



The Fine Art of Small Talk: How To Start a Conversation, Keep It Going, Build Networking Skills -- and Leave a Positive Impression!

By Debra Fine

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Nationally recognized communication expert Debra Fine reveals the techniques and strategies anyone can use to make small talk--in any situation. Do you spend an abnormal amount of time hiding out in the bathroom or hanging out at the buffet table at social gatherings? Does the thought of striking up a conversation with a stranger make your stomach do flip-flops? Do you sit nervously through job interviews waiting for the other person to speak? Are you a "Nervous Ned or Nellie" when it comes to networking? Then it's time you mastered *The Fine Art of Small Talk*. With practical advice and conversation "cheat sheets," *The Fine Art of Small Talk* will help you learn to feel more comfortable in any type of social situation, from lunch with the boss to an association event to a cocktail party where you don't know a soul.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Would-be social butterflies will get encouragement but little inspiration from this not quite scintillating self-help primer. Fine, a conversation consultant, insists that small talk is the necessary overture to deeper communication, the key to generating business leads and dates and a pathway to a richer life in which strangers are magically transformed into acquaintances. She covers such cocktail-party conundrums as how to spot "approachable" interlocutors, how to make introductions, how to butt into an intriguing conversation, resuscitate a flagging one and bail out of a boring one, and how to resist one-uppers, know-it-alls, motormouths and other abusers of talk. Given the ingrained human reluctance to talk to strangers, will, not technique, is the real issue. Much of the book is taken up with motivational pep-talks to get readers to initiate contact (one agonizing exercise suggests "walk through the mall and just say hello to ten people as you pass them"); in a world where everyone feels at a loss for words, Fine argues, saying virtually anything makes one a "hero." Unfortunately, it doesn't necessarily make one a great conversationalist. The heart of Fine's methodology consists of long lists of icebreakers and inviting questions that she instructs readers to memorize and regurgitate as needed to jump-start and sustain conversations, and these read like rather bad small-talk-dull ("How has the internet affected your life?"), stilted ("Do you have a personal motto or creed?") and awkward ("Describe an embarrassing moment you've had."). Tongue-tied readers can benefit from her pointers and exhortation, but one hopes they will think a little harder before they speak.

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From Library Journal

These two books treat similar subjects, but the contrasts are significant. One covers the entire landscape of speaking, whereas the other focuses just on "small talk." The title of *Speak from the Heart* describes the book's very solid premise. Emmy Award-winning broadcaster and motivational speaker Aduvato emphasizes the importance of being genuine as he attempts to cover every conceivable speaking situation, including public speaking, private conversations, group discussions, and listening. He guides readers in the use of eye contact, developing a conversational style, and being comfortable with their message. Despite many charming personal anecdotes and stories drawn from other sources, this book remains a heavy read. Ironically, while Aduvato tells us to make a connection with our audience rather than to "cover the material," he does a much better job of covering the material than of connecting. In contrast, Fine fully engages her audience. She involves readers in the discussion and gives lists of lines people can use to start, maintain, or end a conversation. She discusses conversation topics and how to use them and also includes quizzes, throws in a poem, and scatters a few cartoons to break up the text. Originally released as an audiocassette in 1997, this work comes across much like one of her seminars on small talk. *The Fine Art of Small Talk* does everything that *Speak from the Heart* says should be done. Aduvato's book is best for academic libraries or large public and business libraries. Fine's is a better choice for most public libraries, as well as business libraries. David Leonhardt, Toronto

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Review

Among Fine's best tips are how to deal with these so-called conversation criminals, and how not to be one. -- *USA Today*, October 17, 2005

The meatiest part of Fine's book is a classification of common behaviors that can kill a conversation. -- *USA Today*, October 17, 2005

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Evelyn Brown:

Do you among people who can't read satisfying if the sentence chained inside straightway, hold on guys this specific aren't like that. This **The Fine Art of Small Talk: How To Start a Conversation, Keep It Going, Build Networking Skills -- and Leave a Positive Impression!** book is readable simply by you who hate those straight word style. You will find the facts here are arrange for enjoyable studying experience without leaving perhaps decrease the knowledge that want to offer to you. The writer associated with **The Fine Art of Small Talk: How To Start a Conversation, Keep It Going, Build Networking Skills -- and Leave a Positive Impression!** content conveys objective easily to understand by a lot of people. The printed and e-book are not different in the content but it just different as it. So , do you continue to thinking **The Fine Art of Small Talk: How To Start a Conversation, Keep It Going, Build Networking Skills -- and Leave a Positive Impression!** is not loveable to be your top record reading book?

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