a few auditory references on Brenda. Rather than saying, That looks good to me, Id say That sounds good. Instead of saying, I see what you mean, Id say, I hear you. When I used these auditory references, I felt she paid more attention.

So I started listening very carefully to all my friends to dicover which was their primary perception. Sometimes Id hear visual references like

I see what you mean. That looks good to me. I cant picture myself doing that. I take a dim view of that idea. From my perspective . . .

Wow, I thought I was really on to something!

A Wrinkle Develops

But then, whoops, at other times, Id hear that same friend say

Yeah, I hear you. Sure, that sounds good to me. I kept saying to myself it would work.

That has a negative ring to it. He really tuned out on the whole idea. Something tells me . . .

This wasnt going to be quite as easy as Id expected. However, I wasnt ready to give up.

Once, Brenda and I went skiing with several friends. That night we were

at a party. One of our friends was telling a group of people, The ski slopes were beautiful. Everything was so crytal clear and white.

A visual person? I asked myself.

Another skier added, The feel of the fresh snow on our faces was terrific.

Aha, a kinesthetic person, I mused silently.

Sure enough, just then, Brenda said, Today was so silent. The only sound you could hear was the wind in your ears as you came swooshing down the slopes. That little riff convinced me there was something to it.

However, I still found it difficult to discern ones primary sense.

A Simple Solution

Heres what Ive found does work, and it doesnt take too much detective work on your part. I call the technique Anatomically Correct Empathizers, and its easy to master. Unless it is obvious the person you are speaking with is primarily visual, auditory, or kinesthetic, simply respond in his or her mode of the moment. Match your empathizers to the current sense someone is talking through. For example, suppose a business colleague describing a financial plan says, With this plan, we can see our way clear in six months. Since this time shes using primarily visual references,

say I see what you mean or You really have a clear picture of that situation.

If, instead, your colleague had said, This plan has a good ring to it, youd substitute auditory empathizers like It does sound great, or I hear you.

A third possibility. Suppose she had said, I have a gut feeling this plan will work. Now you give her a kinesthetic empathizer like I can understand how you feel, or You have a good grasp of that problem.

What about the other two senses, taste and smell? Well, Ive never run up against any gustatory or olfactory types. But you could always compliment a chef by saying, Thats a delicious idea. And if you are talking to your dog (olfactory, of course), tell him The whole idea stinks.

The next technique helps create affinity with a single word.

Technique #48

Anatomically Correct Empathizers

What part of their anatomy are your associates talking through? Their eyes? Their ears? Their gut?

For visual people, use visual empathizers to make them think you see the

world the way they do. For auditory folks, use auditory empathizers to make them think you hear them loud and clear. For kinesthetic types, use kinesthetic empathizers to make them think you feel the same way they do.

How to Make Em Think We (Instead of You vs.Me)

By just eavesdropping for a few moments on any two people chating, you could tell a lot about their relationship. You could tell if they were new acquaintances or old friends. You could tell whether a man and a woman were strangers or a couple.

You wouldnt even need to hear friends call each other pal, buddy, or mate. You wouldnt need to hear a man and a woman whisper dear, sweetheart, or turtle dove. It wouldnt matter what they were discussing or even their tone of voice. You could even be blindfolded and tell a lot about their relationship because the technique Im about to share has nothing to do with body language.

How? A fascinating progression of conversation unfolds as people become closer. Heres how it develops:

Level One: ClichŽs

Two strangers talking together primarily toss clichŽs back and forth. For instance, when chatting about the universally agreeupon worlds dullest subjectthe weatherone stranger might say to the other, Beautiful sunny weather weve been having. Or, Boy, some rain, huh? Thats level one, clichŽs.

Level Two: Facts

People who know each other but are just acquaintances often dicuss facts. You know, Joe, weve had twice as many sunny days this year to date as last. Or, Yeah, well, we finally decided to put in a swimming pool to beat the heat.

Level Three: Feelings and Personal Questions

When people become friends, they often express their feelings to each other, even on subjects as dull as the weather. George, I just love these sunny days. They also ask each other personal quetions: How about you, Betty? Are you a sun person?

Level Four: We Statements

Now we progress to the highest level of intimacy. This level is richer than facts and creates more rapport than feelings. Its we and us statements. Friends discussing the weather might say, If we keep having this good weather, itll be

a great summer. Lovers might say, I hope this good weather keeps up for us so we can go swimming on our trip.

A technique to achieve the ultimate verbal intimacy grows out of this phenomenon. Simply use the word we prematurely. You can use it to make a client, a prospect, a stranger feel you are already friends. Use it to make a potential romantic partner feel the two of you are already an item. I call it the Premature We. In casual conversation, simply cut through levels one and two. Jump straight to three and four.

Ask your prospects feelings on something the way you would query a friend. (George, how do you feel about the new govenor?) Then use the pronoun we when discussing anything that might affect the two of you. (Do you think were going to prosper during his administration?) Make it a point to concoct we sentences, the kind people instinctively reserve for friends, lovers, and other intimates. (I think well survive while the governors in office.)

The word we fosters togetherness. It makes the listener feel connected. It gives a subliminal feeling of you and me against the cold, cold world. When you prematurely say we or us, even to strangers, it subconsciously brings them closer. It subliminally hints you are already friends. At a party, you might say to someone standing behind you at the buffet line, Hey, this looks great. They really laid out a nice spread for us. Or, Uh-oh, were going to get fat if we let ourselves enjoy all of this.

Well, we have just explored how to copy our conversation partners movements with Be a Copyclass, echo their words, evoke Potent Images from their world, create a bond through their prmary sense with Anatomically Correct Empathizers, and establish subliminal friendship with words like we.

What else do friends, lovers, and close associates have in comon? A history. The final technique in this section is a device to give a fairly new acquaintance the warm and fuzzy feeling the two of you have been together for a long, long time.

Technique #49

The Premature We

Create the sensation of intimacy with someone even if youve met just moments before. Scramble the signals in their psyche by skipping conversational levels one and two and cutting right to levels three and four. Elicit intimate feelings by using the magic words we, us, and our.

How to Create a Friendly Private Joke with Them

Lovers whisper phrases in each others ears that mean nothing to anyone but themselves. Friends crack up over a few words that sound like gobbledygook to anyone overhearing them. Close busness associates chuckle about shared experiences.

One company Ive worked with has seen reengineering, empowerment, TQM, and team building come and go in one decade. At company parties, the employees never fail to crack up over the time when the whole companymanagers to mail-room clerksscrambled up a twenty-nine-foot pole together all in the name of team building. The CEO slipped down the pole and broke his big toe. At the next weekly meeting, the CEO shook his crutch and caustically announced, No more team exercises! Thus, the death of team buildingand the birth of a private joke.

Out of shared experiences like this, a company culture grows. These employees have a history and a language to go with it. To this day, whenever they want to put an abrupt end to any idea, they say, Lets shake a crutch at it or Lets slide that one down the flagpole. They all smile. Nobody knows what they mean except fellow employees.

The playwright Neil Simon, sometimes with a single word, can make an entire Broadway audience understand two perform195

ers onstage are either married or longtime friends. The actor siply says something to the actress that makes no sense to the audence. Then both of them laugh uproariously. Everybody gets the message: these two people are an item.

Every time my friend Daryl and I meet, we dont say Hello. We say Quack. Why? We met at a party five years ago and, in our first conversation, Daryl told me he grew up on a duck farm. When I told him Id never seen a duck farm, he performed the best human imitation of a duck Id ever seen. He flipped his head side to side looking at me first out of one eye, then the other, all the while flapping his arms and quacking. I got such a laugh out of his performance that it inspired him to do a full flat-footed duck waddle for me. It was contagious. Together we waddled around the room flapping and quacking. We made absolute fools of ouselves that evening.

The next day, my phone rang. I picked up the receiver to hear, not Hello, this is Daryl, but simply, Quack. Im sure thats

Technique #50

Instant History

When you meet a stranger youd like to make less a stranger, search for

some special moment you shared during your first encounter. Then find a few words that reprieve the laugh, the warm smile, the good feelings the two of you felt. Now, just like old friends, you have a history together, an Instant History.

With anyone youd like to make part of your personal or professional future, look for special moments together. Then make them a refrain.

How to Create a Friendly Private Joke with Them 197

what started our friendship. To this day, every time I hear his Quack on the phone, it floods me with happy, if a tad embarassing, memories. It recalls our history and renews our friendship no matter how long its been since we last quacked at each other.

Now Whats Left?

Chemistry, charisma, and confidence are three characteristics shared by big winners in all walks of life. Part One helped us make a dynamic, confident, and charismatic first impression with body language. In Part Two, we put smooth small-talk lyrics to our body ballet. Then in Part Three, we seized hints from the big boys and big girls so were contenders for lifes big league. Part Four rescued us from being tongue-tied with folks with whom we have very litle in common. And in Part Five, we learned techniques to create instant chemistry, instant intimacy, instant rapport.

Whats left? You guessed itmaking people feel really good about themselves. But compliments are a dangerous weapon in todays world. One mishandling and you can butcher the rel tionship. Let us now explore the power of praise, the folly of flatery, and how you can use these potent tools effectively.

How to Talk to Anyone - 92 Little Tricks...

PART SIX

How to Differentiate the Power of Praise from the Folly of Flattery

Kids are experts at getting what they want. Perched on Papas knee, Oh Daddy, youre so wunnerful. I know youll buy me that new doll. The next morning, with Mama in the supermarket, Oh Mommy, I love you. Youre the most bestest mommy in the world. I know youll buy me that chocolate munchie.

From the hungry infants instinctive cooing as Mommy approaches the crib to the car salesmans calculated praise as the prospect walks into the showroom, compliments come naturally to people when they want something from somebody. In fact, compliments are the most widely used and thoroughly endorsed of all getting-what-you-want techniques. When Dale Carnegie wrote Begin with praise, fifteen million readers took it to heart. Most of us still think praise is the path to extracting what we want from someone.

And yes, if its as simple as dolls from daddy and munchies from mommy, it may be. But the business world has changed

dramatically since Dale Carnegies day. In todays world, not every smiling flatterer has the power to procure through praise.

The Malaise of Unskilled Praise

You give someone a compliment. You smile, waiting to see the warm feelings engulf the recipient. You may have to wait a long time.

If he or she has a speck of suspicion your praise is self-serving, it has the opposite effect. If your compliment is insincere or unskilled, it can wreck your chances of ever being trusted by that person again. It can abort a potential relationship before it ever gets off the runway.

However, skilled praise is a different story. When done well, it gives the relationship immediate liftoff. It can make a sale, win a new friend, or rejuvenate a marriage on a golden anniversary.

What is the difference between praise that lifts and flattery that flattens? Many factors enter the equation. They include your sincerity, timing, motivation, and wording. They also involve the recipients self-image, professional position, experience with co pliments, and judgment of your powers of perception. Of course it entails the relationship between the two of

you and how long you have known each other. If youre complimenting someone by phone, E-mail, or snail mail, it even involves subtleties such as whether youve ever seen his or face, either in person or a photograph.

Mind boggling, isnt it? Sociologists research shows: 1) a copliment from a new person is more potent than from someone you already know, 2) your compliment has more credibility when given to an unattractive person or an attractive person whose face youve never seen, 3) you are taken more seriously if you preface your comments by some self-effacing remarkbut only if your listener perceives you as higher on the totem pole. If youre lower, your

self-effacing remark reduces your credibility. Complicated, this complimenting stuff.

Rather than dizzying ourselves with the surfeit of specific studies, lets just put some terrific techniques in our little bag of tricks. Each of the following meets all the criteria of social scietists findings. Here are nine effective ways to praise in the new millennium.

How to Compliment Someone (Without Sounding Like Youre Brownnosing)

The risk in giving a compliment face-to-face is, of course, that the distrustful recipient will assume you are indulging in shameless, obsequious pandering to achieve your own greedy goals.

Its a sad reality about compliments. If you lay a big one out of the blue on your boss, your prospect, or your sweetie, the reciient will probably think youre brownnosing. Your main squeeze will assume youre suffering guilt over something youve done. So whats the solution? Hold back your sincere esteem?

No, simply deliver it through the grapevine. The grapevine has long been a trusted means of communication. From the days when Catskills comics insisted the best ways to spread news were telephone, telegraph, and tell-a-woman, we have known it works. Unfortunately the grapevine is most often associated with bad news, the kind that goes in one ear and over the back fence. But the grapevine need not be laden only with scuttlebutt and sour grapes. Good news can travel through the same filament. And when it arrives in the recipients ear, it is all the more delectable. This is not a new discovery. Back in 1732, Thomas Fuller wrote, Hes my friend that speaks well of me behind my back. Were

more apt to trust someone who says nice things about us when we arent listening than someone who flatters us to our face.

No-Risk Praise (Do It Behind Their Back)

Instead of telling someone directly of your admiration, tell somone who is close to the person you wish to compliment. For instance, suppose you want to be in the good graces of Jane Smith. Dont directly compliment Jane. Go to her close associate Diane Doe and say, You know, Jane is a very dynamic woman. She said something so brilliant in the meeting the other day. Someday shell be running this company. I place ten-to-one odds your comment will get back to Jane via the grapevine in twenty-four hours. Diane will tell her friend, You should hear what so n so said about you the other day.

When you gave Grapevine Glory to Jane, Diane became the carrier pigeon of that compliment. Which leads us to the next technique where you become the carrier pigeon of other peoples compliments.

Technique #51

Grapevine Glory

A compliment one hears is never as exciting as the one he overhears. A priceless way to praise is not by telephone, not by telegraph, but by tell-a-friend. This way you escape possible suspicion that you are an apple-polishing, bootlicking, egg-sucking, bac scratching sycophant trying to win brownie points. You also leave recipients with the happy fantasy that you are telling the whole world about their greatness.

HowtoBea Carrier Pigeon of Good Feelings

Carrier pigeons have a long and valiant history. The dauntless winged messengers, often maimed by shellfire and dying after delivering their messages, have saved the lives of thousands. One tenacious little bird named Cher Ami is credited with saving two hundred lives during the Battle of the Argonne in World War I. The brave one-legged little birdie, one of his wings shot through, carried a message dangling from his remaining ligament. The blood-smeared little ball of feathers arrived just in time to warn that the Germans were about to bomb the city.

Stumpy Joe, another plucky pigeon, had such a heroic battlscarred career that his fans stuffed him, mounted him, and put him on display in the

National Air Force Museum in Dayton, Ohio. And millions of other brave birds have brought joyful mesages to racing-pigeon enthusiasts around the world. In that fine tradition, I present the complimenting technique I call Carrier Pigeon Kudos.

Whenever you hear a laudatory comment about someone, dont let it end there. You dont need to write it, roll it up in a casule, strap it to your leg like Stumpy Joe, and fly it to the recipent. Nevertheless, you can remember the kudo and verbally carry it to the person who will get the most pleasurethe person who was complimented.

204

How to Be a Carrier Pigeon of Good Feelings 205

Keep your ears open for good things people say about each other. If your colleague Carl says something nice about another colleague, Sam, pass it on. You know, Sam, Carl said the nicest thing about you the other day.

Your sister tells you your first cousin is a dynamite relative. Go ahead and call Cuz.

Your mother tells you she thinks Manny did a great job moing the lawn. Pass it on to him. Hey, we all like a little apprecition, even from Mom.

Heres where it benefits you. Everyone loves the bearer of glad tidings. When you bring someone third-party kudos, they apprciate you as much as the complimenter. Call it gossip if you like. This is the good kind.

Carry More Cargo than Compliments

Another way to warm hearts and win friends is to become a carier pigeon of news items that might interest the recipient. Call, mail, or E-mail people with information they might find interestTechnique #52

Carrier Pigeon Kudos

People immediately grow a beak and metamorphosize themselves into carrier pigeons when theres bad news. (Its called gossip.) Instead, become a carrier of good news and kudos. Whenever you hear something complimentary about someone, fly to them with the compliment. Your fans may not posthumously stuff you and put you on display in a museum like Stumpy Joe. But everyone loves the carrier pigeon of kind thoughts.

ing. If your friend Ned is a furniture designer in North Carolina and you see a big article in the Los Angeles Times about furniture trends, fax it to him. If your client Sally is a sculptor in Seattle and you see her work in someones home in New York, send her a note.

My friend Dan lives in San Francisco, and whenever he runs across

anything in the paper on communications, he clips it and sends it to me. No note, just FYIRegards, Dan in the corner. Hes like my own private West Coast clipping service.

Try it. Think of the money youll save on greeting cards. A relevant clipping is the big winners way of saying, Im thinking of you and your interests.

How to Make Em Feel Your Admiration Just Slipped Out

Heres yet another caress for someones ego. Dont give a blatant compliment. Merely imply something magnificent about your coversation partner. Several months ago, I was visiting an old friend in Denver whom I hadnt seen in a long time. When he came to my hotel to pick me up, he said, Hello, Leil, how are you? Then he paused, looked at me, and said, Youve obviously been well. Wow, I felt terrific. He implied I looked good and that made my evening.

Guess the Good Lord decided I shouldnt have too swollen a head, however, because later that evening, after my friend dropped me off, I got into the hotel elevator. A maintenance man entered at the third floor. He smiled at me. I smiled back. He looked at me again and said, Gosh, maam, was you a model? [Oh, man, was I feeling on top of the world now!] . . . when you was young? he continued.

CRASH! Why couldnt he have zipped his lip before the zinger? I loved the implication in the first part of his comment. But the second implied I was now an old lady. Ruined my next day. Heck, his unintentional low blow ruined my week. In fact I still feel wretched about it.

You have to be careful of unintentional bad implications. If, visiting a new city, you stop someone on the street and say, Excuse me, could you tell me if there are any fine dining restaurants nearby? you are implying the passerby is a person of taste. If, however, you ask that same passerby, Hey, know any down and dirty bars in this burg? your implication is entirely different. Find a way to imply magnificent qualities of those you wish to indrectly compliment.

Technique #53

Implied Magnificence

Throw a few comments into your conversation that presuppose something positive about the person youre talking with. But be careful. Dont blow it like the welintentioned maintenance man. Or the southern boy who, at the prom,

thought he was flattering his date when he told her, Gosh, Mary Lou, for a fat gal you dance real good.

How to Win Their Hearts by Being an Undercover Complimenter

Next in our agglomeration of joy spreaders is a technique I call Accidental Adulation. Once, at a small dinner party, the subject turned to space travel. The gentleman seated to my right said, Leil, youre much too young to remember this, but when Apollo 11 landed on the moon . . .

