

# The 3 Minutes It Takes To Read This Will Improve Your Conversations Forever

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Since my [tips to improve your writing in two minutes](#) were so popular, I thought I'd share some similar tips to improve your next conversation.

Following are the simplest tips I can give you to ask better questions, which will make your conversations more valuable to you and the people you engage with.

## Don't ask yes/no questions.

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Open-ended questions generate more interesting responses because they unlock more information from people.

**Example:** Don't ask, "Do you like movies?" You'll get a more interesting answer if you ask, "*Why do you like movies?*"

## Ask "why" three times.

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This is the easiest way to deepen the level of a conversation.

**Example:** If you ask a person why they like movies and they answer because it's a good escape, you can follow up with, *"Why do you feel like you need an escape?"* If they answer because their job is stressful, you can follow up with *"Why is your job stressful?"* Repeated "Why" questions can turn a simple question about movies into a much deeper conversation.

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## Ask about specifics, not generalizations.

Questions about specifics lead people to give you answers that are not generic.

**Example:** Don't ask, "What was fun about your trip?" Instead, drill down and ask, *"What was the single most fun moment of the trip?"*

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## Ask about reactions.

Frame questions around a person's reactions to experiences in their life—what surprised them, challenged them, or changed their viewpoint.

**Example:** Don't ask, "What's it like to be a doctor?" Instead, ask *"What's the most surprising thing you've discovered about being a doctor?"*

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## Ask follow-up questions.

When you ask a question, pay attention to the answer and ask a follow-up question about it to dig deeper.

**Example:** If a person says the most surprising thing about being a doctor is how uncomfortable people get in hospitals, follow up with a question like, *"What do you do to help make them more comfortable?"*

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## Ask about lessons.

If your goal is to learn from somebody, the easiest shortcut to do that is to ask them what they've learned.

**Example:** Ask questions like, *"What did you learn from working with that client?"*, *"What do you wish you knew before you started working with them?"*, and *"What advice would you have for others who want to get into your field?"*

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## Ask for a story.

The most interesting information is found in stories, so ask people to tell you one.

**Example:** Don't ask, "What's it like to be a teacher?" Instead, ask *"What's the craziest thing that's ever happened to you in a class?"*

## Ask like a kid.

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If you don't fully understand something and want more clarity, ask a person how they would explain it to a kid or somebody with no experience on the subject.

**Example:** Instead of asking, "Can you explain that product feature again?," ask *"How would you explain that feature to somebody who's never seen our product before?"*

## Ask what else you should ask.

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When you wrap up your questions, give the other person an opportunity to tell you what you should have asked. They will likely suggest a question that provides valuable information.

**Example:** Ask, *"Am I missing anything? What's the question nobody ever asks you but you wish they would?"*