

TOOL 10

Conversations You Will Need

All 29 conversations of your first 30 days, with the first words to say.

Inside

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With callers and visitors · 4 conversations

With yourself · 3 conversations

Tick each one when it has happened

Every new job comes with the same conversations. Knowing them in advance means you never have to find the first words under pressure.

WITH YOUR BOSS

- ☐ Asking for your first meeting · Day 4
- ☐ Confirming a task · Every time a task is not completely clear
- ☐ Asking a question at the right time · Whenever you have questions
- ☐ When there are too many tasks · When priorities clash
- ☐ Admitting a mistake · As soon as you notice it
- ☐ When you don't know yet · Any time
- ☐ Asking for feedback · Day 19
- ☐ Your 30-day review · Day 29

WITH YOUR COWORKERS

- ☐ Introducing yourself · Days 1 to 3
- ☐ Asking for help · Whenever you are stuck
- ☐ When you forget a name · Any time
- ☐ Lunch · Day 1, then week 2 or 3
- ☐ When gossip starts · Whenever it happens
- ☐ Saying no to an extra task · When a coworker asks for help you cannot give
- ☐ Thanking someone · Week 4, and always

WITH OTHER ASSISTANTS

- ☐ Your first contact · Week 1
- ☐ Asking how things are done · Weeks 1 to 4
- ☐ Offering help back · Week 3 or 4

WITH SUPPORT TEAMS

- ☐ Asking IT for access · Day 2
- ☐ Checking your HR paperwork · Week 1
- ☐ Asking facilities for help · Before your first meeting
- ☐ Learning the expense process · Week 2 or 3

WITH CALLERS AND VISITORS

- ☐ Answering the phone · From Day 1
- ☐ Greeting a visitor · Day 23, and every visit
- ☐ An upset caller · When it happens
- ☐ A VIP arrives without an appointment · When it happens

WITH YOURSELF

- ☐ After a mistake · When it happens
- ☐ When you feel overwhelmed · Any hard moment
- ☐ At the end of the day · Every evening

With your boss

1 • Asking for your first meeting

When: Day 4 • **Full script:** The Boss Profile

SAY THIS

Could I have 20 minutes with you today or tomorrow? I'd like to understand how you like to work, so I can support you the right way from the start.

2 • Confirming a task

When: Every time a task is not completely clear

SAY THIS

Just to confirm: you'd like [task] by [day], in [format]. I'll send it to you by [time].

If it is complicated, confirm in writing: "As a next step, I'll do X, unless you advise otherwise."

3 • Asking a question at the right time

When: Whenever you have questions

SAY THIS

Do you have two minutes now, or shall I bring my questions to our check-in at 4?

Batch non-urgent questions into one list. Urgent ones can go straight away.

4 • When there are too many tasks

When: When priorities clash

SAY THIS

I have [A], [B] and [C] due today. Which would you like me to do first?

This is not a complaint. It is a professional question, and bosses respect it.

5 • Admitting a mistake

When: As soon as you notice it

SAY THIS

I need to tell you about a mistake I made. [What happened]. I've already [what you did to fix it], and from now on I'll [how you will prevent it].

Tell your boss early, and bring the fix with you. A mistake reported early is a small problem. A mistake discovered later is a trust problem.

6 • When you don't know yet

When: Any time

SAY THIS

I don't know yet, but I'll find out and come back to you by [time].

7 • Asking for feedback

When: Day 19 • **Full script:** The 30-Day Plan, Day 19

SAY THIS

I'd value your honest feedback on three things so far: the daily brief, the calendar and the minutes. What should I keep, and what should I change?

8 • Your 30-day review

When: Day 29 • **Full script:** The 30-Day Plan, Day 29

SAY THIS

Here's what I've set up this month. What would you like me to keep, change or start doing over the next two months?

CONVERSATIONS

With your coworkers

9 • Introducing yourself

When: Days 1 to 3 • **Full script:** Introduction Scripts

SAY THIS

Hi, I'm [Name], the new [job title] supporting [boss's name]. Nice to meet you. Which team are you in?

10 · Asking for help

When: Whenever you are stuck

SAY THIS

Sorry to interrupt. I'm still learning how [task] works here. Do you have two minutes, or is there a better time?

Asking for help is not a weakness. Most people enjoy being asked, if you respect their time.

11 · When you forget a name

When: Any time · **Full script:** Introduction Scripts

SAY THIS

I'm so sorry, I've met so many people this week. Could you remind me of your name?