If my life depended on it, I couldnt tell you what the chap said next. I simply remember smiling to myself and stretching to get a glimpse of my youthful self in the dining-room mirror. Of course I remember July 1969. Like the rest of the world, I was glued to the television watching Neil Armstrongs size 9 1Ú2 B boot hit the moon. However, I certainly was not thinking of moon travel at that dinner party. I was too busy reveling in the fact that this lovely man didnt think I was old enough to remember 1969. I assumed his opinion of my youthfulness just slipped out. Ther fore it must be sincere.

Sure! Now that I think about it, he probably knew darn well I was old enough to remember the moon landing. I bet he was

using the maneuver Accidental Adulation. But it doesnt matter. My warm memories of him remain. Accidental Adulation is sliping praise into the secondary part of your point, putting it in vebal parentheses.

Try It. Youll Like It. Theyll Love It.

Try Accidental Adulation and see smiles break out on the faces of the recipients. Tell your sixty-five-year-old uncle, Anyone as fit as you would have zipped right up those steps, but boy, was I out of breath. Tell a colleague: Because youre so knowledgeable in contract law, you would have read between the lines, but stupidly, I signed it.

You run the danger, of course, that you will please the reciient so profoundly with your parenthetical praise, he or she wont hear your main point.

So far we have explored four covert compliments: Grapevine Glory, Carrier Pigeon Kudos, Implied Magnificence, and Accdental Adulation. There are times, of course, when blatant praise does work. The next techniques will hone your skills in this prcarious but rewarding venture.

Technique #54

Accidental Adulation

Become an undercover complimenter. Stealthily sneak praise into the parenthetical part of your sentence.

Just dont try to quiz anyone later on your main point. The joyful jolt of your accidental adulation strikes them temporarily deaf to anything that follows.

How to Make Em Never Forget You with a Killer Compliment

Would you like to have a little trick up your sleeve potent enough to kick start commerce, ignite a friendship or even a love affair? Ill give you one, but only if you heed its warning label. You must register your tongue as a lethal weapon once youve mastered the following technique. Its called the Killer Compliment.

It was born one night some years ago after my then-roommate, Christine, and I had just returned home from a holiday party. As we were taking off our coats, she had a silly smile on her face and a faraway look in her eye.

Christine, are you OK? I asked. Oh yes, she purred. Im going to go out with that man. Man? What man? Oh, you know, she said, chastising me for not knowing, the

one who told me I had beautiful teeth. Teeth!

That night I happened to walk by the bathroom door as Christine was getting ready for bed. I saw her grinning at herself in the mirror, tilting her head from side to side, and brushing each individual tooth. All the while she kept her eyes glued to the miror, inspecting each one for the beauty her new admirer comented on. I realized the fellow who had given Christine the

unusual compliment had made her dayand had made a killer impression on her. Thus the Killer Compliment came into being. What is the Killer Compliment? It is commenting on some very personal and specific quality you spot in someone. A Killer Compliment is not I like your tie or Youre a very nice person. (The first is not personal enough and the second is not specific enough.) A Killer Compliment is more like What exquisite eyes you have, (very specific) or You have a wonderful air of honesty

about you, (very personal). Because delivering your first Killer Compliment is difficult, I

trick my seminar participants into pulling it off. About midway through the program, Ill ask them to close their eyes and think about a partner they had in an earlier exercise. Then I say, Now recall one attractive physical quality or personality trait you observed in your partner. Not one you would

necessarily comment on, I caution. Perhaps your partner had a lovely smile or a twikle in her eye. Perhaps he exuded a sense of calm or credibility. Got it in your mind?

Then the thunderbolt: OK, now go find your partner and tell them the nice quality you noticed. What? Tell them? The thought paralyzes them. One by one, however, they courageously seek their partners and deliver their Killer Compliments. As peple hear a stranger tell them they have beautiful hands or pentrating brown eyes, joy fills the room. Laughter explodes in every corner. I am now looking out at a sea of smiles and happy blushes. Everyone loves receiving his or her personal Killer Compliment. And everyone develops friendly feelings toward the giver.

The Killer Compliment Users Manual

Just like a cannon, if you dont use the Killer Compliment corectly, it can backfire. Heres the users manual that comes with the mighty missile.

How to Make Em Never Forget You with a Killer Compliment 213

Technique #55

Killer Compliment

Whenever you are talking with a stranger youd like to make part of your professional or personal future, search for one attractive, specific, and unique quality he or she has.

At the end of the conversation, look the individual right in the eye. Say his or her name and proceed to curl all ten toes with the Killer Compliment.

Rule #1: Deliver your Killer Compliment to the recipent in private. If you are standing with a group of four or five people and you praise one woman for being fit, every other woman feels like a barrel of lard. If you tell one man he has wonderful carriage, every other feels like a hunchback. You also make the blushing recipient uncomfortable.

Rule #2: Make your Killer Compliment credible. For example, Im tone-deaf. If Im forced to sing even a simple song like Happy Birthday, I sound like a sick pig. If anyone in earshot were foolish enough to tell me they liked my voice, Id know it was hogwash.

Rule #3: Confer only one Killer Compliment per half year on each recipient. Otherwise you come across as insincere, groveling, obsequious, pandering, and a thoroughly manipulative person. Not cool.

With careful aim, the Killer Compliment captures everyone. It works best, however, when you use it judiciously on new acquaintances. If you want to praise friends every day, employ the next technique.

How to Make Em Smile with Itty-Bitty Boosters

In contrast to the big guns of Killer Compliments for strangers, and The Tombstone Game for loved ones, which we will learn shortly, heres a little peashooter you can pop off at anyone, antime. I call it Little Strokes.

Little Strokes are short, quick kudos you drop into your casual conversation. Make liberal use of Little Strokes with your coleagues in the office:

Nice job, John! Well done, Kyoto! Hey, not bad, Billy! I have one friend who uses a lovely Little Stroke. If I do something he likes, he says, Not too shabby, Leil. You can also use Little Strokes on the everyday achievements

of your loved ones. If your spouse just cooked a great meal, Wow, youre the best chef in town. Just before going out together, Gee, honey, you look great. After a long drive, You did it! It must have been tiring. With your kids, Hey, gang, great job cleaning up your room.

I once read a poignant Readers Digest article about a little girl who often misbehaved. Her mother had to continually reprimand her. However, one day, the little girl had been especially good and

hadnt done a single thing that called for a reprimand. The mother said, That night after I tucked her in bed and started downstairs, I heard a muffled noise. Running back up, I found her head buried in the pillow. She was sobbing. Between the sobs she asked, Mommy, havent I been a pretty good girl today?

The question, the mother said, went through her like a knife. I had been quick to correct her, she said, when she was wrong. But when she tried to behave, I hadnt noticed it and I put her to bed without one word of appreciation.

Adults are all grown-up little girls and little boys. We may not go to bed sobbing if the people in our lives dont notice when we are good. Nevertheless, a trace of those tears lingers.

Little Things Mean a Lot

Little Strokes are indeed, little. But as every woman knows, they mean a lot. Ive yet to meet a woman who wouldnt agree with these lyrics from an old song sung by Kitty Kallen:

Blow me a kiss from across the room. Say I look nice when Im not. Touch my hair as you pass my chair.

Technique #56

Little Strokes

Dont make your colleagues, your friends, your loved ones look at you and silently say, Havent I been pretty good today? Let them know how much you appreciate them by caressing them with verbal Little Strokes like Nice job! Well done! Cool!

Little things mean a lot. Send me the warmth of a secret smile To show me you havent forgot. For always and ever, now and forever, Little things mean a lot.

To further complicate the art of the compliment, one must consider timing. Blatant, barefaced, brazen flattery turns all but the blindest egomaniacs off. But the human animal never fails to amaze observers. There are moments when, if you dont give a bltant, barefaced, brazen complimenteven to a bright indiviualyou lose. The following technique defines those moments.

How to Praise with Perfect Timing

Ill never forget the first time I gave a luncheon speech in front of strangers. Id practiced for the stuffed animals on my bed and my roommate, Christine, but this was my debut in front of a real audience.

As I shakily got to my feet, I looked out at seventeen smiling Rotarians waiting for my words of wit and wisdom. My tongue was dry as chalk dust, my palms as wet as a fish. The audience might as well have been seventeen thousand judges waiting to setence me to eternal humiliation if I didnt inform and entertain each. I gave a last panic-stricken glance at Christine, who had driven me to the club, and began, Good afternoon. It gives me great pleasure . . .

Thirty minutes later, amidst scattered applause which I feared was obligatory, I crawled back to my seat next to Christine. I looked expectantly at her. She smiled and said, You know this dessert isnt bad. Have some.

Dessert? Dessert! Dammit, Christine, how did I do? I silently screamed at her. A few minutes later Christine told me how much she and, she assumed, everyone else enjoyed my talk. Neertheless, by then it was too late. The crucial compliment-craving moment had passed.

When the doctor sadistically smacks your knee with that nasty litle rubber hammer, you instantly give a knee jerk. And when peple make a coup, you must instantly hit them with a knee-jerk Wow, you were great!

Say theyve just successfully negotiated a deal, cooked a terific Thanksgiving turkey, or sung a solo song at the birthday party. No matter whether their accomplishment is trivial or triumphant, you must praise it immediatelynot ten minutes later, not two minutes laterimmediately. The moment the winner walks out of the boardroom, the kitchen, the spotlight, the victor wants to hear only one sound: WOW!

But What If They Really Bombed?

Are you asking me to lie? you ask. Yes. Absolutely, positively, resoundingly, YES. This is one of the few moments in life where a lie is condoned by the most ethical individuals. Big winners reaize that sensitivity to an insecure performers ego takes mometary precedence over their deep commitment to the truth. They

Technique #57

The Knee-Jerk Wow!

Quick as a blink, you must praise people the moment they a finish a feat. In a wink, like a knee-jerk reaction say, You were terrific!

Dont worry that they wont believe you. The euphoria of the moment has a strangely numbing effect on the achievers objective judgment.

How to Praise with Perfect Timing 219

also know, when sanity returns to the recipient and they suspect they screwed up, it wont matter. He or she will retroactively apprciate your sensitivity and forgive your compassionate falsehood.

Weve talked a lot about giving compliments, both covert and overt. Now lets talk about a skill that, for many, is even harder receiving them.

How to Make Em Want to Compliment You

We have a national weakness: we dont know how to receive a compliment! In fact, I would like to dedicate the following tecnique to my French friends who contend the French are better at everything. Well, I concede one point. The French are, indeed, better at receiving compliments. Ill explain how shortly.

Americans, unfortunately, are beastly at accepting adulation. If someone compliments you and you react clumsily out of embarassment, you unwittingly start a vicious cycle. A friend ventures a compliment:

He: (smiling) Hey, thats a nice dress youre wearing. She: (frowning) Oh,

this old thing? He: (thinking) Whoops, she didnt seem to like hearing that.

She thinks I have terrible taste to like that dress. Id better keep my mouth shut.

Three weeks later . . .

She: (thinking grumpily) He doesnt ever give me complments anymore. What a boor!

He: (thinking gloomily) Whats her problem?

Girls Dont Like What?

Several months ago in one of my seminars, the group was dicussing compliments. One fellow insisted that girls dont like compliments.

Girls dont like what? I asked incredulously.

He explained, I once told a woman she had beautiful eyes. And she said, Boy, are you blind. The poor chap was so wounded by her reaction, he became gun-shy and had not aimed a compliment at a female since. What a shame for womankind and what a blight on his social skills.

Upon receiving a compliment, many people demur or proffer an embarrassed little Thank you. Worse, they protest, Well, not really, but thanks anyway. Some people toss it off with, just luck. When you react this way, you visit a grave injustice on the coplimenter. You insult a well-meaning persons powers of perception.

Vous ætes Gentil

Leave it to French folks to come up with a congenial catchall phrase. Upon receiving a compliment, they say, Vous ?tes gentil. Loosely translated, that is How kind of you.

An American saying How kind of you could sound stilted like the little flower girl in My Fair Lady trying to be cultured. Nevertheless, we Yanks can express the French gentil sentiment with a technique I call Boomeranging.

When you toss a boomerang, it makes an almost 180-degree swerve in midair and soars back to land at the feet of the thrower. Likewise, when someone tosses a compliment your way, let the good feelings soar back to the tosser. Dont just say Thanks. (Or worse, Oh its nothing.) Let them know of your gratitude and find a way to compliment them for their compliment. A few examples:

She says, I like those shoes. You say, Oh Im so happy you told me. I just

got them.

He says, You really did a good job on this project. You say, Oh, thats so nice of you to tell me. I appreciate your positive feedback.

You can also Boomerang the good feelings back when people ask you a question about your family, a project, an event, or anthing that shows they are interested in you.

Your colleague asks, How was your vacation in Hawaii? You answer, Oh, you remembered I went to Hawaii! It was great, thanks.

Your boss asks, Are you over your cold now? You answer, I appreciate your concern. I feel much better now.

Whenever someone shines a little sunshine on your life in the form of a compliment or concerned question, reflect it back on the shiner.

Incidently, in that seminar, I decided to do womankind a favor by setting malekind straight on compliments once and for all. I asked the fellow who swore women hated praise to give three women sitting near him a sincere compliment. He chose the woman with the beautiful silver hair sitting behind him, the girl

Technique #58

Boomeranging

Just as a boomerang flies right back to the thrower, let compliments boomerang right back to the giver. Like the French, quickly murmur something that expresses Thats very kind of you.

with the hands like a pianist to his left, and the lady with the lovely deep-blue eyes on his right. He told them all.

Three women waltzed out of the room that night feeling a litle better about themselves than when they walked in. And, I hope, for all the women he would yet meet in his life, one man left with a changed attitude about compliments.

As we come to the end of our exploration of praise, I want to make sure youre aiming dead center for peoples hearts. Whether youre giving little Carrier Pigeon Kudos or laying a Killer Copliment on your conversation partner, this next technique keeps you on target.

How to Make a Loved One Feel You Are THE Partner for Life

Do you remember when you were a kid the hundreds of times Mommys and Daddys friends asked, And what do you want to be when you grow up? That was our cue to regale our adoring audience with dreams of being a

ballerina, a firefighter, a nurse, a cowboy, or a movie star. Well, most of our lives wound up being a little closer to butcher, baker, or candlestick maker. Neverthless, we all still have fantasies of our own greatness.

Even though most of us cashed in our childhood dreams of being the star we thought wed be (so we could make some money), we all know that deep down we are very, very, very sp cial. We say to ourselves, Maybe the world will little note nor long remember how brilliant, how wonderful, how witty, how creative or caring I really am. However, those who truly know and love methey will recognize my greatness, my magic, my specialness over all other ordinary mortals. When we find people with the supernatural powers of perception to recognize our remarkablness, we become addicted to the heady drug of their appreciation.

Praising someone you know and love requires a different set of skills from complimenting a stranger. The formula to bring someone even closer to you personally or professionally follows. I call it The Tombstone Game. It requires a little setup.

Step one: In a quiet moment chatting with your friend, your loved one, or your business partner, tell him or her that the other day you were reading aboutof all thingstombstones! The piece was about, you say, what people fantasize will be inscribed above their grave after they die. You learned that people want the quality they are most proud of in life etched in stone. Then say, The variety is surprising. Everyone has a different self-image, a different deep source of pride. Examples:

Here lies John Doe. He was a brilliant scientist. Here lies Diane Smith. She was a caring woman. Here lies Billy Bucks. By golly, he could make people laugh. Here lies Jane Wilson. She spread joy wherever she went. Here lies Harry Jones. He lived life his way. Step two: Reveal to your partner what you would like carved

on your tombstone. Be serious about your revelation to encourage him or her to do likewise.

Step three: Now, you pop the question, You know, Joe, when all is said and done, what are you most proud of ? What would you like the world to most remember about you? What would you want the world to see carved on your tombstone?

Perhaps your business partner Joe says, Well, I guess Id sort of like

people to know that Im a man of my word. Listen carfully. If he expounds on it, take note of every nuance. Then file it away in your heart and dont say a word about it again. Joe will forget you ever played The Tombstone Game with him.

Step four: Let at least three weeks pass. Then, whenever you want to improve the relationship, feed the information back to your partner in the form of a compliment. Say Joe, you know the reason I really appreciate being in business with you is because youre a man of your word.

WOW, that hits Joe like a 747 out of the sky. Finally, he says to himself, someone who appreciates me for who I really am. Telling him you admire him for the same reason he admires

himself has an impact on Joe like no other compliment in the world.

Now, suppose your friend is Billy Bucks, the one who wanted his wit carved on his tombstone. Youd say, Billy, ol buddy, youre terrific. I loves ya cause you can really make people laugh.

I Love You Because . . . (You Fill in the Blank)

Suppose your significant other is Jane Wilson in the preceding example. Tell your beloved, Jane, I love you because you spread joy wherever you go.

Suppose your life partner is Harry Jones. You take his hand and say, Harry, I love you because you live life your way. BLAM! You have found that tender spot where the heart and the ego blend.

Technique #59

The Tombstone Game

Ask the important people in your life what they would like engraved on their tombstone. Chisel it into your memory but dont mention it again. Then, when the moment is right to say I appreciate you or I love you, fill the blanks with the very words they gave you weeks earlier.

You take peoples breath away when you feed their deepest self-image to them in a compliment. At last, they say to themselves, someone who loves me for who I truly am.

The Tombstone Game compliments are not interchangeable. Billy Bucks might not appreciate your calling him a man of his word; Billys thing is humor. Jane might not value your thinking she lives life her way. Her source of pride is spreading joy wheever she goes.

Its wonderful to tell people you appreciate or love them. When it matches what they appreciate or love about themselves, the effect is overpowering.

How to Talk to Anyone - 92 Little Tricks...

PART SEVEN

How to Direct Dial Their Hearts

Hundreds of people have formed impressions of you through that little device on your desk, your bed table, your kitchen wall. And theyve never actually met you. Theyve never seen your smiles, felt your frowns. Theyve never grasped your hand or enjoyed your hugs. Theyve never read your body language or seen how you dress. Everything they know about you came through tiny filments, sometimes from hundreds of miles away. But they feel they know you just from the sound of your voice. Thats how poweful the telephone is.

Powerful, yes, but not always accurate. For years I dealt with my travel agent only by phone. Rani, my faceless agent whom Id never met in person, got me rock-bottom prices on airfares, cars, and hotels. But her snippy phone personality really ticked me off. A dozen times I vowed to find another agent.

One Monday morning several years ago, I received bad news and had to book an immediate flight home for a family emergency. I had no time to wait in line at the airport, so I jumped in a cab and asked the driver to wait in front of the travel agency while I grabbed tickets and a boarding pass.

