

Guidelines for Having a Satisfying Conversation

1. *Ask* the person to have a conversation with you.
“Mary, I’d really like to talk with you today. Would you mind if I sat down beside you?”
2. *Guide* the conversation onto specific topics and *redirect* the conversation back to the topic when the person begins to ramble.
“Mary, let’s talk about your family now, please tell me all about them.”
3. *Reassure* the person and *help out* when he or she gets stuck or can’t find a word.
“That’s ok, Bob; what else can you tell me about your life?”
4. *Smile* and *act interested* in whatever the person is talking about even if you’re not quite sure what is being said.
5. *Thank* the person for talking with you.

What to AVOID during conversations

- *DO NOT quiz* the person or ask lots of specific questions
“Now who is this person? I know you know who she is!”
- *DO NOT correct* or *contradict* something that was stated as a fact even if you know it’s wrong.
“No, that’s not John. That’s Jason, remember, your grandson Jason?”