



Building Better Banter

The Basics Part I

Tool 1: Never Use Absolutes

~~“What’s your favourite movie, ice cream, meal?”~~

Instead, use stream of consciousness, free associations, connections based on particular nouns/topics discussed.

Tool 2: Canned Invitations Questions

Q: How are you? A: “I’m swinging in an hammock!”

Q: How was your weekend? A: “[describe something funny]”

Q: Where’d you go to school? A: “[partying 80% studying 20%]”

Q: Where are you from? A: “[the prairie skies...minus 40.]”

Q: Do you have siblings? A: “[one sis, two bros..lot-a-sharing]”

Q: What do you do? A: “[I help financial traders click better]”

Q: What did you study? A: “[people, places and beers]”

Tool 3: Double Answers

Step 1 – provide a layman’s answer that is short, unique and fun.

“I pack and send wallets for a living!” “This weekend I sailed my parents sailboat chanting limericks and avoiding siblings.”

Step 2 – provide the expert answer. “I’m the CEO of a men’s apparel company.” “Sailing since I was 12, like riding a bike.”

IMPORTANT NOTES

- Don’t want to appear too knowledgeable or elitist in Step 2

Play In Conversation Part I

Tool 1: Break the Fourth Wall

- Commenting on the conversation itself.
- Acknowledge something about the conversation. Full meta!
- “This conversation just took a fun turn...”
- “I apologize for talking so much about this topic...”
- Be positive: “Franky, I don’t know where this conversation is going but I like it!”
- Us against the World: “Have you noticed something...?”

Tool 2: Fall Back Stories

Fall back stories should be universal. Never use absolutes.....

Four distinct parts

1. The bridging sentence “You know what I heard yesterday...”
2. The story “One of my friends proposed to her boyfriend, didn’t want to wait...”
3. Your opinion of the story “I thought, well, it’s 2021...”
4. What their opinion of the story “Would you accept a proposal like that?”

- Just transition from a dead convo: “Want to know something interesting that happened yesterday?” or “You won’t believe what happened?”
- Story points out some basic emotions, story telling. It’s not even about the story...what is the primary emotion and point!!!
- My opinion: “You want to have a positive interpretation.” It’s key to be positive...
- Opinion: “Would I do that?” You need multiple questions to prime the conversation.

The Basics Part II

Tool 4: Always Stay Positive

- Lead with: “Yes!”, “Agreed!”, “Totally!”, “Awesome!”
- Avoid: “Nope!”, “Yeah But!”, “Wrong!”, “The opposite!”
- Compliment things that the person can control: clothing, hairstyle, accessories, world view, their ideas, how they solve/tackle a problem, weight loss.....
- Do not compliment eyes, ears, face, body as the person cannot really control those things, (also inappropriate).
- Flattery can quickly become ham fisted and lame, avoid it.

Tool 5: Pay Attention to how they want to be perceived

- Call out when some one has put in a lot of effort.
- “You kept working on that project, we love it!”

SUMMARY OF THE BASICS

1. Don't use absolutes, use generalizations...no right answers.
2. Reactions are important, mirror the emotions that the other person is expressing, this brings them onside.
3. Use free associations in the conversation; keywords!
4. Double answer: layman answer and expert answer.
5. Give people complements on the things they control.

Play In Conversation Part II

Tool 3: Role Play

Get the creative mind flowing, how would you proceed with this story?

1. Make a judgement about someone, that contrasts with you. “You are great at navigating”
2. Give them a label in a statement made. “Chris Columbus of Round Lake.”
3. Start playing the role: the modern Chris Columbus. Then you play out the role conversationally.
4. Then continue with the fake set of questions...Chris Columbus would you travel to the moon?

SUMMARY OF PLAY IN CONVERSATIONS:

1. Breaking the fourth wall;
2. Use against the world technique;
3. Short fall back stories to test how they would react;
4. Role playing....take on generic roles and then follow up the role play.