Like a lit fuse, I zipped into Ranis agency for the first time. Seeing my frenzied rush, the woman sitting at the front desk sypathetically jumped up. She gave me a reassuring smile and asked

how she could help me. As I blithered on about my need for an emergency ticket, she smiled, nodded, and lunged immediately into action. What a terrific lady! I thought as she printed out the tickets.

Moments later, darting out gratefully grasping the tickets in my fist, I called out over my shoulder, By the way, whats your name?

Leil, Im Rani, she said. I whirled around and saw a thooughly congenial woman with a big smile on her face waving to wish me a safe trip. I was dumbfounded! Why had I previously thought she was so snippy? Rani was, well, so nice.

Sitting back in the cab on the way to the airport, I figured it all out. Ranis friendlinessher warm smile, her nods, her good eye contact, her body language, her Im here for you attitude were all silent signals that didnt travel through wires. I closed my eyes and tried to remember the voice I had heard

moments ago. Yes, it was Ranis same crisp, curt pronunciation. But her friendly body language made her seem like a different person from the brusque agent Id dealt with on the phone. Ranis phone persoality and her demeanor in person were completely different shows.

I realized its the same with all of us. Your personality, mine, and everyones could be likened to a show, a theatrical perfomance. You want to make sure yours is a box-office smash, not a flop. The following ten techniques will get your phone personaity rave reviews.

How to Sound More Exciting on the Phone

I have a friend, Tina, who designed costumes for an off-ofBroadway show that became a smash hit a few years ago. The tiny show was such a critical success, it won the heart of an angel a backerand it went to Broadway. There the show laid a big fat egg.

When I read the bad news, I called Tina. Tina, why did the show get such bad reviews on Broadway? Tina told me that, sadly, the director didnt insist the actors and actresses change their peformances to adapt to the new surroundings. The actors undestated movements, which moved small audiences alternately to laughter and tears, were lost in the big Broadway house. Audiences couldnt see their subtle gestures and poignant facial expressions. Tina told me the performers neglected to make their movements much bigger to fit the new medium.

That excellent advice is not just for actors. Whenever you are talking, you must consider your medium. If your face were on a big movie screen, you might get your message across with a wink or an eyebrow raise. On radio, however, that would be meaninless. Because listeners couldnt see your wink, youd have to say something like Hi, Cutie. Because listeners couldnt see your raised eyebrows, youd have to say, Wow, Im surprised!

Your body language and facial expressions comprise more than half your personality. When people dont see you, they can get an entirely wrong impression as I did with Rani. To get your persoality across on the phone, you must translate your emotions into sound. In fact, you have to exaggerate the sound because studies have shown people lose 30 percent of the energy level in their voices on the phone.

Say you meet an important new contact tomorrow. When youre introduced, you shake her hand, you fully face her. You make good, strong eye contact and let a sincere smile flood over your face. You even nod and

smile, listening intently as she speaks. She likes you a lot.

But how good an impression could you make on that VIP if both you and she were blindfolded and the two of you had your hands tied behind your backs? Thats the handicap you suffer on the phone.

If she couldnt see you, youd have to substitute words to let her know youre agreeing or listening. Youd have to somehow vebalize that youre smiling and use her name more to replace the eye contact. Youd be using the technique I call Talking Gestures.

To make up for your missing eye contact, punctuate your phone conversations with Uh huh or I hear you. So your litener knows youre nodding in approval, verbalize I see, Oh thats great, No kidding, Interesting, and Tell me more!

She didnt see you hitting your head in surprise? Better say What a surprise! or You dont say!

He just said something impressive and he cant see your look of admiration? Try That was wise of you or Youre no dummy! Of course, you need a big verbal smile in your repertoire. Try Oh, wow, thats funny! Obviously youre going to choose phrases that match your personality and the situation. Just make sure your

phone listeners hear your emotions.

How to Sound More Exciting on the Phone 233

Technique #60

Talking Gestures

Think of yourself as the star of a personal radio drama every time you pick up the phone. If you want to come across as engaging as you are, you must turn your smiles into sound, your nods into noise, and all your gestures into something your listener can hear. You must replace your gestures with talk. Then punch up the whole act 30 percent!

How to Sound Close (Even if Youre Hundreds of Miles Away)

When youre not sitting across from each other resting your elbows on the same desk, your forks on the same table, or your heads on the same pillow, you need a substitute for intimacy. How can you create closeness when the two of you are hundreds of miles apart? How can you make the person youre talking to on the phone feel special when you cant pat their back or give them a little hug?

The answer is simple. Just use your callers name far more often than you would in person. In fact, shower your converstions with his or her name.

When your listener hears it, its like receiving a verbal caress:

Thanks, Sam. Lets do it, Betty. Hey, Demetri, why not? Its really been good talking to you, Kathi.

Saying a persons name too often in face-to-face conversation sounds manipulative. However, on the phone the effect is drmatically different. If you heard someone say your name, even if you were being jostled around in a big noisy crowd, youd perk up

and listen. Likewise, when your phone partner hears his or her own name coming through the receiver, it commands attention and rcreates the familiarity the phone robs from you.

If your listener is drifting, it brings him right back. If shes opening mail, she stops. If hes picking his teeth, he pulls the pick out. When you say someones name on the phone, its like yaning the person into the room with you.

Technique #61

Name Shower

People perk up when they hear their own name. Use it more often on the phone than you would in person to keep their attention. Your callers name re-creates the eye contact, the caress, you might give in person.

Saying someones name repeatedly when face-to-face sounds pandering. But because there is physical distance between you on the phonesometimes youre a contnent apartyou can spray your conversation with it.

How to Make Em Happy They Called You

Brr-ing! No matter whether you hear the ring in the boardroom, the bedroom, or the bathroom, self-styled telephone experts tell you, Smile before answering. Some pros even suggest you perch a mirror right next to your phone to monitor your grin.

Been there, done that, doesnt work. One evening, in the midle of my weekly mud-pack facial, the phone rang. The horror of seeing myself in the phone mirror made my voice as hideous as my face. I immediately trashed the pros advice along with the miror. Who wants to sound like a dizzy Pollyanna? A no-brain Cheshire cat? A lonely recluse whose life is so dull that the big thrill of the day is a phone call? Any phone call? From anybody!

Big winners dont smile before answering. They put a smile in their voices after they hear who is on the line. Thats when it counts. Answer the phone

unemotionally, professionally. Say your name or the name of your company. Then when you hear who is on the line, the little trick is to let a big smile flood over your face.

Oh Joe, [smile] how nice to hear from you! Sally, [smile] how are you? Bill, [smile] I was hoping it would be you.

My friend Steve lives in Washington, D.C., and heads a major trade association that lobbies on Capitol Hill. Whenever I call Steve, I never know which of his dozens of assistants is going to

answer. Nevertheless, whoever answers gives me the same warm response.

First he or she says, Cable Telecommunications Association, the individuals name, and How may I direct your call? No fake friendliness. No prefab smiles in the voice. I am sure the assistant is not beaming back at hior herself in any mirror.

When I say Is Mr. Effros available? This is Leil Lowndes caling, thats when the employee becomes superfriendly. Oh yes, Ms. Lowndes, he or she purrs. Definitely! Let me put you right through.

Wow, does that make me feel special! As Im waiting for Steve to come to the phone, I fantasize him sitting at the head of a long mahogany table in his weekly staff meeting. I can just hear him instructing his staff, Now if the president or some higher-ups in the White House call, put them right through. Oh, and of course, if that important woman Leil Lowndes calls, put her right through, too.

While visiting Washington last year, I had lunch with Steve. I took the opportunity to tell him what a pleasure it was to call his office and how I appreciated his staff s warm phone reception. I thanked him for familiarizing each with my name and metioning I might be calling from time to time. Steve looked across the table at me and blinked. Leil, he said, you teach telephone skills. Havent you caught on?

Huh?

Forgive me if Im bursting a bubble, Steve said, but everone gets that reception, no matter whos calling.

Oh!

When a Pain in the Neck Calls

But Steve, I protested when Id recuperated from the initial diappointment

that I was a victim of a technique and not a VIP,

what if the caller is unknown, a complete stranger? Surely your staffers shouldnt fake they know the caller.

Of course not, Leil. In that case, I instruct them to show energy and enthusiasm over the reason theyre calling. For exaple, suppose the caller is a cable operator wanting to join our assciation. The caller would get a smile and a sincere, Oh yes, Mr. Smith, Ill put you right through.

Yeah, but suppose the caller is selling office furniture? I challenged.

Doesnt matter, Steve said. The salesperson gets the same reception after the staffer hears why hes calling. If my staffer says warmly, Oh, office furniture! the caller feels good. And I find the salesperson is a lot easier to deal with later.

I told him, OK, Steve, starting tomorrow morning, Im going to put that Oh wow, Im so happy you called for that reason atttude in my voice.

The next morning, the first call was my dentists office. Ms. Lowndes, this call is to remind you youre overdue for your simonth checkup.

Oh, of course, youre so right, I cooed. Im so glad you called. The receptionist sounded surprised but very pleased at my reaction. I cant book an appointment right now, I continued, but Ill call you as soon as my schedule frees up. She didnt hasle me with her usual Well, when do you expect that to be? She just hung up satisfied. (And I got what I wantedno call from my dentists office for at least another six months.)

The second time the phone rang, it was a man who had ordered my tape set calling to complain that one of the tapes broke. Oh my goodness, Im so glad you told me about that, I said with the enthusiasm of having won the lottery. The caller sounded a little shocked but obviously pleased at my reaction. Of course, Ill get another set out to you and I hope you accept my apologies. Caller hung up satisfied. (And I got what I wanted

his good will and word of mouth in spite of my tape duplicators blooper.)

The third call was tougher. This was from a vendor I had copletely forgotten to pay. Oh, Im so glad you reminded me of that bill, I lied. Again, shocked pleasure was the callers reaction. (I was probably the first creditor in history who ever sounded happy shed called.) In the back of my mind I felt there was one bill I had overlooked. Im writing the check as we speak.

Then I got my reward. The dunner said, By the way, dont worry about the 2 percent per month late-payment charge. As long as we get your check by

the end of the week, it will be OK. She hung up happy. (And I got a presentno finance charges in spite of my oversight.)

And so it went throughout the rest of the day, the rest of the week, and ever since. Try it. Youll find you get a lot more from anone when you smile, after you find out who it is or why theyre caling. Use the Oh Wow, Its You! technique on almost every call.

Technique #62

Oh Wow, Its You!

Dont answer the phone with an Im just sooo happy all the time attitude. Answer warmly, crisply, and professionally. Then, after you hear who is calling, let a huge smile of happiness engulf your entire face and spill over into your voice. You make your caller feel as though your giant warm fuzzy smile is reserved for him or her.

How to Sneak Past the Gatekeeper

No, No, Aaaaaagh, not The Screen! Picture a torture device called The Screen. The mad scientist, laughing maniacally, forces the victim into a giant meat grinder that mashes him through a heavy-metal screen. It slices his body into a million moecules before hes reconstituted on the other side. Being screened when you call someones office is the emotional version of that ordeal.

You place your cold call. May I speak to Mr. Jones? you pleasantly ask.

Whos calling? a haughty voice responds. Of course, your name is not prestigious enough for the screener to grant you the exalted status of speaking to Jones.

Her ruthless interrogation continues, And what company are you with? You submit your companys name, praying it will score with her. And then to top it off, she has the pluck to ask, And whats this in reference to? Aaaaaagh!

Several weeks after my luncheon with Steve, I had the occsion to call him again. Is Steve Effros available? This is Leil Lowdes calling.

Oh yes, Ms. Lowndes, definitely. Let me put you right through. I start humming happily as I wait for Steve to come to the line.

A moment later his assistant came back and said sympathetcally, Im so sorry, Ms. Lowndes. Steve just stepped out to lunch. I know hell be sorry he missed your call. Meanwhile, Im still smiling. Do I suspect that Steve didnt just step out to lunch? Do I suspect hes sitting right there? Do I ever, in my

wildest parnoid dreams, think he doesnt have the time or inclination to talk to me? Do I feel screened? No way! Im as happy as a carefree kiten as I leave my number for a callback. You see, I have probably fallen for The Sneaky Screen.

Technique #63

The Sneaky Screen

If you must screen your calls, instruct your staff to first say cheerfully, Oh yes, Ill put you right through. May I tell her whos calling? If the party has already identified himself, its Oh of course, Mr. Whoozit. Ill put you right through.

When the secretary comes back with the bad news that Mr. or Ms. Bigwig is unavailable, callers dont take it personally and never feel screened. They fall for it every time, just like I did.

How to Get What You Want on the Phone from Big Shots

I know a secret about a big cat who owns an international hotel chain with properties in six countries. He hires and fires thosands, awards or pulls immense contracts, borrows from major financial institutions, and makes lavish contributions to charities. Mr. Big Cat (well call him Ed) has a respected and immediately recognizable name in his industry. And heres the secret: Mrs. Big Cat is the real brains behind the operation.

I became friends with Mrs. Big Cat (well call her Sylvia) when I did some consulting for her husbands organization. Sylvia invited me to tea one afternoon. She sweetly apologized that this was maids day off so wed have to fend for ourselves. As we hapily perched ourselves on the patio and were about to dive into our tea and crumpets, the phone rang. She excused herself to answer it.

I heard Mrs. Big Cat say, No, Im sorry, hes not in. Shall I tell him who called? . . . No, I dont know when he is planning on returning, but if you give me your name and . . . No, I said I dont know what time hell be back . . . Yes, Ill tell him you called.

As Sylvia returned to the patio, I could she was annoyed by the call. Always on the lookout for a good phone story, I ventured a questioning look.

Picking up on my curiosity, she said, That fool thinks hes going to get a contribution from Ed. Ha! she laughed wryly. Her candor emboldened me to ask her more. It turns out the caller, a Mr. Creighton, was a fund-raiser for a

major charity Ed was cosidering contributing to. My hostess said Creighton had called twice in the past two weeks when Ed was out. And not once did he greet me, ask how I was, or apologize for the disturbance. This did not please Mrs. Big Cat.

Was it a major irritation for Mrs. Big Cat? No, only minor. But did it mean a major loss for the little cat who called? It sure did. In Ed and Sylvia Big Cats household, subtleties count. At the dinner table, Mrs. Big Cat could say to her husband, A very nice man named Creighton called for you today, dear. Or she might say, A rather irritating chap named Creighton called for you today. One comment or the other could mean millions won or lost by Creightons charity. And all because little cat Creighton mildly ruffled Mrs. Big Cats whiskers.

Home advice: Salute the Spouse. Office advice: Salute the Secretary.

A surprising number of Big Cat spousesand secretaries have deep claws into important business decisions. When it comes

Technique #64

Salute the Spouse

Whenever you are calling someones home, always identify and greet the person who answers. Whenever you call someones office more than once or twice, make friends with the secretary. Anybody who is close enough to answer the phone is close enough to sway the VIPs opinion of you.

hiring time, firing time, promoting time, or buying time, many spouses have a say. When it comes to whose calls get through, whose proposals get put on the top of the bosss desk, who gets luncheon appointments made, secretaries opinions count!

Only foolish callers dont realize all spouses and secretaries have names. All spouses and secretaries have lives. All spouses and secretaries have feelings. All spouses and secretaries have influence. Deal accordingly.

How to Get What You Wantby Timing!

When Alexander Graham Bell invented the phone, he and his comrades had no use for such trite phrases as Hi, how ya doin? Bell and his boys never just started spouting their ideas into their listeners ears. The first words out of their mouths in those times were Can you talk? Bell and his buddies were, of course, refering to technical capabilities.

Little did they know, more than a hundred years later, big winners would use a form of that same greeting. Today, of course, Can you talk? means Is it convenient to talk? Before launcing into conversation, they always ask Is this

a good time to chat? Did I catch you at a good time? Do you have a minute to dicuss the widget account?

All folks have a Big Ben in their brain that determines how receptive they are going to be to you and your ideas. When you mess with their internal cuckoo clock, they wont listen to you. No matter how interesting your information, or how pleasant your call, bad timing means bad results for you.

Its not your fault. Whenever you call someone at home, you never know whether she was sleeping or whether theres a fire raing in the kitchen stove. Whenever you call someone at work, you

never know whether hes got two hours to get a report in or whether the big boss is not-so-patiently sitting on his desk.

Whenever you place a call, alwaysnot occasionally, not frquentlyalways ask about your timing. Make it a habit. Make it a rule. Make it a self-punishable crime if the first words out of your mouth dont concern the convenience of your timing:

Hi, Joe, is this a good time to talk? Hello, Susan. Have you got a minute? Hi, Carl, did I catch you good or did I catch you bad? Sam, do you have a second for me to tell you about what

happened at the game last Saturday? There are many ways to say it, but it all boils down to Is this

a good time to talk? My friend Barry, a broadcaster, accomplishes more in a day

than most people do in a week. He came up with a clever coversational device that ensures hell never shatter anyones emtional sundial. He calls it What Color Is Your Time? Barry introduces the device by telling people hes calling he has great respect for their time. He then asks permission to start his future conversations with a question that assures hell never disturb them at an inopportune moment. Barry says hes going to ask what color their time is. They should honestly answer, red, yellow, or green.

Red means Im really rushed.

Yellow means Im busy but whats on your mind? If its quick, we can deal with it.

Green means Sure, Ive got time. Lets talk.

Red, like the stoplight at the corner, means stop. Yellow means hurry up, time is short or stop and wait for the next green light. Green means go.

Busy people pick up quickly on his artful device and enjoy the game.

Most especially, they enjoy Barrys sensitivity and respect for their time. In fact, he says, most of his callers play the same

How to Get What You Wantby Timing! 247

sensitive game when they call him. Hi Barry, what color is your time? Are you green?

Salesfolks, Wait for the Green Light

A note here for salespeople. If you ask a prospect if he or she has time to talk and the answer is Not really, but tell me whats on your mind, DONT! Do not make your sales pitch while he or she is red. Do not talk when he or she is yellow. Wait until green, very green. (If you ever want to see any green coming from your prospect, that is.)

Technique #65

What Color Is Your Time?

No matter how urgent you think your call, always begin by asking the person about timing. Either use the What Color Is Your Time? device or simply ask, Is this a convenient time for you to talk? When you ask about timing first, youll never smash your footprints right in the middle of your telephone partners sands of time. Youll never get a No! just because your timing wasnt right.

How to Impress Everyone with Your Outgoing Voicemail Message

You can tell a lot about people just from the outgoing messages they leave on their voice mail. Hello, his machine answers. Im not in right now. But you probably dont want to talk to me anway. Beep. Would you suspect this fellow has an inferiority complex?

Hello, her machine answers. The sound you hear is the barking of our killer Doberman pinscher, Wolf. Please leave a mesage after the tone. Beep. Would you suspect this woman is woried about break-ins? Most of us dont record our personal foibles so conspicuously for the world to hear. Nevertheless, people can hear a lot between the lines of what we say on our voice mail.