12 · Lunch

When: Day 1, then week 2 or 3

SAY THIS

(Day 1) Where do people usually go for lunch?

(Later) Do you mind if I join you today?

Expect to eat on your own for a few days. Everyone has their routine. You will slowly join in.

13 · When gossip starts

When: Whenever it happens

SAY THIS

I'm still too new to have an opinion on that. Could I ask you about [work topic]?

Stay neutral, kindly. People notice who keeps out of gossip, and they trust those people more.

14 · Saying no to an extra task

When: When a coworker asks for help you cannot give

SAY THIS

I'd like to help. Let me check with [boss's name] first, because I have [task] due today.

15 · Thanking someone

When: Week 4, and always

SAY THIS

Thank you for showing me [task] last week. It made my week much easier.

Be specific. "Thanks for everything" is nice. "Thanks for showing me the expense system" is remembered.

CONVERSATIONS

With other assistants

16 · Your first contact

When: Week 1 · **Full script:** Introduction Scripts

SAY THIS

Hi, I'm [Name]. I've just started supporting [boss's name]. Could I buy you a coffee one day this week? I'd love to learn how things work here.

17 · Asking how things are done

When: Weeks 1 to 4

SAY THIS

How does [team or office] usually handle [task]? I want to do it the way people here expect.

18 · Offering help back

When: Week 3 or 4

SAY THIS

If you ever need someone to cover the phones or a meeting, I'm happy to help.

Good relationships go both ways. Offer before you need something.

With support teams

19 • Asking IT for access

When: Day 2 • **Full script:** The 30-Day Plan, Day 2

SAY THIS

Hi, I started yesterday as [job title] for [boss's name]. I still need access to [A, B and C]. Could you tell me how to request it, or does my manager need to approve it first?

20 • Checking your HR paperwork

When: Week 1

SAY THIS

I want to make sure my paperwork is complete. Is there anything else you need from me? And is there a deadline for benefits enrollment I should know about?

21 • Asking facilities for help

When: Before your first meeting

SAY THIS

Hi, [boss's name]'s meeting in [room] on Thursday needs [equipment]. Who should I ask, and how much notice do you need?

22 • Learning the expense process

When: Week 2 or 3

SAY THIS

Could you walk me through how [boss's name]'s expenses are submitted and approved? I'd like to get it right the first time.

With callers and visitors

23 • Answering the phone

When: From Day 1 • **Full script:** Phone & Gatekeeping Scripts, script 1

SAY THIS

Good morning, [boss's name]'s office, [your name] speaking. How may I help you?

24 · Greeting a visitor

When: Day 23, and every visit · **Full script:** The 30-Day Plan, Day 23

SAY THIS

Good morning, Ms. [Name], welcome. [Boss's name] is expecting you. May I offer you a coffee or some water while I let them know you're here?

25 · An upset caller

When: When it happens · **Full script:** Phone & Gatekeeping Scripts, script 10

SAY THIS

I'm sorry this has been frustrating. I'd like to make sure it reaches the right person, so let me write down the details.

26 · A VIP arrives without an appointment

When: When it happens

SAY THIS

Good morning, Mr. [Name], welcome. Please have a seat, and I'll check with [boss's name] straight away.

Tell your boss quietly, with a note or a message, not out loud in front of others. Let them decide.

CONVERSATIONS

With yourself

27 · After a mistake

When: When it happens · **Full script:** Confidence at Work

SAY THIS

I made a mistake. I'm fixing it. One mistake is not who I am.

28 · When you feel overwhelmed

When: Any hard moment · **Full script:** Confidence at Work

SAY THIS

One thing at a time. What is the next small step?

29 · At the end of the day

When: Every evening

SAY THIS

Today I learned [one thing]. That is enough for today.

How to practice a conversation

- 1 **Read it once, out loud.** Your mouth needs to know the words, not only your eyes.
- 2 **Change the words** so they sound like you. Keep the structure and the length.
- 3 **Say it to a mirror or a friend** the night before a big one, like your first boss meeting or your 30-day review.
- 4 **Breathe out slowly** before you start. A long breath out tells your body there is no danger.
- 5 **Afterwards, write one line:** what went well, and what you would change next time.

FROM 26 YEARS AT THE DESK

I still rehearse important conversations, after 26 years. Not because I'm nervous, but because the first sentence is the hardest one, and once it is out, the rest follows naturally.

CALM MOMENT

If a conversation goes badly, it is one conversation. You will have hundreds more with the same people. Most of them will go well.