Witty Banter Part I

Tool 1: Don't Be Too Literal

- *So the idea here is to be more playful in your conversation, less literal and less serious. Use conversation as a way to have fun with people rather than share information or facts.*
- *Something that is noteworthy and gets their attention is more valuable than a straightforward answer, in most circumstances.*
- *Make sure you actually answer the question so that you're humorous and informative.*

Tool 2: Witty Comeback

- When you come back should be done with an indifferent tone, in the way that perhaps James Bond might use, after just defeating a villain. "Positively shocking!"
- Focus on specific words that the person uses. And exploit those words. Re-interpret them in a new way. Intentionally mis-interpret their statements.
- For example, Statement: you're as slow as a glacier....could be interpreted as. Comeback: you mean I'm strong and cool under pressure?

Tool 3: Amplify the Statement to a ridiculous degree

"You look like a girl" Can be responded with "Am I a charming girl?"

Funny on Command

Tool 1: The Comic Triple

- List two things that are positive (negative) and then one negative (positive).
- Audiences expect the third to align with the other. This surprise causes laughter
- [good things], [good thing] and [bad things].
- Greeks gave us science, democracy and little cubes of charred meat that taste like sweat. – Big Bang Theory

Tool 2: Misdirection

- Stating something in the first part and then the true sentiment in the second part.
- I love dogs except seeing, hearing or touching them.

Tool 3: Sarcasm

- Usually to exaggerate the situation to the absurd...
- Make sure you do this dead pan...
- Oh that would be the end of the world...

Tool 4: Irony

- The opposite of what was intended. Observing contrasts.
- Ironic Simile: "As a sad as a dog with a bone."
- "As flexible as a brick."

Witty Banter Part II

Tool 3: Banter Chain

- The key is to stop taking things at face value and start intentionally misinterpret the statement for goofy results.
- The best way to break the mold in small talk is to play dumb and misconstrue what the other persons point was.
- You can achieve quite a lot in your banter by agreeing and then going beyond and amplifying what they had said to create a banter chain. For example, Statement: I love the colour of that cat. Reply: “so you think that cat is sexy huh?” Answer: “Yeah, I think that cat sexy I can go on a date with that cat.” Question: “where would you take the cat?” Answer: “I’d take that cat dancing all night, cats are nocturnal after all.”

Tool 4: Exaggeration Is an Effective Technique

- For example if you say I’m really hungry I could eat this whole meal myself, the other person could reply oh I could eat a horse;
- Make sure the exaggeration is extreme: “I’ll call you when you get home.” A: “Well, I don’t know how I don’t know if they have phones on the moon...”

Captivating Stories

Tool 1: The Power of Three

- We have an innate desire to hear things in threes the human brain is drawn to patterns of three, the three little pigs, the three bears, the holy Trinity and the three branches of government. Etc etc.

Tool 2: MiniStory

- You have to recognize them in our daily stories.
- Storytelling is telling someone what happened.
- We must draw and tell stories from our daily lives.

Tool 3: The Story Spine – 8 Elements

- 1. “Once upon a time there was ____.” You lay out the characters...
- 2. “Every day, ____.” You lay out their world...
- 3. “One day ____.” dilemma one....
- 4. “Because of that, ____.” dilemma two....
- 5. Because of that, ____ (and so on) dilemma three...
- 6. “So...” dilemma four....
- 7. “Until finally ____.” Climax
- 8. And every day after that ____ . You provide the moral of the story at the end which signals you’re done telling the story
- The High Point of a conversation could be referenced at a future point in the conversation which creates an inside angle between you and the person you’re talking with
- Asking the right questions in a conversation is critical by asking the right questions you’re able to elicit storytelling so frame your question as though it requires a story and you’ll get more out of your partner.
- One ask for a story to be brought as to what you were asking give them multiple prompts
- Ask them for an emotional angle.