Last month I needed a graphic artist to do some work for one of my extremely conservative clients. I phoned Mark, an artist whose work I had seen and liked a lot. His answering machine blasted ear-splitting rock music through the receiver. Then his voice boomed over the electric guitar, Hey there, dude, dont be crude. Jes croon me an earful of sweeeeeeet sounds right at that lone tone. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Beep. I banged the receiver quickly

back into the cradle to shut out horrible fantasies of how my client would react if he had to call Mark. His thirty-second talent show might have been an appropriate sample of a rock musicians taent. But a businessperson should opt for a more sedate outgoing message. The message you leave on your answering machine reflects your work. Keep yours friendly, neutral, and up-to-date.

And heres the secret: to give the impression you are really on top of your business, change your message every day. Studies show that callers perceive people to be brighter and more efficient when they hear an updated message each time they call. If appropriate, let callers know where you are and when you intend to be back. If you have customers who need to be attended to, this is crucial.

Try something like this on your office phone: This is (name). Its Thursday, May 7, and Ill be in a sales meeting until late this afternoon. Please leave your message and Ill get back to you as soon as I return. That way, if you dont call a client back until 4 p.m. he isnt steaming.

Also, keep it short. Some people change their message every day, but its too long. I had a colleague, a public speaker named Dan, who in his finest mellifluous voice imposed his thought for the day on all unsuspecting callers.

Last year I was working on a project with Dan and had to call him three times in the same day to leave a progress report. Each time his machine answered: Hello, this is Dan, and heres my daily motivator. He cleared his throat for his big recorded peformance and then continued. Did someone say something today that offended you? So what! Thats their problem. He paused drmatically. Did someone look at you the wrong way? So what! Thats their problem. Again, a pause for the magnitude of that sentiment to sink in. Replace your petty thoughts of anger, exaperation, and spite with thoughts of strength. Calm down. Rise above those little insignificant irritations in life. Focus your thoughts in the direction of fulfillment and accomplishment. Once

again, this is Dan. Im surprised he didnt also leave his agents phone number here. Leave your message at the tone. And have a great peaceful day. Beep.

The first time I listened to Dans inspirational message, the length mildly irritated me. The second time, I found myself hypeventilating while waiting for him to get through his unbearably long message. By the third call, his schmaltzy message seemed interminable. I was filled with those petty

thoughts of anger, exaperation, and spite he warned against because of his darn mesage. I found it impossible to rise above it and focus my thoughts in the direction of fulfillment and accomplishment. I wanted to punch him in the nose. Outgoing messages are not the venues to give inspirational messages or to impress the world with ones accomplishments.

Another friend of mine, a writer, earned herself a few little cat stripes with this one on her machine:

Hello, this is Cheryl Smith. Cheryl is on her national book tour, (she paused so all callers could be appropriately impressed) making appearances in twelve cities. (Another pause as though awaiting applause.) Shell be returning on October 7. (Whats this she bit? Cheryl herself is speaking.) Please leave your mesage for her at the tone. Beep.

Yes, Cheryl, we know youre an important author. But your third-party reference to self, your narcissistic tone of voice, and topping it off with twelve cities would make any big cat snicker through his whiskers.

One last codicil: Avoid one particular message many busnesspeople use these daysIm either away from my desk or on the other line. The subtext of this message is Im a slave chained to my desk and it is an amazing fact that I have escaped for the moment. One night I was working into the wee hours. At 4 a.m. I decided to leave a message on a colleagues business phone so shed get it as soon as she came in at nine. Hello, the message

chirped. This is Felicia. Im either away from my desk or on the other line right now, but leave your message at the tone. Beep. Felicia, of course youre away from your deskits 4 a.m. on Suday morning! On the other line? At this hour? I hope not!

You never know how your message is going to affect somone. Just keep yours neutral, friendly, constantly changing, short, and understated. No boasts, no bells, no whistles.

Technique #66

Constantly Changing Outgoing Message

If you want to be perceived as conscientious and reliable, leave a short, professional, and friendly greeting as your outgoing message. No music. No jokes. No inspirational messages. No boasts, bells, or whistles. And heres the secret: change it every day. Your message doesnt have to be flawless. A little cough or stammer gives a lovely unpretentious reality to your message.

How to Get Them to Call You Back

Producers of big Broadway musicals can be brutal during audtions. An anxious wanna-be star, after rehearsing his audition song for weeks, steps onstage. He opens his mouth to sing. After a few notes, the heartless producer shouts, Thank you. NEEEXXXT! Dreams of stardom dashed in ten seconds!

Businesspeoples professional dreams can also be dashed in the first ten seconds of their audition. Their audition is the message they leave on someone elses answering machine.

Competent businesspeople wouldnt dream of sending a messy handwritten business letter to a VIP on cheap yellow-stained paper and expect a response. They know the recipient would toss it in the trash. Nevertheless, some of these same folks will leave a lacluster message on a VIPs voice mail and expect a callback. No one ever told them that big winners scrutinize messages on their voice mail with the same consideration of a big Broadway producer. If you sound good, youve got a chance. If you dont, you are fasforwarded out of their life.

Salespeople, suitors, candidates, and competitors who leave crisp, intelligent, upbeat messages on voice mail get called back. Losers with lackluster tones and uncrafted messages never hear from Mr. or Ms. Make It Happen. Make sure your message

reflects three Cs: Confidence, Clarity, and Credibility. In addition, make it entice, entertain, or interest the listener. A flat This is Joe, call me back doesnt score with big winners.

Stay Tuned For . . .

Radio DJs use tricks to keep their listeners tuned in. Top salepeople have similar little tricks to entice prospects to call them back. Heres one called a cliff-hanger. To make sure listeners wont switch stations during the radio commercial, the broadcaster throws out a mini-mystery: And right after the commercial well be back with the winning ticket . . . It could be yours . . . Stay tuned! Whenever you leave a voice mail message for anyone, try to include a cliff-hanger: Hi, Harry, this is Andrew. I have the answer to that question you asked me last week. Or Hi Diane, this is Betsy. I have some big news about that project we were dicussing. Now Harry and Diane have a reason to call Andrew and Betsy back.

Pitch personality into your message, too. Picture the people listening to it. Say something to pique their curiosity or make them smile. The message you

leave is your ten-second audition. Make it good.

Technique #67

Your Ten-Second Audition

While dialing, clear your throat. If an answering machine picks up, pretend the beep is a big Broadway producer saying Nexxxt. Now youre on. This is Your Ten-Second Audition to prove you are worthy of a quick callback.

Incidentally, if someones voice mail unexpectedly comes on and you are unprepared, quickly hang up (before the beep so they dont get a hang-up message.) Take a moment to craft your entetaining, enticing, or interesting message. Rehearse it once with confidence, clarity, and charisma. Then redial to leave your great hot message.

A funny thing happens. If your party answers this time, youll be disappointed.

How to Make the Gatekeeper Think Youre Buddy-Buddy with the VIP

The inspiration for this next telephone technique comes from pesonal experiences with mid-Manhattan toilets (a less-than-refined origin, to be sure). New York City, in spite of all its reputed sophitication, lags some of the shabbiest European cities in one respect. Manhattan has few public toilets. And none of those Europeastyle, charming, and at times very much appreciated, freestanding structures on street corners.

In the days when I made sales calls around the busy city of New York, this presented a problem. Several times a day. I often found myself at the mercy of coffee-shop cashiers who jealously guarded their restroom facilities. Some shops even put menacingly scribbled signs in the window, Bathrooms are for customers only.

I often found that if I played it straightgoing up to the cashier and asking if I could use the amenitiesId get shot down. So I used the following technique. Without casting a glance at the cashier, Id strut confidently into the coffee shop. Id march right past the bathroom bouncer and keep my gaze fixed on one of the booths. Shed assume I was coming for lunch or had simply

returned to collect my forgotten gloves. Once past the gatekeeper of the loo, Id wait for her to be busy ringing up the next check. Then, like greased lightning, Id sprint into the john.

I dubbed this deception The Ho-Hum Caper after my feigned attitude of

Ho hum, business as usual. I come here every day with nothing on my mind but lunch.

Let us now translate that sneaky subterfuge into a seldofail phone technique. You can use the maneuver to sneak around secretaries and dodge their heartless screening. Instead of plaing it straight and asking for your party by name, just say Is he in? or Is she in? Using the pronoun is verbally sprinting past the secretary with a business as usual, Ho hum, I call every day attitude.

Technique #68

The Ho-Hum Caper

Instead of using your partys name, casually let the pronoun he or she roll off your tongue. Forget Uh, may I speak to Ms. Bigshot please? Just announce, Hi, Bob Smith here, is she in? Tossing the familiar she off your tongue signals to the secretary that you and her boss are old buddies.

How to Make Them Say You Have Super Sensitivity

Whenever youre on the phone with someone, you hear a lot more than their voices. In the background you might hear dogs baring, babies crying, or a crackling sound. For all you know, the dog has his tail caught in the refrigerator, the baby has to be fed, or the house is on fire. When you acknowledge the sound by asing if they have to take care of it, you warm the hearts of your listeners.

When you are talking to someone at work, you often hear another phone ringing. Say immediately, I hear your other line. Do you have to answer it? Even if not, he or she will appreciate the gesture. If he does have to catch the other call, you can be sure he heard nothing you said after the first ring. Hes only thinking How can I interrupt this babbling person without being rude so I can answer my other phone? In fact with every brr-ing, irrittion sets in that you are holding him hostage from doing what he has to do.

Here is the technique guaranteed to save you from being in that uncomfortable position.

The subtext, of course, is that you are sensitive to whats going on in your callers world. If youre talking to someone far away or in another country, another way to show youre tops in the com257

munications department is to translate time references into their time zone. When you leave a message, say I can be reached between three and five your time.

And dont forget foreign holidays. Last July 1, I was on the phone with a

client from Australia. I was impressed when he wished me Happy Independence Day weekend. So impressed, in fact, I ran out to find a chart of international holidays. I made a note in my calendar next January 26 to wish my Aussie friend Happy Australia Day.

If you do business with people around the world, be sure to extend good wishes to them for their holidays. Forget about your own if theyre not shared. Im still mortified about the time last November when I was on a conference call with a Canadian client and seven of his salespeople. I wished them all Happy Thanksgiving.

Technique #69

I Hear Your Other Line

When you hear a phone in the background, stop speakingin midsentence, if necessaryand say I hear your other line, (or your dog barking, your baby crying, your spouse calling you). Ask whether she has to attend to it. Whether she does or not, shell know youre a top communicator for asking.

How to Listen Between the Lines on the Phone

The first time I saw The Wizard of Oz, the story bewitched me. The second time I saw The Wizard of Oz, the special effects amazed me. The third time I saw The Wizard of Oz, the photoraphy dazzled me. Have you ever seen a movie twice, three times? You notice subtleties and hear sounds you completely missed the first time around.

Its the same on the phone. Hearing it is much better the seond time around. Because your business conversations are more consequential than movies, you should listen to them two, maybe three times. Often we have no clear idea of what really happened in our phone conversation until we hear it again. Youll find shaings more significant than the color of Totos collarand more scarecrows than you imagined who havent got a brain!

How do you listen to your important business conversations again? Simply legally and ethically tape-record them. I call the technique of recording and analyzing your business conversations for subtleties Instant Replay.

Having a tape recorder on her phone could have made a drmatic difference in the career of my friend Laura. Laura, a nutrtionist, had developed an excellent health drink. It deserved to be marketed nationally.

I was in Lauras office one day discussing her plans and I said, Laura, Ive got just the contact for you. Several months earlier, I had met Fred, a man

who owned a chain of supermarkets. Fred owed me a favor because, at his request, Id given a pro bono talk for a social club he belonged to. Fred was a big banana in the supermarket world, and with one yes he could put my friends health drink in his stores. That would launch Laura nationally.

I placed the call and, lo and behold, he was in. And, an even bigger lo and behold, Fred sounded interested in Lauras beverage.

Put her on, Fred said.

I proudly handed Laura the phone and their conversation started out fine. Oh sure, Ill send you a sample, Laura said. Whats the address? Then I heard Laura say, Uh, wait a minute, let me get something to write with. (I rapidly rolled a pen and pushed a pad in front of her nose.) Uh, whats that again? Did you say 4201 or 4102? [I moan inaudibly.] And how do you spell the name of the street? [My moan becomes audible.] Whoops, this pen just ran out of ink. Leil, do you see another pen on my desk? [I did, and this time I felt like throwing it at her.] Sorry, whats that again?

Yikes, now I wanted to grab the phone out of Lauras hands. She shouldnt be bothering a busy big banana for details like repeating addresses. She could have called his secretary back later for clarification. But even that would have been unnecessary if she were recording the conversation with the Instant Replay technique. She could have merely mentioned that she was flipping on the recorder (most heavy hitters are comfortable with that concept) and she would have had it on tape.

Fred was nice to Laura that day. But my friend never heard back from him. And to this day, she wonders why. Shell never know the confused phone exchange nixed the deal.

Was Fred being unfair just because Laura was a little slow on the phone? Absolutely not. Fred figures, If this woman is as insenHow to Listen Between the Lines on the Phone 261

sitive about my time at the beginning of a possible business reltionship, whats she going to be like down the pike? Wise choice, Fred. I still like Laura. Shes still my friend. But will I introduce her to any other big winners who might help her? I cant take the chance.

How to Set Up Your Instant Replay

Instant Replay is simple and cheap. Go to your local electronics store and ask for a recorder for your telephone. Slap it on your phone receiver, and plug the other end into a cassette recorder. Then turn the recorder on during your next important converstion. The device could earn you hundreds of

dollars on your first call. In some states the law requires you inform the other party you are recording them. Make sure to check with the authorities about the legality in the state where you live. If its one-party cosent, dont worry. Youre the one party. Obviously you must never ever use the tape for any other purpose than for your own second listening. Not only would that be unlawful, but it would be uncoscionable. For extra security, dont leave peoples taped converstions lying around. Keep the same tape in your cassette machine and use it over and over to record important details.

With Instant Replay, you can catch balls your conversation partner throws out on the first bounce. Youre on the phone with your boss. He rambles off four or five names in a law firm youre supposed to write to, then the address, then the nine-digit zip code. Realizing hes pitched you some pretty fast balls, he asks, Shall I repeat that for you? No thanks, I got it, you proudly say, silently tapping your little tape recorder. Boss is impressed.

Yet another benefit of Instant Replayit helps hide your ignorance. Recently I was on the phone with a cameraman negtiating a price on a videotape to use as a speakers demo. Luckily I was recording the conversation because his flurry of Hi-8, VHS,

Super VHS, Beta SP, and three-quarter-inch U-matic had me wanting to crawl into a rodent hole in the wall. But I listened to the tape of our conversation afterward. I wrote down all the words I didnt understand and then asked a video friend what they meant. Now I was able to call the cameraman back and say, Id like a two-camera shoot on Beta SP. And can you give me a VHS dub so I can do some off-line editing? Dont you think I got a much better price than if Id asked, Duh, whats a Beta SP?

Forget What They Said, Hear What They Meant

Instant Replay also makes you sensitive to levels of communiction far deeper than just your callers words. You tune in to their real enthusiasm or hesitation about an idea.

When we want something, our minds play funny tricks on us. If we desperately crave yes from someone, we hear yes. But yes isnt always what it seems. A clients forceful YES and her hesitant yeee-sss are different as heaven and hell. Last month I asked a woman whod booked me for a speech if her office could reproduce my ten-page handout. She gave me the answer I wanted, which was yes. Later, however, I relistened to our conversation

Technique #70

Instant Replay

Record all your business conversations and listen to them again. The second or third time, you pick up on significant subtleties you missed the first time. Its like football fans who often dont know if there was a fumble until they see it all over again in Instant Replay.

How to Listen Between the Lines on the Phone 263

on tape. Her answer about the handouts had been a very hesitant, Hmm, well, yes. I immediately called her back and said, By the way, dont worry about those handouts.

Oh, Im so glad! she purred. Because we really dont have the budget for things like that. I gained much more in my clients goodwill than the value of reproducing a few sheets of paper.

Let us now return to your live, in-person show. Were going to talk not only about how to be a hit at a party, but how to smoothly hit on all the folks you wantjust like a politician.

How to Talk to Anyone - 92 Little Tricks...

PART EIGHT

How to Work a Party Like a Politician Works a Room

The Politicians Six-Point Party Checklist

When invited to a party, most of us waft into a fluffy thought prcess. Our random reverie goes something like this: Hmm, this could be fun. . . . Wonder if theyre going to serve food. . . . Hope its good. . . . Might be some interesting people there. . . . Wo der if my friend so n so is coming. . . . Golly, what should I wear?

Thats not the way a politician thinks about a party, however. While politicians, heavy-duty networkers, serious socializers, and big winners in the business world are staring at the invitation, they instinctively surf to a different channel. Before they RSVP with yes or no, their brains craft journalistic campaign questions. Its the Six-Point Party Checklist. Who? When? What? Why? Where? And How?

Lets take them one by one.

Who Is Going to Be at the Party?

More specifically, who will be there that I should meet? Serious networkers calculate Who must I meet for business? Who should I meet for political or social reasons? And, if single and searcing, Who do I want to meet for possible love?

If they dont know who is going to be in attendance, they ask. Politicians unabashedly telephone the host or hostess of the party and ask, Whos coming? As the party giver chats casually about the guest list, politicians scribble the names of the people who interest them, then resolve to meet each.

When Should I Arrive?

Politicians do not leave arrival time to whenever they finish geting dressed. They dont ask themselves, Hmm, should I be fasionably late? They carefully calculate their estimated time of arrival and estimated time of departure.

If the party is bulging with contacts, biggies get there early to start hitting their marks as each arrives. VIPs frequently come early to get their business done before party regulars who hate to be the first one there start arriving. They are never embarrassed to arrive early. After all, the only people who see

them are other early arrivals who are often heavy hitters like themselves.

Nor will you find politicians prowling around, the last to slink out the door. Once theyve accomplished what they set out to do, theyre on their way to the next opportunity. If their agenda is more social, they try to leave their departure time open and their aprŽs-party schedule free. That way, if they make an important new contact, they can stay around and talk with him. Or drive her home. Or go somewhere else for coffee.

How to Work a Party Like a Politician Works a Room 267

What Should I Take with Me?

A politicians checklist is not the usual, Lets see, my comb, cologne, and breath mints. They pack more functional networing tools in their pockets or purses.

