

## Conversation Starters

**How to Go From Small talk to Meaningful Conversation...***in a comfortable and natural way. Follow your curiosity. Think of dialog as exponential, break past the barrier of "boxes" within 3 layers deep. Don't bounce from topic to topic, but dive deeper within a single topic. The topic of conversation does not matter, it should be focused on the process of the conversation. And, listen (intentionally)! Not just to words, but actions. Reflect on what others share. And, with this, it is ok to stretch outside your comfort zone.*

### Professional Questions:

1. Why did you choose your field of study?
2. What challenges did you face in undergrad related to the STEM field?  
(Repeat for graduate and professional as appropriate.)
3. What qualities do you think young people need to develop to be successful in the work place?
4. How was your undergraduate experience?
5. What is your opinion on navigating life after college? How do you feel about Graduate School, Academia, and Industry?
6. What is something you know now that you wish you learned sooner?

### Personal Questions:

1. Why did you sign up to be a mentor in this program?
2. What are your hobbies?
3. What is a goal on your bucket list?
4. If you could instantly be an expert in any field, which would it be?
5. What is a skill you learned as a kid that you use today?
6. Where are you from?

**Because connection and conversation can grow from who we are as a holistic individual...**

### Need more? Try these questions:

- What is your greatest, yet strangest talent?
- What is the silliest way that you've been injured?
- If you could break any world record what record would you want to break?
- What is the best type of cheese?
- What is a ridiculous Wi-Fi name that you've seen?
- If animals could talk, which animal would be the rudest?
- What did you think was cool as a kid, but isn't actually cool now?
- What food describes your personality?
- If we could teleport anywhere in the world right now, where would you want to go?
- What topic could you give a 30-minute presentation on without any preparation?
- What was the last thing that you did for fun?
- If the color blue had a smell, what would it smell like?
- Is hot dog a sandwich? Yes or no? Why or why not?
- What is the weirdest thing you are afraid of?
- If money wasn't an issue, what would be one of your goals in life?
- In 50 years, what random thing do you think you will be most nostalgic for?
- What is your go-to joke?
- What makes you smile without fail?
- What is the strangest thing you've been asked in a job interview?
- Do you have a signature dance move?
- If you could master any skill what would it be?
- What was the highlight of your week?
- What is the most interesting thing you have read this week?
- What do you do to get rid of stress?