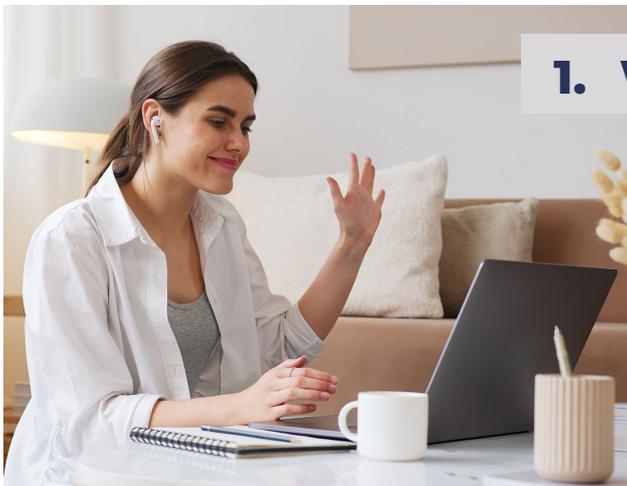


8 TIPS TO LEAD A CONVERSATION LIKE A PRO

Have an interview or session planned with customers? Use our expert tips to find the insights that matter.



1. Who's in the session?

You know their names - but what else can you find out?

Visit their LinkedIn pages for example to find out their age, hobbies, groups. This will make it easier to connect with them at the start of the session and help you place their answers in context.

2. Use open questions

Practice using open questions instead of closed (or "yes/no") ones. It's harder than you think to formulate your thoughts into an open question format.

Why? A simple 'yes' or 'no' doesn't tell you much, and closed questions can be leading.

"How clear is this page to you?"

"To what extent is this clear to you?"

"Which parts do you find clear? Why?"

"Is this clear?"



3. Bounce criticism back

When a person is critical of your work, you may think: "That's not how it works! let me explain." Resist the urge to say this.

Instead bounce the critique back to them, asking why. Listen and learn their viewpoint.

"What specifically don't like?"

"Why do you feel that way?"

"Why do you think this is how it works?"



4. Curb your enthusiasm

People want to be helpful, especially when they feel you're personally invested in the topic at hand.

If they compliment the work, realize they may just be trying to please you.

Play the compliment back to them, asking why. For example: *"So you like this a lot, what 2 things do you specifically like about it? Why these?"*

5. The past is golden (and the future is flimsy)

"How have you done this in the past?"

"Tell me about the last time you (...)"

"When did this happen last? Why?"

"What didn't work when you did that? Why?"

"What would you pay for this?"
"Woud you use this?"



Ask someone what they think they'll do (eg *"would you buy this?"*) - most likely they'll tell you what you want to hear.

Instead, ask for concrete examples about what they've done in similar situations in the past, such as: *What did you buy when you needed to...? How'd it work?*

Apply these past insights to finetune your work today.

6. Dig deep into their tips and ideas

People often come up with neat ideas or tips about the topic you're discussing.

Instead of just noting the tip down, take a step back. Ask what's driving or sparking these tips. What is it that they need that prompts them to suggest this idea?

Getting to the underlying need will help you dream up even better solutions.

"Why do you want it to do that?"

"Why is this idea important to you?"

"What problem does this solve for you?"

"Where have you seen something similar?"

"Good idea, thanks"



7. Practice the "why?"

[You] *"Why don't you like that box?"*
[Jack] *"I don't like the clock in it."*
[You] *"Why don't you like the clock in it?"*
[Jack] *"It's analog, not digital."*
[You] *"Why don't you like an analog clock?"*
[Jack] *"Because I need to be able to compare it to the departure time in my app."*

You've probably heard that asking "why" is a golden rule in any interview or session. Asking why over and over gets to the deeper insights and motivations.

But even for seasoned interviewers, it can be awkward or intrusive to keep asking why. We assume we know why. So we don't ask.

To combat this, include the Why question explicitly in your interview guide, and do a dry run with a colleague on just the "why" interaction.

8. Let everyone shine in a group discussion

If you're speaking with a group, you'll need to manage the conversation so participants build off each other's experiences. If not, the session may fall into 'group think', when participants are reluctant to share opinions for fear of being different.

To do this, ask questions that pro-actively invite others to join in with their views.

Questions like *"Who can share a different experience to Jack's?"* and *"Who does or doesn't recognize themselves in Jack's story?"* help to create a positive, constructive climate.



We've got you covered.

We built 5hellos to empower anyone - yes even those with no interviewing skills - to experience the power of a short conversation with their customers.

The 5hellos questions, conversation guide and tips take you by the hand so you can lead a conversation like a pro. Go ahead, try it. Set up your project in one hour and start speaking with customers in a few days. We guarantee you'll gather insights and get input that you hadn't thought of before.

Questions? Mail Sophie at hello@5hellos.com or Whatsapp via +31 6 11 774 803.

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