If corporate cats will be prowling the party, they pack a pocetful of business cards. If its a gala where people are gadding about on the social ladder and they want to exude old-world elegance, they grab a handful of social cards containing only their name and possibly an address and phone number. (Some feel giving out a business card in a purely social setting can be gauche.) The most vital tool in their party pack is a small pad and pen to keep track of important contacts.

Why Is the Party Being Given?

The politicians perpetual philosophy of penetrate the ostensible enters here. (Thats just a fancy way of saying look under the rug.) They ask themselves, What is the ostensible reason for the party? A big industrialist is giving his daughter a graduation party? A newly divorced executive is throwing himself a birthday bash? A floundering business is celebrating its tenth year?

Nice, politicians say to themselves, thats the ostensible. But whats the real reason for the party? Maybe the industrialist wants to get his daughter a good job so hes invited dozens of potential employers. The birthday boy is single again so the guest list is heavy with attractive and accomplished females. The business deperately needs good PR if its going to stay around another ten years. So theyve invited the press and community makers and shakers.

Politicians have expert under-rug vision to spot the hosts real agenda. They will, of course, never discuss it at the party. However, the insight elevates them to a shared state of higher cosciousness with other heavy hitters at the bash.

Their knowledge also makes them valuable agents for the party giver. A savvy politician introduces the job-seeking daugter to some executives at the party or tells the most alluring women at the bash what a great guy birthday boy is. When chatting with reporters, he talks up the hosts business that needs good PR. When people support the real why of the party, they become popular and sought-after guests for future events.

Where Is the Collective Mind?

Often people from one profession or one interest group will coprise most of the guest list. A politician never accepts any invittion without asking herself, What kind of people will be at this party, and what will they be thinking about? Perhaps there will be a drove of doctors. So she clicks on the latest medical headlines and rehearses a little doc-talk. If the guests are a nest of new-age voters, the politician gets up to speed on telepathic healing, Tantric toning, and trance dancing. Politicians cant afford to not be in the know.

How Am I Going to Follow Up on the Party?

Now, the big finale. I call it Contact Cement. Its cementing the contacts the politician has made. After meeting a good contact and exchanging cards, practically everyone says, Its been great talking to you. Well stay in touch.

This good intention seldom happens without herculean effort. Politicians, however, make a science out of keeping up the cotact. After the party, they sit at their desks and, like a game of soltaire, lay out the business cards of the people theyve met. Using

How to Work a Party Like a Politician Works a Room 269

The Business Card Dossier technique described later in this setion, they decide how, when, and if to deal with each. Does this person require a phone call? Should that one receive a handwriten note? Shall I E-mail or call the other one?

Use the Six-Point Party Checklistthe Who? When? Why? Where? What? and How? of a partyas your general game plan. Now lets get down to specifics.

How to Avoid the Most Common Party Blooper

The average party goer, lets say Charlie, arrives at the bash. He makes a beeline for the refreshment table for munchies and a beerage. He then finds a few buddies and starts chatting away with them.

Chewing the nibbles on his plate and the fat with his friends, he occasionally looks around the room to see who might be new and fun to talk

to. Hes hoping several attractive and interesting people at the party will spot him and come over to talk.

Whats wrong with Charlies approach? Everything, if Chalie wants to make the party productive. Lets start with the aveage party goers first mistakegetting some refreshments and a drink right off the bat.

People mingling at a party make judgments, often subcoscious, about whom they are going to approach. Have you ever lived on a farm? Or had a dog or a cat? Then you know you never disturb animals when they are eating. Likewise, when a human animal is eating, other human animals do not feel comfortable advancing. If party goers eyes scan the crowd and see you with the feed bag on, they pass right over you. Subconsciously theyre saying to themselves, Let the hungry hound chow down and

maybe well talk later. Later never comes because they wind up making friends with someone else whose mouth wasnt full.

Politicians always eat before they come to the party. They know theyd need a circus jugglers talent to shake hands, exchange business cards, hold a drink, and stuff crackers and cheese into their mouthsall with just two hands.

Technique #71

Munching or Mingling

Politicians want to be eyeball to eyeball and belly to belly with their constituents. Like any big winner well versed in the science of proxemics and spatial relationships, they know any object except their belt buckle has the effect of a brick wall between two people. Therefore they never hold food or drink at a party.

Come to munch or come to mingle. But do not expect to do both. Like a good politician, chow down before you come.

How to Make an Unforgettable Entrance

Loretta Young makes television history when she appears at the head of her immense staircase and surveys the set. Then she swoops down to start the show.

The Pope steps out onto his balcony overlooking St. Peters Square in Rome and surveys the crowd. Then he begins the benediction.

Bette Davis stops in the doorway and looks around. Then she mutters, What a dump!

And every late-night TV comic since Heeeeres Johnny! steps center stage

and scrutinizes the applauding audience. Then he reveals the reason for the smirk on his face.

What do all these great entrances have in common? Each pauses momentarily and looks around before swooping into decsive action.

Movie directors love shots of THE DOORWAY where the camera pans, the music swells, and all eyes gravitate to the hocho or honchoette standing under the frame. Does the star skulk into the room like a frightened little kitten in a new owners home? Or, like many of us do at a party, frantically gravitate to the first familiar face so people wont think he or shes unconnected? No,

the star stops. Then, framed by the doorway, his or her notable presence is felt by all.

People who have mastered this trick have what envious thatrical wanna-bes call stage presence. Stage groupies think some lucky stars are born with it. Think again, thespians. Its cultivated. Politicians dont just slink unnoticed into a roomful of people.

Politicians make The Entrance.

With one simple technique, you too can make great entrances. I call it Rubberneck the Room. Before entering, stop dramatically in the doorway and survey the scene s-l-o-w-l-y with your eyes. It is significant that, while youre standing in the doorway, youre not thinking, Look at me. The reason youre Rubbernecking the Room is not to show off. It is so you can diagnose the situation youre walking into. Take note of the lighting, the bar, and most important, the faces. Listen to the music, the buzz of the crowd, the clinking of glasses. See who is talking to whom. While rubbenecking, youll also be using Be the Chooser, Not the Choosee, the next technique, which helps you select your first, second, and maybe third target. Now, like the big cat who rules the jungle, leap in to make your first move toward wiping up the room.

In tandem with Rubberneck the Room, try using the folloing technique.

Technique #72

Rubberneck the Room

When you arrive at the gathering, stop dramatically in the doorway. Then s-l-o-w-l-y survey the situation. Let your eyes travel back and forth like a SWAT team ready in a heartbeat to wipe out anything that moves.

How to Meet the People YOU Want to Meet

Politicians dont wait for others to approach them. If the party host or their campaign manager has not supplied a must meet list, they choose their targets while Rubbernecking the Room. As their keen eyes scan the crowd, theyre asking themselves Who would I most enjoy talking to? Who looks like they could be most beeficial to my life? Who could I learn most from in this gang?

How do they choose? They look at everyone the same way my friend, Bob, the caricature artist, looks at people. You can tell a whole lot more than you realize if you keep your gaze fixed on someone. Every twinkle in someones eye and every line surounding it tells a storythe story of the life he or she leads. Who was it who said, At age thirty, everyone has the face he deserves? Yet few of us consciously look into strangers eyes. How foolish that, at a party or convention for making contacts, most people are embarrassed to make eye contact with people we dont know.

In my networking seminar, I prime participants to make intense visual contact by asking them to form a big circle, walk around the room, and silently stare at each other. Gaze into each others eyes, I tell them. Examine each others movements.

As they are walking, I say, The most important business cotact, the dearest friend, or the love of your life is probably not in

this room. Nevertheless, sometime soon, you will be in a room where you will spot someone you sense could change your life. I want you to be prepared. I want you to have the courage to make the approach and not wait in vain for that special someone to approach you. While strolling and staring, I ask them to silently choose the four people they most want to talk to during the break.

Only the Beautiful People Will Be Chosen

When given this unfamiliar and uncomfortable assignment, the participants assume everyone will make a beeline for the most attractive people. It never happens. Something mystical occurs when people take the time to really look at each other. Everyone discovers a distinctive beauty in one or two other people that is very personal, very special, and speaks uniquely to the seeker.

The dearest friend in my life was a homely little fellow named Chip. He was only 5 feet 2 inches tall. Chip had a huge nose and funny little eyes peeping out through thick glasses. At a party, without using this technique, I

probably would never have noticed Chip. However, my concentration was on him the day we met because he was giving a speech. When I gazed intently into his eyes and watched his lips moving, I saw such subjective beauty coming from his face. He became my best friend for twelve years until a tragic disease took his life. Nevertheless, Chip remained beautiful to me until the end because, no matter how twisted his body became with illness, the beauty shone through his spirit.

As the seminar participants explore each others faces and movements, they discover the subjective beauty in their faces, in their spirits. No one can explain why one person chooses another as one of his or her special four. Yet practically everyone returns from the break having made a new good friend. Never is anyone left unchosen.

When you seek peoples special qualities by exploring their faces, you will find them. If you want to walk out of any gatheing with your life enhanced, spend time with people you choose, not just those who choose you. Be choosey in who you pick. But dont wait to be the choosee.

Sure, in a Seminar, Its Easy, but What About Real Life?

Sometimes, after the break, a participant will say, It was simple to go up to people I wanted to talk to this time because you gave it as an assignment. But what about at a real party? Recently, one of my participants named Todd asked me this question in front of the group.

I asked, Todd, how did you make the approach this time?

Well, I just went up and said, Hi, Im Todd. I wanted to talk to you.

Well? I asked.

Technique #73

Be the Chooser, Not the Choosee

The lifelong friend, the love of your life, or the business contact who will transform your future may not be at the party. However, someday, somewhere, he or she will be. Make every party a rehearsal for the big event.

Do not stand around waiting for the moment when that special person approaches you. You make it happen by exploring every face in the room. No more ships passing in the night. Capture whatever or whomever you want in your life.

It dawned on him that he could use this opening phrase to meet anyone at any party. To smooth a potentially awkward moment, you quickly follow up with an innocuous question like How do you know the hostess? or Do you

live in the area? Now, youre off and running just as though the host had intrduced you.

Of course, other choosey people will be prowling around the party. Some of them, after scrutinizing you, will decide you are one of the special people they choose to talk to. The following is a subliminal maneuver to make it easy for them come over to cofirm they made a wise choice.

How to Subliminally Lure People to You at a Gathering

Have you ever noticed how comfortable you feel sauntering into certain rooms? The chairs are arranged in a way that welcomes you as if saying, Come right on in and sit on me. Conversely, you enter other rooms where you must navigate a circuitous route around tables and dressers before you finally find a free chair.

Likewise, some people arrange their body furniture, their arms and legs, to say, Hey, come right on over and talk to me. Yet other peoples body furniture shouts, Keep out! Approach at your own risk. Shy people inadvertently say stay away when they fold their arms. They give off insecure signals by clutching a purse, clasping a drink, or smoking a cigarette.

Controlled studies show that party goers are more comforable approaching people who stand with an open body, arms uncrossed and hanging at their sides, legs slightly separated, a slight smile on their faces. Any object between you and the crowd is a subliminal cutoffeven your purse. More people approach a woman who sports a shoulder bag than one squeezing a handbag. The shoulder bag hangs behind her back, thus leaving the path to talk to her open.

Give Them the Ol Wrist Flash

Now, heres the pi&#xFFFD;ce de rŽsistance. Next to your face, your wrists and palms are one of the most expressive parts of your body. Palms up speak volumes of good sentiments.

The Popes wrists and palms are up when he beckons Come unto me my brethren. The burglars wrists and palms are up when he says, I give up, dont shoot. The innocent mans wrists and palms are up when hes saying, I dont know who took the money. Vulnerable, open palms signify I have nothing to hide.

They also signify acceptance. When you are listening to a business colleague to whom you want to signal acceptance, make sure your wrists and

palms are up. Even if youre resting your head on your chin, turn your wrists forward. Whenever you are chating with anyone, give yourself a constant hand check. Make sure you dont point your knuckles directly toward anyone. Let them have the pleasure of seeing the soft, tender come hither skin of your wrists and palms, not the wrinkled go away hide on your knuckles.

Romance on your mind? Ladies, let your hands do some taling for you. Women instinctively turn their wrists and palms upward when a man excites them. (In fact, the ol wrist flash while talking with males subconsciously gives them a sexy jolt.)

Pave a Clear Path for People Who Find You Special

Frightened little jungle cats crouch behind rocks and logs so no bigger animals will spot them. In the social jungle, shy people do the same. They instinctively seek out corners and sit in seats where they wont be seen.

Technique #74

Come-Hither Hands

Be a human magnet, not a human repellent. When standing at a gathering, arrange your body in an open positionespecially your arms and hands. People instinctively gravitate toward open palms and wrists seductively arranged in the come hither position. They shy away from knuckles in the get lost or Ill punch you position. Use your wrists and palms to say I have nothing to hide, I accept you and what youre saying, or I find you sexy.

Whereas lynxes and lions stroll confidently to the center of the jungle clearing, human big cats in the social jungle also stand confidently in a clearing so others can see them. Like a politician, position yourself near a doorway since everyone must pass your way at some point in the evening.

Now we come to a technique all politicians use. In fact, some political pundits have credited the election of both John Kennedy and Bill Clinton to their mastery of the technique I call Tracking.

How to Make Em Feel Like a Movie Star

In the 1940s, movies were different. Before experimental films, ciema veritŽ, and nouvelle vague, they had stories. Americans hopped in their Buicksa foxtail tied to the radio antenna and baby boots suspended from the rearview mirrordrove to the movie house, and watched a story unfold before them.

Almost invariably, the hero and heroine on the silver screen would meet, fall in love, overcome seemingly impossible obstacles, get married, and (presumably) live happily after. Oh, the stories varied slightly. But there was

always a leading man and maybe a leading woman. Then there was the rest of the world. The suporting characters could live or die without much brouhaha. But every minor event in the stars life was significant.

Well, movies may have changed. Human nature hasnt. Everone feels like the star of a 1940s movie. Every trivial event in their lives is momentous. Theres ME. Then theres the rest of the world.

What someone had for breakfast, what shoes he chose to wear, and whether he took time to floss his teeth can be more impotant to that particular someone than the fall of faraway nations or the rise of global temperatures.

Husbands and wives sometimes share their spouses minutiae:

What did you have for breakfast, Honey? You didnt wear those shoes, did you? Did you remember to floss? To create an interesting intimacy, big winners make a point to

remember minute details of important contacts lives. They obvously dont feign interest in what they had for breakfast or whether they flossed or forgot. But to make someone feel like a big star, they remember details their contact does happen to share.

Take their lead. If a prospect mentions he had Rice Krispies for breakfast, allude to it later. If, in chatting, your boss tells you she wore uncomfortable shoes to work one day, find a way to refer to it on another. If your client mentions hes a resolute flosser, co pliment him at a later date on his discipline. It hints he or she is a memorable star in the galaxy of people youve met. Its called Tracking their lives. When you track their minutiae, you make them feel like 1940s movie stars and that minor events in their lives are major concerns in yours.

Dont Leave It to Chance

Politicians make a science out of Tracking. They keep a little black box either on their desk, in their computer, or in their brain of the last concern, enthusiasm, or event discussed with everyone in their life. They keep track of where the people were, what they said, and what they were doing since the last conversation. Then the first words of the next phone call or meeting with that person relates to that information:

Hello, Joe. How was your trip to Jamaica? Hey Sam, did your kid make the baseball team? Hi, Sally. Have you heard back from your client yet? Nice to hear from you, Bob. It means you survived that

Szechuan restaurant you were going to last time we spoke.

How to Make Em Feel Like a Movie Star 283

When you invoke the last major or minor event in anyones life, it confirms what theyve known all along. Theyre the most important person in the world.

One of the most powerful forms of tracking is remembering anniversaries of peoples personal achievements. Did your boss get promoted to her present position one year ago today? Did your client go public? How much more memorable than a birthday card to send a one-year congratulations note.

Remembering peoples private passions is another. Several years ago, I wrote regularly for a magazine. My then-editor, Carie, was obsessed with her new kitten named Cookie. Recently I ran into Carrie at a writers conference. In early conversation I said to her, I guess Cookies a full-grown cat by now. How is she?

Carries astonished smile was my reward.

Leil, she squealed, I cant believe you remember Cookie. Yes, shes fine now and . . . Carrie went on for another ten miutes about Cookie, the now full-grown cat.

Technique #75

Tracking

Like an air-traffic controller, track the tiniest details of your conversation partners lives. Refer to them in your conversation like a major news story. It creates a poweful sense of intimacy.

When you invoke the last major or minor event in anyones life, it confirms the deep conviction that he or she is an old-style hero around whom the world revolves. And people love you for recognizing their stardom.

A week later I got a call from Carrie asking me if Id do a big story for her magazine. Did she think of me because I used the Tracking technique and remembered Cookie? Nobody can say, but I have my suspicions. Ive seen the Tracking technique work on too many people to assume the rewards are coincidental.

How do politicians remember so many facts to track about so many people? They use the following technique.

How to Amaze Them with What You Remember About Them

Several years ago, I attended a political fund-raising event in a Midwestern state. One guest intrigued me. Sometimes Id see him in animated conversation with several people. Other times, hed be standing alone scribbling something on a card in his hand. Then the next time Id look up,

hed be chatting it up with somone else. The next minute, hed be scribbling in his hand again. He repeated this pattern for over an hour. I became as curious as a nosy neighbor. Who was this fellow?

At one point during the evening, I was standing alone by the refreshment table. He came up to me with a big smile, a warm handshake, and introduced himself. Hi, Im Joe Smith. He asked me what I was drinking. I told him white wine and we started dicussing preferences. I happened to mention my favorite white was Sancerre. While we talked, I had to bite my tongue to resist asing him what hed been up to with the feverish note taking.

A few minutes later, I spotted a friend across the room and excused myself. He asked for my card and, as I walked away, I peeked over my shoulder. I knew it! There he was, scribbling on my card. That was my opening. I turned back and, trying to pass my inquiry off as a joke, said, Hey, I didnt give you my meaurements. Whats that youre writing?

285

He gave a hearty laugh at my tasteless joke and said, You caught me! He turned over my card and I saw one word written on it: Sancerre. Then, to assuage my paranoia, he emptied his pocketful of peoples business cards to show me scribbles on the back of each. I assumed it was just Joes little system to help him remember people. It wasnt until months later that I saw the method to his madness.

One morning I went to my mailbox and found a personal postcard from Joe. He told me he was running for state senator. Then at the bottom of the card, hed written, Had any good Sancerre lately? That won my heart. Had I lived in his state, a litle touch like that might have swayed my vote to him.

They may not jump up and down asking, How did you remember that? Nevertheless, they will remember you. No matter how important the VIP, he or she senses a special kinship

Technique #76

The Business Card Dossier

Right after youve talked to someone at a party, take out your pen. On the back of his or her business card write notes to remind you of the conversation: his favorite restaurant, sport, movie, or drink; whom she admires, where she grew up, a high school honor; or maybe a joke he told.

In your next communication, toss off a reference to the favorite restaurant, sport, movie, drink, hometown, high school honor. Or reprieve the laugh over the great joke.

with the person who refers to other than their usual well-known accomplishments.

Politicians are constantly selling themselves. (If youve ever wondered why America is called The Land of Promise, just keep your ears open in election year.) But, of course, to know what to promise people, politicians use the next super sales technique called Eyeball Selling.

How to Make the Sale with Your Eyeballs

The percentage of sales that Jimmi, a good friend of mine, makes is not to be believed. Even his sales manager doesnt know how he does it. But I do. Because he told me.

Jimmi says the fancy sales techniques hes learned over the years (Benefits Selling, Partnering, Selling to Personality Types, Value-Added Concept, Rejection Proofing, Spin Selling) all pale next to what he calls Eyeball Selling.

Eyeball Selling is not memorizing two dozen closing tecniques. Nor is it verbally sparring with a customer to overcome objections. Jimmi says its quite simply keeping his eyes open, watching his customers reactions, and adjusting his sales pitch according to how his customers body moves.

While Jimmi is giving his sales pitch, hes concentrating more on how his customer fidgets, twitches, and squirms than on what hes saying. Hes scrutinizing his customers involuntary head movments. Hes studying her hand gestures, her body rotation, her facial expressionseven her eye fluctuations. Jimmi says when his cutomer is not saying a word, even if shes trying to give you a poker face, she cannot not communicate. She may not say in words how receptive she is to your pitch, but shes clearly telling you nonethless. Jimmi says knowing what turns a prospect on, what turns her off, and what leaves her neutral from moment to moment can make or break the sale.

How Jimmi Finds Out Where the Buck Stops

The product Jimmi sells is expensive lighting equipment. Often he must make sales presentations to groups of ten, twenty, or more people. He says, The first challenge in Eyeball Selling is discoering who the real decision maker is.

Jimmi meets his challenge in an unorthodox (not necessarily

recommended) way. Right after Good afternoon, gentlemen and ladies, he says something slightly confusing. Why? Because the surprised group doesnt know how to react. So their heads all twirl like weather vanes on a windy day to look atguess who?the honcho, the heavyweight, the head man or woman. Now Jimmis got his decision maker so he can continue Eyeball Selling to that person.

What to Do When You Get Your Cue

Some signals are obvious, Jimmi says. People shrug their shouders for indifference, tap their fingers for impatience, or loosen their collar when they feel uncomfortable. But there are hundreds of other unconscious gestures I keep my antennae tuned for.

For example, I watch the exact angle of my prospects head position. If its fully facing me, especially if its cocked at a cute little angle, it means theyre interested. In that case, I keep right on talking. But if their head is slightly turning away, thats a bad sign. I take it as a cue to change the subject and maybe talk about a different benefit of my product.

Jimmi not only tailors what hes saying to his customers reations, but he actively takes steps to change his prospects body postion if he feels its not receptive. He says, The body must be open before the mind can follow. For example, he continues, If your customer has his arms crossed in front of his chest, hand him somthing to look at so he has to unfold them to take it from you. Jimmi

always carries a briefcase full of props to break down the barriers. He has photos of his wife and kids to hand married prospects, snashots of his Skye terrier for customers that have a dog, an antique watch to show antique lovers, and a pocket-size computer to show gadget fanatics. Jimmi says, As long as I can get them to open their arms to reach for something, I have a shot at their minds.

Jimmi also paces the timing of his pitch to match his cutomers covert reactions. When his client reaches for an object, he takes it as a cue to talk slower or just be quiet. Reaching for a paper clip or fondling a folder on the desk says, Im thinking about it.

Of course, Jimmi is on constant lookout for sales-ready sinals like picking up the contract, fondling the pen, or turning their palms up. At that point, he cuts quickly to the close.

Another cue to bring out the contract-signing pen is when your prospects head starts bobbing up and down like a plastic duck. Theyre silently

screaming, Yes, Ill buy! Unskilled salepeople just keep on talking until they finish the pitch they learned in training. Many keep talking so long, they unsell themselves. Conversely, when customers move their heads back and forth, no matter what they are saying, they mean No!

Eyeballing Is Not for Selling Only

Without a word, your friends and loved ones also show their wishes. When my friend Deborah became engaged to Tony, it seemed obvious to everyoneexcept Deborahthat it was not a marriage made in heaven. A few months before their wedding I said, Deb, are you really sure Tonys the one for you?

Oh yes, she said, her head moving right and left, back and forth, I love him very much. That marriage never took place. Her body recognized what her mind hadnt yet realized.

Like a politician, think of your social conversations as sales pitches. Even if you have no product, you want them to buy your ideas. If your listener turns away while youre talking, dont conHow to Make the Sale with Your Eyeballs 291

centrate on how rude the person is. Like a sales pro, ask yourself, How can I change the subject to turn this person on? If their whole body starts to turn away, use the time-honored personal question ploy. Ask about their favorite topic. George, how big did you say that bass you caught last week was? Or use his name and ask a personal question. Thats always a grabber. Archibald, what did you say the name of your high school football team was?

Weve talked about only a few responses. Hints for reading someones body language could fill a book. In fact, they have many of them. I suggest a few of my favorites in the references. 2126 Read up on body language and tune in to its visual channel wheever youre trying to sell to people, get their vote, or convince them youre the best candidate for the job or the role of life partner.

Wouldnt it be super to have Jimmis success rate with our listeners accepting whatever we say? We can if we just keep our eyes open.

A Quick Review

Thats all there is to it. Youll remember to eat before coming to the party (the Munching or Mingling technique) to leave your

Technique #77

Eyeball Selling

The human body is a twenty-four-hour broadcasting station that transmits

You thrill me. You bore me. I love that aspect of your product. That one puts my feet to sleep.

Set the hidden cameras behind your eyeballs to pick up on all your customers and friends signals. Then plan your pitch and your pace accordingly.

hands free for heavy networking. When you arrive, youll stop in the doorway and Rubberneck the Room to get the lay of the land. While rubbernecking, youll Be the Chooser, Not the Choosee and pick your prospects for the evening. When standing around, you will be relaxing and inviting with Come-Hither Hands.

You havent forgotten, of course, to use the meeting-people techniques from previous chapters. If you spot someone you want to talk to, check them out for a Whatzit you can comment on. Finding none, just ask the party giver, Whoozat? If the host or hostess is not in sight, simply stand near your target and resort to the Eavesdrop In technique.

While chatting with anyone youve previously met, you will, of course, use Tracking to win their vote or heart and all the tecniques in Part Two to ensure the conversation is interesting for your new acquaintance. Finally, youll employ Eyeball Selling to make sure youre on target with every conversation. And dont foget, as you say so long, to scribble material for your next contact on your Business Card Dossier.

Its a good feeling when youve done it all right. Continue using these techniques politicians use to work a room, and youll suffer no more unimportant parties. And, following the advice throughout the book, youll never strike anyone as an unimpotant person.

Now we move on to the advanced section of How to Talk to Anyone. Some of the following techniques may make you scratch your head in confusion. Pay special attention to the ones that do because it means somewhere, sometime, you might find yourself scratching your head over something much more painfullike the bump from hitting a glass ceiling, or why the business deal, frienship, or love affair went sour. You might never know, unless you read it here, that it was your own communications fumble.

How to Talk to Anyone - 92 Little Tricks...

PART NINE

How to Break the Most Treacherous Glass Ceiling of All

Sometimes People Are Tigers

Every week, when I was a kid, my mother took me to the National Geographic Society to see a film. The one on tigers invades my nightmares these many years later. Sitting there in the darkened theater, I watched a mother give birth to three tiny cubs. One was born with a mangled leg. I witnessed how all the other tiger cubs excluded him. And right there in front of the cameras, he was totured to death by the others. I remember crying and thinking how the healthy cubs were like a few of the kids in my school. Somtimes they could be very cruel.

My best friend in grade school was Stella and she was a beatiful girl inside and out. But she had a speech defect, a cleft palate. And many of our classmates laughed at her behind her back and excluded her from their games.

Kids havent changed much. When I give talks for colleges and young peoples groups, the discussion often turns to popularity. Everyone wants to be liked. Occasionally students tell me stories

about how some girl has a minor physical defect, say, a crossed eye or a nervous twitch. They say some kids laugh and make fun of her. Or a boy has a limp so no one chooses him for their baseball team. Even if he can run just as fast as the other kids, some of his classmates dont like the image of a cripple being on their side.

The years go by and kids become adults. Not too much changes. Adults are not as cruel, happily, about physical disabilties. But they can be brutal about social disabilities. Social diabilities are insidious because often we dont recognize them in ourselves. We can be blind to our social handicaps and deaf to our verbal deficiencies. But were quick to recognize them in others.

How many times has one of your associates made a dumb, insensitive gaffe? How often have you written somebody off because of some stupid move? Do you think he knew what he was doing? Of course not. He had no idea he was crossing a line or stepping on your toes. Probably no one ever told him about the subtleties were going to discuss in this final section of How to Talk to Anyone.

Weve all heard about the glass ceiling some companies costruct over women and minorities. People seldom discuss another kind of glass ceiling. This one is even more treacherous because you cant legislate against it and only top communicators reconize it. Yet its a rock-hard shield. Many bright individuals hit their heads on the thick glass as they try to climb up the next rung of the ladder to join the big boys and big girls on top. The folks able to crash through are the ones who abide by the unspoken rules that follow.

Consider each of the following techniques. If you find any of them obvious, give yourself a pat on the back. It means youre already a tiger on that one. Be on the lookout for those commnications sensitivities where you find yourself saying, You gotta be kidding! Whats wrong with that?

Watch out! It means someday, somewhere, you might commit that particular insensitivity. Then, when a big winner responds

How to Break the Most Treacherous Glass Ceiling of All 295

coolly to your suggestion, doesnt return your phone call, doesnt give you the promotion, doesnt invite you to the party, doesnt accept your date, youll never know what happened. Read each of the following techniques to ensure youre not making any of these subtle mistakes, that let the big players lacerate you and keep you from getting what you want in life.

How to Win Their Affection by Overlooking Their Bloopers

One remarkable reaction opened my eyes to yet another diffeence between big winners and little losers. Several years ago I was doing a project for a client. I had the pleasure of being taken to lunch by the four biggest fish in the firm. They wanted to famiiarize me with communications problems their company was experiencing.

We went to a busy midtown restaurant at peak lunchtime. Every table was filled with a variety of corporate creatures. Uppeand middle-management types were lunching in their suits and ties or high-collar blouses. Workers and secretaries were muncing in their blue shirts or short skirts. The restaurant was buzzing with conversation and conviviality.

Over the entrŽe, we were in deep discussion about the copanys challenges. The CFO, Mr. Wilson, was talking about the financial outlook when suddenly, BLAM! Not six feet away, a waiter dropped a tray full of dishes. Glasses broke, silverware clatered against the marble floor, and a hot baked potato rolled under our table in a direct path for Wilsons feet.

296

How to Win Their Af fection by Overlooking Their Bloopers 297

Practically everyone in the restaurant turned toward the humiliated waiter. We heard a cacophony of Uh-oh, Buterfingers! Whoops, watch it! Boy, thats his last lunch here, and a variety of tittering and derisive laughter.

Wilson, however, didnt miss a word of his monologue. Not one big player at my table turned or blinked an eye. It was as though nothing had happened. The restaurant gradually quieted down around us as we continued our deliberations. (A few miutes later the baked potato shot back out from under our table. At that moment, I found myself wondering whether Wilson had been a soccer player in his youth.)

Over coffee, the director of marketing, Ms. Dawson, was dicussing the companys planned expansion. Suddenly she made an expansive gesture with her arms that knocked over her coffee cup. Just as I was about to say, Oh dear, I bit my tongue. Before I could grab my napkin to help, Dawson was dabbing the muddy puddle with hers, and not missing a syllable of her soliloquy. None of her cool colleagues at the table even seemed to notice the ove turned cup.

At that instant, I realized big boys and big girls see no blooers, hear no bloopers. They never say Butterfingers or Whoops or even Uh-oh. They ignore their colleagues boners. They siply dont notice their comrades minor spills, slips, fumbles, and blunders. Thus, the technique See No Bloopers, Hear No Blooers was born.

Let Me Suffer in Your Silence

I have one friend who every time I sneeze says, Oh, are you coing down with a cold? Every time I miss a step on a curb, its Be careful! Every time he sees me after a long days work he asks, Are you tired? Granted, this is small fry in the great bouillabaisse of bloopers. And the poor guy probably genuinely thinks hes

being sensitive to my needs. But, darn it, coming down with a cold, missing the curb, and looking tired are less than cool. Let me sufferin YOUR silence.

If youre having dinner with a friend and she makes a boner, be blind to her overturned glass. Be deaf to her sneeze, cough, or hiccups. No matter how well-meaning your gesundheit, whoops, or knowing smile, nobody likes to be reminded of their own human frailty.

Fine, you say, for small slips, but what should one do in extreme circumstances? Say a rippling tide of soda is flooding across the table in your direction and it will be impossible to ignore by the time it reaches your lap.

If possible, deftly flip your napkin to obstruct the current and keep talking. Try not to miss a syllable of the sentence you started before the oncoming tide. At this point, your companion might mutter incoherent apologies. Adroitly weave a parenthetical Its nothing into your current phrase and continue talking. On such small sands the castles of big cat camaraderie are built.

Technique #78

See No Bloopers, Hear No Bloopers

Cool communicators allow their friends, associates, acquaintances, and loved ones the pleasurable myth of being above commonplace bloopers and embarrassing biological functions. They simply dont notice their comrades minor spills, slips, fumbles, and faux pas. They obviously ignore raspberries and all other signs of human frailty in their fellow mortals. Big winners never gape at anothers gaffes.

How to Win Their Af fection by Overlooking Their Bloopers 299

If people hate to be reminded of the moments when theyre not shining, there is another event almost as disillusioning. It is when a talker is shining and the spotlight abruptly pivots to a more urgent matter. The speaker is forgotten in the flurry.

Top communicators put the glow back in the gloomy gabbers eyes with the technique that follows.

How to Win Their Heart When Their Tongue Is Faltering

In ancient Japan, if you saved someones life, it was their selimposed task to spend the rest of their life serving you. Nowadays, if you rescue someones story, a molecule of that ancient instinct still gushes through his or her veins.

It happens all the time. Someone in a group is telling a story and, just before their big point, BOOM! Theres an interruption. Someone new joins the group, a catering person with a tray of crackers and cheese comes over, or a baby starts crying. Suddenly everyones attention turns to the new arrival, the nibbles on the tray, or the adorable little tyke. Nobody is aware of the interuptionexcept the speaker. They forget all about the fact that the speaker hasnt made his or her point.

Or youre all sitting around the living room and someone is telling a joke. Suddenly, just before their big punch line, little Johnny drops a dish or the phone rings. After the crash, everyone talks about little Johnnys clumsiness. After the call, the subject turns to the impending marriage or medical operation of the caller. Nobody remembers the great punch line got

abortedexcept the joke teller. (When its you regaling everyone at a restaurant, have

you ever noticed how you can almost set your clock by the waiter coming to take everyones order just before your hilarious punch line?)

Most joke and story tellers are too timid to say, after the invsion, Now, as I was saying . . . Instead, theyll spend the rest of the evening feeling miserable they didnt get to finish. Heres where you come in. Rescue them with the technique I call Lend a Hel ing Tongue.

Watch the gratitude in the storytellers eyes as he stabilizes where his story sunk and he sails off again toward the center of attention. His expression and the recognition of your sensitivity by the rest of the group are often reward enough. You are even more fortunate if you can rescue the story of someone who can hire you, promote you, buy from you, or otherwise lift your life. Big winners have elephantine memories. When you do them subtle favors like Lend a Helping Tongue, they find a way to pay you back.

Technique #79

Lend a Helping Tongue

Whenever someones story is aborted, let the interrution play itself out. Give everyone time to dote on the little darling, give their dinner order, or pick up the jagged pieces of china.

Then, when the group reassembles, simply say to the person who suffered story-interruptus, Now please get back to your story. Or better yet, remember where they were and then ask, So what happened after the . . . (and fill in the last few words).

Harvey Mackay, the worlds most notable networker who rose from envelope salesman to corporate CEO and one of Americas most sought-after business and motivational speakers, teaches us that the world goes round on favors. How right he is! The next three techniques reveal unspoken subtleties of this critical balance of power.

How to Let Em Know Whats In It for Them

Savvy businesspeople know everyone is constantly tuned to the same radio stationWIIFM. Whenever anyone says anything, the listeners instinctive reaction is whats in it for me? Sales pros have elevated this constant query to the exalted status of acronym, WIIFM. They pay such strict attention to the WIIFM principle that they dont open their pitch with the

features of their product or service. Top pros start by highlighting the benefits to the buyer.

Except for tactical reasons during sensitive negotiating, big winners lay both whats in it for me? and whats in it for you? (WIIFY) right out on the table. This is so critical that, if one caouflages WIIFM or WIIFY, the concealer is relegated to the sttus of little loser.

I once invited a casual acquaintance to lunch. I had hoped to consult with Sam, the head of a marketing association, on my speaking business. I told him my desire and jokingly asked if an hour of his valuable time was available in return for lunch at a great restaurant. That was my way of saying, Look Sam, I know theres no real benefit to you except a tasty lunch and the dubious plesure of my company. (In other words, I was revealing WIIFY.) To make the meeting even more convenient for him, I said, Sam, choose the date and the best restaurant in your neighborhood.

303

The day of our lunch consultation rolled around and I traeled forty-five minutes across town to his chosen restaurant. As I entered, I was surprised to see an assortment of people arranged around the largest table in the room with Sam as the smiling ce terpiece. Obviously, this was not the setting in which I could cosult with him. Unfortunately, Sam had already spotted me by the coat check. I was trapped.

It wasnt until after-lunch coffee arrived that I realized why Sam had assembled the group. He wanted each to donate presetations on their particular expertise to his organization. The sly fox hadnt revealed his own whats in it for me?

Had Sam been a straight shooter and big player, he would have told me on the phone, Leil, Im getting a group of speakers who might be helpful to my organization together for a Dutctreat lunch. I will, of course, try to answer your questions about your speaking business, but we will be a group of ten. Would you like to join us, or shall we choose another date when we can have more privacy?

I would gladly have spoken pro bono for Sams group had he been up-front about it. Instead, by not revealing WIIFM, we both lost. I lost a half day and, because of his trickiness, he lost my free speech for his group.

Dont Deny Them the Pleasure of Helping You

Big winners also lay their cards on the table when asking someone for a favor. Many well-meaning folks are embarrassed to say how important the

favor is to them. So they ask as though its a casual inquiry when its not.

A friend of mine named Stefan once asked me if I knew any bands his organization could hire for their annual event. I told him No, Im sorry. I really dont. But Stefan didnt let it go at that. He pressed, Leil, didnt you once work with bands on ships?

How to Let Em Know Whats In It for Them 305

I told him Yes, but I no longer have contact with them. I thought that was the end of it. But Stefan didnt. He grilled me further and I found myself getting confused and irritated. Finally I said, Stefan, whos in charge of getting the band?

He sheepishly said, I am.

Criminy jicketts, Stefan, why didnt you tell me it was your responsibility? In that case, let me do some research and see if I can find a good one for you. I was happy to do my friend a favor. But Stefan, by not telling me how important it was to him, risked not getting help. He also went down a notch or two in his friends esteem by not revealing WIIFM.

When asking someone for a favor, let them know how much it means to you. You come across as a straight shooter, and the joy of helping you out is often reward enough. Dont deny them that pleasure!

Asking or granting favors is a fabric that holds together only when woven with utmost sensitivity. Let us explore more ways to stitch this delicate cloth so your relationship doesnt rip.

Technique #80

Bare the Buried WIIFM (and WIIFY)

Whenever you suggest a meeting or ask a favor, divulge the respective benefits. Reveal whats in it for you and whats in it for the other personeven if its zip. If any hidden agenda comes up later, you get labeled a sly fox.

How to Make Them Want to Do Favors forYou

One of my clients, Susan Evans, heads up a large real estate firm. Once, sitting in her office discussing an upcoming project, her seretary buzzed. Excuse me, Ms. Evans, its your brother-in-law Harry on the phone.

Oh, of course, she smiled, put him on. My client, maing apologies for the interruption, picked up the phone. I left the room for a few moments to give her privacy.

When I returned, Susan was just hanging up, saying, Sure, have him phone me. She told me the call was from her brothein-law whose young cousin worked in a gas station but was inteested in a career in real estate. The

young man is going to call me and Ill see if I can help him out. It was obvious she was happy to do her brother-in-law a favor. We picked up our discussion where we left off.

Not four minutes later, the secretary buzzed again. Ms. Evans, a Sonny Laker is on the line. He says hes your brother-ilaw Harrys cousin and hes supposed to call you. My client was taken aback. I could tell from her expression she was saying to heself, Boy, my overanxious brother-in-law didnt waste any time, did he? It seemed obvious to both of us what had happened. Like

greased lightning, Harry must have hot-breathedly called Cousin Sonny to give him the big headline: Evans Would See Him! Then, by dialing Ms. Evans immediately, Sonny made it seem the bideal interview was the most important event in his otherwise dull and dismal life.

True or not, one verity remainedLittle Cousin was insenstive to an unspoken rule big winners always obey: dont jump immediately when someone is doing you a favor. Allow the peson granting the favor time to savor the pleasure of agreeing to it, before having to pay up.

Both brother-in-law and potential employee slipped in Evanss estimate, all because of timing. To ensure the kid wouldnt call his real-estate-mogul sister-in-law too quickly, Harry should have waited a day before telling his cousin the good news. Also, young Sonny should have asked Cousin Harry about Evanss schedule. Sometimes an immediate call is advantageous but not when somone is granting you a favor.

One might think Evans was unfair judging Sonny harshly just because he didnt let her savor the favor. It runs deeper than that. Evanss subconscious thought process goes something like this: If this kid is insensitive to the subtleties of timing when getting a

Technique #81

Let Em Savor the Favor

Whenever a friend agrees to a favor, allow your generous buddy time to relish the joy of his or her beneficence before you make them pay the piper.

How long? At least twenty-four hours.

job, how sensitive is he going to be when negotiating the sale of a house? One agents overanxious call to an owner can mean thosands lost in commissions for the firm.

Big winners have supernatural vision into your future. They see every communications blunder you make as a visible blotch on your x-ray. It dims your prognosis for being successful in life.

Lets look at yet another tenuous thread between favor asker and favor grantor that must not be severed lest the relationship unravel.

How to Ask for Favors (and Get Them!)

I once asked a well-connected friend who works in a top Los Angeles talent agency if she knew any celebrities I could contact for a project I was working on. Tania flipped though her Rolodex and came up with just the names I needed. It was obvious to both of us, I owed her big time.

When I thanked her profusely on the phone, Tania said, Oh Im sure youll find a way to pay me back.

Well, of course I will, I said. That goes without saying. And well it should have gone without saying. She was reminding me the favor wasnt out of friendship, but because she expected something in return.

Two days later, Tania called and said she was coming to New York in a few months. She was just checking now if I could put her up then. Naturally I could, but blatantly cashing in on the return favor so quickly was not a smooth move. When someone does something nice for you, you find yourself with an elephants memory. In fact, you consciously look for ways to return the favor. Had Tania called, even years later, of course I would have remebered I owed her one. Frankly, I was glad it came up so quickly so I could even the score. Nevertheless, I do wish the whole barter aspect had been left unspoken. It tarnished what should have been

a generous sharing on both sides. Tarnish always wears off on the tarnisher.

When you do someone a favor and they obviously owe you one, wait a few weeks. Dont make it look like tit for tat. Allow the favor asker the pleasurable myth that you joyfully did the favor with no thought of what youre going to get in return. They know thats not true. You know thats not true. But only little losers make it obvious.

The next three techniques also involve timing, not of favors, but of important discussions.

Technique #82

Tit for (Wait . . . Wait) Tat

When you do someone a favor and its obvious that he owes you one, wait

a suitable amount of time before asking him to pay. Let him enjoy the fact (or fiction) that you did it out of friendship. Dont call in your tit for their tat too swiftly.

How to Know What Not to Say at Parties

When police were hot on the tail of a thief in ancient times, hed frantically seek a church to duck into. The crook knew if he could get to an altar, the frustrated posse could not arrest him until he came out.

When a pack of wolves in the jungle is in hot pursuit of a jackrabbit, the frightened bunnys eyes seek a hollow log. He knows the wolves cant devour him until he emerges.

Likewise in the human jungle, big cats have certain safe havens. Although unspoken, they are as secure as the tenth-century altar or a hole in the log. At clearly understood times and places, even the toughest tiger knows he must not attack. I call these safe havens.

I have a friend, Kirstin, the president of an advertising agency who each year invites me to her companys Christmas party. One year, the holiday spirit was in extra-high swing. Conviviality was high and champagne flowed freely. It was a terrific bash.

The evening wore on, more bubbly flowed, and the decibel level of the holiday revelers went up and up. So high, in fact, that Kirstin told me she was going to tiptoe out the back door and offered to drop me off at my place.

As we were making our way toward the exit, we heard a woozy voice in the crowd, Oh Kirrr-stin, Kirrr-stin! A mail-room worker, warped with too much seasonal spirit, wobbled up to her boss and said, You know, thish ish a great party, a grr-reat party. But I been doin some figuring. If half what it cost went into a child-care facility for the seven, count em, seven mothers with preschool children who work here . . .

Kirstin, a top communicator, took Janes hands in hers and gave her a big smile. She said, Jane, youre obviously excellent at math. Youre right, just about half of what this party cost would indeed pay for the opening of such a facility. Lets talk about it during business hours. We then made a swift departure.

On the way back to my place, she let out a big breath and said, Whew, Im glad thats over.

Didnt you enjoy the party, Kirstin? I asked.

Well, sure, she said, But you never know whats going to happen. For

instance, she said, that remark Jane made. She went on to explain management had already had several meetings about opening a child-care facility for employees. In fact, plans for turning an unused storage area into a beautiful nursery were already in the works. Na•vely, I asked Kirstin why she hadnt metioned that to Jane.

It wasnt the right time or place. Kirstin had handled the siuation at the party the way any big winner wouldno spoken confrontation now (but probable silent condemnation later).

Jane, unfortunately, had broken the first unspoken safe-haven rule, Parties Are for Pratter. Did Kirstin chastise Jane? Did she punish her inappropriate behavior? Not then, of course. Nevetheless, Jane would probably feel the repercussions a few months down the pike when it came to promotion time. But by then poor Jane wouldnt even know why she was passed over.

Will it be because of a one-time overimbibing? Jane might grumble, Yes. Jane is wrong. Its simply that big players cant take

How to Know What Not to Say at Parties 313

the chance that one of their key people will feel too much holiday spirit at another party and next time confront an important client.

Lets move to the second safe haven where big cats can escape the claws of bigger cats and, they hope, the growls of lesser ones.

Technique #83

Parties Are for Pratter

There are three sacred safe havens in the human jungle where even the toughest tiger knows he must not attack. The first of these is parties.

Parties are for pleasantries and good fellowship, not for confrontations. Big players, even when standing next to their enemies at the buffet table, smile and nod. They leave tough talk for tougher settings.

How to Know What Not to Say at Dinner

Did you ever wonder why business lunches between big bosses go on interminably long, sometimes well into the afternoon? Did you ever suspect its just because they like to sit, drink, and massage each other on the company expense account? Perhaps theres an element of that. But the main reason is because the dining table is an even more sacred safe haven than a party. Big boys and big girls realize, whether its a business dinner, lunch, or breakfast, breaking bread together is a time when they must discuss no unpleasant aspects of the business. After all, tough negotiating can kill your appetite.

Lets listen in on an average business lunch between big plaers. We hear the clanking of glasses as they consume drinks over convivial conversation. They are discussing golf, the weather, and making general observations about the state of the business. Duing the main course, the discourse turns to food, the arts, current affairs, and other nonthreatening subjects.

Wasted time? one might ask. Not at all! The big players are watching each others moves very carefully, calculating each others skills, knowledge, prowess. Like NFL scouts observing college football practice, theyre determining whos got the right stuff. Big

players know how people handle themselves at a social occasion is an accurate barometer of their big-business muscle. As they are smiling and laughing at each others jokes, they are all making silent critical judgments.

Finally, coffee arrives. At this point one or more of the biggies gently broaches the business at hand. Naturally, he or she does it with supposed reluctance, trying to repress the obvious relief that at last they can get down to significant stuff. He exudes, What a shame such genial company should have to concern itself with mundane matters like making money.

Only after they have played out this crucial charade can they discuss business. But no dirty business. The biggies can brainstorm over coffee. They can discuss proposals over dessert. They can toss around new ideas over cordials. They can explore the positive side of the merger, the acquisition, or the partnership while waiting for the check.

However, should any disagreement, misunderstanding, or controversial aspect arise, they must immediately relegate it to another table, the conference table.

Technique #84

Dinners for Dining

The most guarded safe haven respected by big winners is the dining table. Breaking bread together is a time when they bring up no unpleasant matters. While eating, they know its OK to brainstorm and discuss the positive side of the business: their dreams, their desires, their designs. They can free associate and come up with new ideas. But no tough business.

This convention probably arose out of a prudent agreement not to inflict indigestion on each other. Tough negotiating is unpalatable and can ruin an otherwise perfectly mouthwatering veal chop.

Incidentally, the same rule applies in the social jungle. If one partner in a friendship or a love relationship has some heavy reltionship issues to discuss, save them for after dessert. Even if you dont solve the problem, you want to enjoy the delicious chocolate soufflŽ.

Lets crawl into our third and final safe haven to explore it.

How to Know What Not to Say in a Chance Meeting

William, who sells widgets, has been trying to get Big Winner on the phone for weeks to see if B.W.s company will buy his line of widgets. Big Winner is still considering Willies widgets and plans eventually to return his call. However, at this point in our story, our little heros phone has not rung.

It just so happens, one evening Willie finds himself standing behind Big Winner in the supermarket line.

What good fortune! thinks Willie.

Oh hell! thinks Big Winner. I hope hes not going to hit me with talk of his widgets at this hour.

Those who appreciate safe havens know there are two very different endings to this story. The Willie who brings up widgets with an Aha, Ive got you now gleam in his eye, never gets his call returned. Even if Big Winner preferred Willies widgets above all others, he would find the supermarket entrapment sufficiently painful to punish the little loser.

However, the Willie who just says Hello there, B.W. How good to see you, with nary a word of widgets, shows hes a big player, too. This Willie will most certainly get his call returned probably the next dayout of Big Winners relief and gratitude for Willies graciousness.

Technique #85

Chance Encounters Are for Chitchat

If youre selling, negotiating, or in any sensitive communication with someone, do NOT capitalize on a chance meeting. Keep the melody of your mistaken meeting sweet and light. Otherwise, it could turn into your swan song with Big Winner.

Consistently create safe havens for people if you want them to elevate you to the status of big winner. You may find yourself dining with them, going to parties with them, getting big hellos in the hall, and closing deals much faster than during business hours. Who knows? If its your desire, you even make yourself elgible for some heavy socializing at the top. Big winners make it safe for each other to accept invitations to play golf, spend the

weekend in their country homes, or relax by each others pools. They know there will be no sharks swimming in the water, no razor blades buried in the shrimp cocktail.

How to Prepare Them to Listen to You

Once night, several years ago on a New York City street, I caught a man trying to break into a car. I shouted for him to stop. Instead of being content escaping, the burly would-be burglar decided to retaliate. As he raced past me, he shoved me down onto the cement and I cracked my skull against the curb.

Dizzily, I wobbled into the emergency room of a nearby hopital. Holding an ice pack against my throbbing head, I was grilled by the emergency room triage nurse on my address, telephone, and social security numbers, insurance carrier, policy number, ad naseam. Its as if she had said,The heck with your cracked skull. You can tell me about that later. Whats your insurance number?

Dont bother me with that minutiae! All I wanted to do was tell somebody, anybody, what happened to me. It wasnt until the very end of her ruthless and sadistic interrogation that she asked, So what happened?

I later told my sad story to a friend, Sue, a nurse who works in admitting in another emergency room. She said, I know. I cant believe they print the forms that way. Injured people dont get to tell what happened to them until the last line of the form. Sue said getting crucial numerical details from people suffering in the ER with broken bones and burns was a real challenge. Until, she said,

she switched her questioning around. Shed first ask them what happened. Theyd tell her all about it. Shed listen sympathetically. Then, she said, they were only too happy to give me the infomation I needed.

Good bosses understand this human need to talk. Robert, a colleague of mine who owns a small manufacturing firm, says whenever one of his employees complains about a problem, he never holds the gripers feet to the fire for facts first. He hears the employee out completely. He lets him carry on about the cantakerous customer, the uncooperative coworker. Then, after hes gotten it off his chest, Robert says, I get the facts a lot more clearly.

When You Have Important Information to Impart

Any kid working in a garage knows you cant pump more gas into a full tank. Too much topping it off, and it splashes onto the cement. Likewise,

your listeners brain is always full of his or her own thoughts, worries, and enthusiasms. If you pump your ideas into your listeners brain, which is full of her own notions, youll get a polluted mixture, then a spill. If you want your supersupreme ideas to flow into her tank unpolluted, drain her tank completely first.

Technique #86

Empty Their Tanks

If you need information, let people have their entire say first. Wait patiently until their needle is on empty and the last drop drips out and splashes on the cement. Its the only way to be sure their tank is empty enough of their own inner noise to start receiving your ideas.

How to Prepare Them to Listen to You 321

Whenever you are discussing emotionally charged matters, let the speaker finish completely before you jump in. Count to ten if you must. It will seem like an eternity, but letting the flustered felow finish is the only way hell hear you when its your turn.

Im Going to Make You Miserable Before You Can Enjoy Being My Customer

Companies that run mail-order operations could take a hint from this technique. One reason I enjoy ordering from L.L. Bean, a mail-order clothing and sports-equipment outfit, is they let me ask questions about the wearable or widget I want first. They let me ramble on with my questions about the quality, the available coors, how it looks, how it feels, how it smells, and how it works. Then, when Im all whacked up about receiving my four size-ten, red-and-chartreuse, soft, odorless widgets, they tastefully ask my credit card number.

Other companies have first grilled me on the number, the expiration date, my customer number (which I can never find on the back of the catalogue), and how often Ive ordered from them in the past before I even get to fantasize about the wonderful widget I might want to buy from them. Takes all the joy out of the purchase and sometimes kills the sale.

Top communicators do more than just let you babble on. They use the next technique while youre in the process of dribling down.

How to Turn Their Anger Around (in Three Sentences or Less)

Emo is a word invented by Helen Gurley Brown, the grand dame of Cosmopolitan magazine. Emo translated is Give more emotion! Once Cosmopolitan asked me to write an article on communicaing sensitive

matters (most specifically advising young women on how to make their boyfriends more passionate). I interviewed a passel of psychologists, communications experts, and sexologists. My draft came back from Cosmo all marked up with MORE EMO scribbled on every page.

I called my editor and asked what it meant. She said that was Helens way of saying downplay all that factual stuff with the sex therapists and so-called experts. Write about the emotion the young woman feels when her boyfriend isnt passionate enough, the emtion the accused male feels when confronted, and the emotion the couple feels about discussing their quandary. Helen Gurley Brown, a certified big winner, liked to have it all and knew just how to get it. Helen recognized, when the time is right, reject the rational and empathize with the emotions. In other words, smear on the emo.

Oh, No! He Must Have Been Mortified!

L.L. Bean recently smeared emo all over me. Several months ago, my friend Phil wanted to buy some trousers and asked for a rec322

How to Turn Their Anger Around (in Three Sentences or Less) 323

ommendation. I dragged him to my closet to show him the quaity and construction of the L.L. Bean clothes. That convinced him, and Phil ordered a pair of navy-blue dress trousers.

Phil wore his brand new L.L. Bean pants for the first time on a big date with a new girlfriend at an elegant restaurant. While following the ma”tre d to the cozy corner booth which hed requested, his date happened to drop her evening bag. Phil promptly bent over to pick it up. Riiiiiiip! Right down the midle seam.

Most of the diners facing Phils derriere mercifully looked away. A few tittered. Phil, tugging the torn seams together to blaket his buns, backed his way into the booth. The cool upholstery on his bottom the rest of the evening reminded him of his humiliation.

When I heard of Phils tribulations, I was furious at L.L. Bean. I immediately called one of their customer service agents. She sypathized as I told her of Phils ordeal, but I was still simmering. She patiently listened and even asked me details of the disaster. When I finished the long sad story, the agent said, Oh thats terible. I understand, your friend must have felt awful.

Yes, he did, I agreed. He must have been mortified! she said. He definitely was, I said, surprised at her excellent grasp of

the situation. And you, when you heard about it. You must have felt terrible, too, especially after youd recommended our products so highly.

Well, your products usually are excellent, I said, calming down a bit.

Im so sorry we caused you this pain and aggravation, she said.

Oh, I interrupted. Its not your fault. Now I was copletely appeased. It must have just been a fluke that this one pair of pantswas...

Technique #87

Echo the Emo

Facts speak. Emotions shout. Whenever you need facts from people about an emotional situation, let them emote. Hear their facts but empathize like mad with their emotions. Smearing on the emo is often the only way to calm their emotional storm.

Theres more to this story, but let me pause here to interject the Echo the Emo technique.

The clever customer service rep not only emptied my tanks and softened me up with Echo the Emo. She completely dissolved me with the next technique.

How to Make Em Like You (Even When Youve Messed Up)

The next day, UPS delivered not only the replacement slacks, but tucked into the package was a handwritten apology and a hefty gift certificate. Would I order from that company again? You bet I would. Would I recommend their clothes to someone else? You bet I would. Top customer service folks welcome mistakes because they know it gives their firm a chance to shine. Whenever you mess up and someone suffers because of it, make sure they come out ahead, way ahead. I call the technique My Goof, Your Gain.

Visiting an important clients office, I once tripped on a rug and took a nose dive, making a three-point landing in a vase on her desk. My nose was spared but her vase shattered into smithereens. Two tubes of crazy glue and lots of Where the heck does this piece go later, the vase was back on her desk, and we agreed it looked pretty good. Nevertheless, the next day I had a messenger deliver a beautiful vase, ten times the value of the almost-totaled one, with a dozen roses in it.

Whenever we speak, my client tells me every time she looks at the new vase, she smiles. (A better incentive gift than a pen with your name on it, no?) The next time I visit her office, my client may hide some of her more valuable breakables. But, thanks to My Goof, Your Gain, there will be a next time.

Technique #88

My Goof, Your Gain

Whenever you make a boner, make sure your victim benefits. Its not enough to correct your mistake. Ask yourself, What could I do for this suffering soul so he or she will be delighted I made the flub? Then do it, fast! In that way, your goof will become your gain.

Now, suppose its not your boo-boo. Its theirs. How can you make their goof your gain? Read on.

How to Trap a Rat with Class

In Japan, some citizens prefer to lose their lives rather than to lose face. In America, the same death wish exists, with one modifiction. The Yank dreams of the death of the mortal who made him lose face.

Why make enemies? Unless it is your obligation to catch cheaters or entrap liars, let them get away with it. Then immedately get them out of your life and the lives youre responsible for. Even when the case is open and shut against someonewhen youve got the rat fink trappedleave him an escape hatch.

The best example I heard of this high sensitivity was from one of my clients. She was invited to brunch at the home of a wealthy socialite known as Lady Stephanie. Lady Stephanies home was filled with beautiful objets dart. Not the least among them was an exquisite collection of extremely valuable FabergŽ eggs, which all the guests admired.

At the end of the elegant champagne brunch, my client told me she was walking out the door chatting with several other guests. Just then, Lady Stephanie sidled up to one woman leaving at the same time as my client. Oh, Im so happy you were admiing my FabergŽ collection, Lady Stephanie said, sliding her hand into the pocket of the guests mink coat and plucking out one of

her priceless eggs. You must have wanted to see this one in the sunlight. Come, let us look at it together. It does reflect the bright light beautifully.

The mink-clad thief gulped and furtively looked around to see who had witnessed her gentle entrapment. My client and everyone in the foyer saw what happened, but took Lady Stephanies lead and pretended na•vetŽ of the attempted heist.

Carrying the charade a step further, Lady Stephanie and the sticky-fingered guest admired the egg in the sunlight. Then Lady Stephanie, with

her FabergŽ egg secured safely between her pefectly manicured fingers, marched home to put the treasure in its rightful place. The attempted egg snatcher crawled back to her car, from her last attendance at Lady Stephanies coveted bashes. The hostess let the foiled filcher get away with a few slivered shreds of her ego left intact.

Why did Lady Stephanie come out ahead? Everyone who winessedand subsequently heard aboutthe thwarted burglary has renewed respect for Lady Stephanie. Snaring the thief, yet sparing her pride, helped Lady Stephanie keep her reputation of hostess with the mostest.

Why do big winners let bad-news people get away with bumers? Because, like mothers confronting naughty children to corect them, confronting creeps is a way of saying I care. By closing your mouth (and then the door forever), you are saying, You are so beneath me Im not going to even waste my words on you.

Mea Culpa!

Big winners leave an escape hatch for the small foibles of friends they wish to keep by taking the blame themselves. If a friend gets lost and is an hour late arriving at your house, tell her Those directions I gave you were terrible. He breaks your Limoges bowl? Oh I shouldnt have left it in such a precarious position. Its the

old mea culpa routine that endears you to everyone, especially when they realize it wasnt your fault.

Residents of Toronto, Canada, have a well-earned reputation for grace. They demonstrated it last year in a downtown Toronto drugstore. A shopper attempted to stroll out through the security system with a purloined object in his pocket. Instead of a shrill alarm shattering all shoppers eardrums, as in many American cities, a tasteful little chime sounded. A charming voice came across the public address. Excuse us, we have failed to inactivate the inventory control system. Thank you for your patience while you wait for a customer care representative to come help you. Isnt that a nicer way of saying Freeze, punk, while we come frisk you?

Now lets move on to the next technique to keep people from messing upand to help them give you their very best.

Technique #89

Leave an Escape Hatch

Whenever you catch someone lying, filching, exaggeating, distorting, or

deceiving, dont confront the dirty duck directly. Unless it is your responsibility to catch or correct the culpritor unless you are saving other innocent victims by doing solet the transgressor out of your trap with his tricky puss in one piece. Then resolve never to gaze upon it again.

How to Get Whatever You Want from Service Personnel

A complimentary letter is called a buttercup because it butters up the recipient. Buttercups are nice. Even nicer are buttercups about someone to their boss.

I once needed a massive photocopying job. It was so immense that the assistant manager of Staples office-supply store didnt think it could be finished by the end of the week. Nevertheless, grudgingly, he grumbled, Ill try. In my enthusiasm and hope he could, I gushed, Wow, youre great! Whats your bosss name? Your supervisor should get a letter of congratulations on hiring you. You really try harder for your customers. To my astonis ment, not only was my printing job done two days early, but every time I walk into Staples, the assistant manager rolls out the red carpet.

Hmm, I began to think. I may be on to something. A prmature letter of commendation for favors not yet received could be a clever tactic. I decided to check it out with a few heavy hiters on my consultation list.

One fellow I know, Tim, a top travel agent, is a real can-do guy. He gets anything his friends ask for in a finger snap. Hes the fellow to call when you want hard-to-get theater tickets. Hes the

guy you call when your airline says the hotel is booked or the flight is oversold.

When I told him of my buttercup experience, Tim laughed and said, Leil, of course. This is news to you? A complimentary letter to someones bossor the promise of oneis a great insu ance policy. Its as good as a written rider that you will be well taken care of in the future.

Now I have a standard one in my computer. The buttercup reads as follows:

Dear [name of supervisor],

I know how important customer service is to an organization such as yours. This letter is to comend [name of employee]. He/She is an example of an [employee title] who gives exceptional customer service. [Name of store or business] continues to have my business thanks in great part to the service

given by [name of employee].

Gratefully, [signature]

Ive sent this letter to supervisors of parking lots, owners of insurance companies, and to managers of dozens of stores where I shop regularly. Im sure thats why I never need to worry about getting a parking place when the lot is full, an immediate callback from my insurance agent, and attentive service at my regular shoping haunts.

But be careful! Dont just ask, Whats the name of your supervisor? Hearing those words can make an employee as nerous as a turkey in November. Be sure to couch it in a compliment. Say something like, Wow, you are terrific. Whats your supervsors name? Id like to write him or her a letter. Then write it! Youll forever be a VIP in his or her book.

Teechnique #90

Buttercups for Their Boss

Do you have a store clerk, accountant, law firm junior partner, tailor, auto mechanic, ma”tre d, massage therapist, kids teacheror any other worker you want special attention from in the future? The surefire way to make them care enough to give you their very best is send a buttercup to their boss.

The next technique tells you how to stand out as a VIP when youre in a group.

How to Be a Leader in a Crowd, Not a Follower

During the McCarthy era, government spies infiltrated undeground political rallies to determine who was dangerous to national security. The agents were trained applause watchers. They photographed and investigated men who clapped first, shouted Bravo the loudest, and smiled the longest at the end of politically inflammatory speeches. The spies dubbed those the dangerous ones. The infiltrators felt first responders were confdent cats who had the power to persuade followers and the charisma to lead crowds.

In less politically sensitive gatherings, the same principle applies. People who respond first to a presentation or happening, without looking around to see how everyone else is reacting, are men and women of leadership caliber.

Cool Cats Clap First

You are sitting in an auditorium with hundreds of fellow emploees listening to the president of your firm introduce a new cocept. As youre slouching anonymously in the audience, you think your expression is invisible to the man or woman at the podium. Not so! As a speaker, I guarantee you every one of my colleagues

sees every smile, every frown, every light in every eye, and every emblem of extraordinary human intelligence flashing back at him or her.

Likewise, the company president making a presentation aniously surveys his corporate jungle and, from the pusses peering back at him, senses which employees are sympathetic and which are not. He also knows which in the sea of faces floating in front of him has the potential to be a heavy hitter like himself. How?

Because heavy hitters, even when they do not agree with the speaker, support the podium pontificator. Why? Because they know what its like to be on. They know, no matter how big or litle the cat at the front of the room is, when giving a speech hes concerned about the crowds acceptance.

When the company big shot delivers his last line, carefully contrived to bring the crowd to its feet or employees to acquiecence, do you think hes unaware of who starts the trickle, or the riptide, of acceptance? No way! Though his head is down while taking a bow, with the insight of a McCarthy-era spy, he perceives

Technique #91

Lead the Listeners

No matter how prominent the big cat behind the podium is, crouched inside is a little scaredy-cat who is anxious about the crowds acceptance.

Big winners recognize youre a fellow big winner when they see you leading their listeners in a positive reaction. Be the first to applaud or publicly commend the man or woman you agree with (or want favors from).

precisely who inaugurated the applause, precisely how long after the last words were uttered, and precisely how enthusiastically! Being the first to put your hands together, being the first to jump to your feet, and, if appropriate, being the first to shout Bravo, gets you big cat status with the tiger who was talking.

Be the first clapper no matter how small the crowd, no mater how informal the talk. Dont wait to see how everyone else is going to respond. Even if its a small group of three or four peple standing around, be the first to empathize with the speakers ideas, the first to mutter good idea. Its proof positive youre a person who trusts his or her own instincts.

How to Make All the Right Moves

Any minute, any second, football fans know the score. Even beeguzzling

Big George, dozing in front of the TV set on football Sunday knows. Poke his pudgy pot, and in a wink, hell tell you whos winning, whos losing, and by precisely how many points.

Key players in the game of life are like George. Even when you think theyre dozing, they are constantly aware of the score between themselves and everyone in their lifefriends and faily included! They know who is winning, who is losing, and by how many points.

When two Japanese businessmen meet, its obvious who is on top. You measure it in millimeters from how close to the floor their noses come when bowing. (Bottom mans nose dives lower.)

In America, we dont have carefully choreographed bows showing the score in a relationship. But boys n girls in the busness big league know who is top dog and who is bottom dog today. (It can change tomorrow.)

Bottom dog must curtsy deeper. He or she must show defeence. Bottom dog must offer to meet at top dogs office, pick up the restaurant tab when appropriate, and be respectful of top dogs time. If bottom dog fails to show the proper deference, he doesnt

get his nose rubbed into the ground. He simply disqualifies hiself to bark in the big league.

Thats what happened to my girlfriend Laura, who had deveoped the healthy milkshake. (Remember her from Instant Replay?) When we last left Laura, she was blowing her chances with Fred, the top banana of a supermarket chain, by grilling him for details of his mailing address, complaining her pen was out of ink, maing him wait while she got another, writing numbers down wrong, ad nauseam.

I didnt tell you the worst part. After Fred was generous enough to invite Laura to send him samples of her health shake, she dropped another bomb by asking him which shipping service she should use. He must have said FedEx because I heard Laura say, Well, my milkshake needs to stay refrigerated. Does FedEx have refrigerated trucks?

At this point I knew she had strangled the deal by her own phone chord. She shouldnt nudge Supermarket Czar with dinky shipping details. In fact, Laura should be so grateful, she should personally deliver the drink the next dayrolling it all the way to his supermarket with her nose if need be. Laura was obviously not aware of The Great Scorecard in the Sky. That day the

tally was Fred everything, Laura nothing.

Big winnersbefore putting pen to paper, fingers to keboard, mouth to phone, or hand to someone elses to shake it do a quick calculation. They ask themselves Who has the most to benefit from this relationship? What has each of us done recently that demands deference from the other? And what can I do to even the score?

Friends Keep Tabs Too

The Great Scorecard in the Sky is not just bobbing over busnesspeople. If family members and friends look carefully over their

loved ones heads, theyll spot it. And, like an over-the-counter stock, it goes up or down every day. When you mess up, you have to even your score by doing more for the one who didnt. To keep love alive, keep your eye on The Great Scorecard in the Sky.

Several months ago, I met a nice chap named Charles at a covention. We started discussing our favorite foods. His was hommade linguine with pesto sauce. I liked Charles and I make a mean pesto sauce. The remarkable coincidence of these two elements emboldened me to invite him to dinner at my place. Great, he said. We set it for seven-thirty the following Tuesday.

Tuesday afternoon, I begin preparations for the big date. The cuckoo clock on the wall monitored my progress. At five cuckoos, I run to the store to find pine nuts. By six cuckoos, Im back home grinding basil and garlic. At seven cuckoos, Im folding napkins, setting the table, pulling out fresh candles. Whoops, running late. I change clothes and spruce myself up. When seven-thirty strikes, I am all ready. The pesto and I await his arrival.

Eight oclock rolls around and no friend. Well, I figure, Ill open the wine and let it breathe. Another hour passes and no Charles. The cuckoo calls me cuckoo nine times now. I begin to believe the bird. It is evident Charles isnt coming. I have been stood up.

The next day Charles called with halfhearted apologies and a semiplausible excuse. His car broke down. Gee, Im sorry, I said. (I wanted to say, Did Martians capture you? Were you tranported to another planet where there were no phones to call me? I resisted the sarcasm.) However, he did sound contrite so I was almost willing to forget it. Until his next question.

He obviously wasnt aware of how hed slipped in The Great Scorecard in the Sky because, instead of inviting me for linguine with pesto at a fine Italian restaurant to make up for his blooper, he asked, When can we reschedule at your house?

Never, Charlie.

How to Make All the Right Moves 339

Technique #92

The Great Scorecard in the Sky

Any two people have an invisible scorecard hovering above their heads. The numbers continually fluctuate, but one rule remains: player with lower score pays deference to player with higher score. The penalty for not keeping your eye on The Great Scorecard in the Sky is to be thrown out of the game. Permanently.

Your Destiny

Weve met many people in How to Talk to Anyone. A few of their names are changed, but each is very real. Recently, I decided to track down some of the folks with whom Id crossed paths over the years. I wanted to see what theyre up to now.

Laura, my old friend who dreamed of milkshake millions but ignored the Supermarket Czars scorecard, is now back at her day job. Sam, who ruffled me by not revealing he wanted me to speak for his organization, no longer has one. Sonny, who hounded his brother-in-laws cousin by a too-quick call, is still pumping gas. Tania, who insisted on immediate tit for tat, no longer has that terrific job at the talent agency. Poor Jane, the mail-room clerk who confronted her boss at the Christmas party five years ago, is still wrapping packages. And Dan, who left the prolonged inspirational message on his phone, now has an unlisted numbernot a good sign for an aspiring speaker.

Whereas Barry who asks everyone he calls, What Color Is Your Time? was recently chosen Broadcaster of the Year by the National Association of Talk Show Hosts. Joe, who keeps note of everyone on his Business Card Dossier, is now a state senator.

Jimmi, the expert at Eyeball Selling, was recently written up in Success magazine. Steve, whose staff insinuates Oh Wow, Its You! to every caller, is one of the most requested speakers on the cable circuit. Tim, the can-do guy who gets what he wants from worers in every industry by writing Buttercups for Their Boss, now owns the travel agency. And Gloria, my hairdresser who gives the great Nutshell RŽsumŽ, recently opened a salon on New Yorks fashionable Fifth Avenue.

Does this mean to say that just because the first folks irked me and a few others they were exiled to a humdrum existence? And the latter group who made people smile would attain great heights? Of course not. Those isolated

moments of their lives we examined were but one move of many they made each day.

But consider: if you had been who was ruffled by Laura, Sam, Sonny, Tania, Jane, or Dan and they called you, would you feel like extending yourself for them? Probably not. The memory of their ragged dealing would still smart.

Whereas if you heard from Barry, Joe, Jimmi, Steve, Tim, or Gloria, happy memories of your exchange would flood over you. Youd want to do whatever you could for them.

Multiply your response by many thousands. As we said in the introduction, nobody gets to the top alone. Over the years, the smooth moves of these big winners have captured the hearts and conquered the minds of hundreds of people who helped boost them rung by rung to the top of whatever ladder they chose.

How does one become an instinctive smooth mover rather than a ragged rider through life? The answer became blindingly clear one snowy day last winter. Lumbering along a neatly groomed track on cross-country skis, I spotted a Nordic skier swiftly striding toward me in the same trail. I didnt need to observe his high kick or his snazzy diagonal poling to let me know I was obstructing the path of a pro.

How to Make All the Right Moves 341

While mustering the energy to lug my throbbing legs out of the track so Super Skier could soar past, he deftly sidestepped out of the groove, leaving the groomed trail all for me. As he whizzed toward me, he slowed slightly, smiled, nodded, and said, Good morning, beautiful day for skiing, isnt it?

I appreciated his deference (and insinuation that we were equals on the snow!). I knew he was not thinking Hey look at me. Here I am! but Ahh, there you are. Let me make room for you.

As I implied in the opening words of this book, the diffeence in the life success between those two types of thinkers is incalculable.

Why was Super Skier able to pull off his move so gracefully? Was he born with the skill? No. His was a deliberate move that grew out of practice.

Practice is also the fountainhead of all smooth communictions moves. Excellence is not a single and solitary action. It is the outcome of many years of making small smooth moves, tiny ones like the ninety-two little tricks weve explored in How to Talk to Anyone. These moves create your destiny.

Remember, repeating an action makes a habit. Your habits create your

character. And your character is your destiny. May success be your destiny.