

# THE 1ST 5 MINUTES

*How to Leverage  
The Most Important Minutes to  
Build Connection, Trust, and Influence*

Bryan Buckley

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Published in the United States by Second Bridge Press

ISBN: 979-8272562555

[BryanBuckleySpeaks.com](http://BryanBuckleySpeaks.com)

Book cover design by Jason Clement ([jasonclement.com](http://jasonclement.com))  
Copy editing and layout by Cory Pepler ([corypepler.com](http://corypepler.com))

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# FREE BONUS

Over the years, I've identified four communication secrets that create instant impact—whether I'm talking with a CEO, a client, or the stranger next to me on a plane.

These secrets do more than help you talk; they help you **connect**. They turn a monologue into a dialogue—the kind that builds rapport, sparks laughter, and finds common ground fast.

Think of them as your secret communication resource. Once you learn how to leverage them, you'll be amazed at how quickly they resonate with the other person.

These secrets will accelerate your ability to connect more quickly and effectively, but you need to know them to use them.

Curious what the four secrets every elite business connector uses to stand out instantly?

We can solve that right now. Go to: <https://media.bryanbuckleyspeaks.com/resources> or scan the QR code to grab your free copy.





# INTRODUCTION

## *Stop Wasting the Most Important Five Minutes of Every Conversation*

### Jason or Jenn

Jason is an extrovert who loves people. The moment he locks eyes with someone, he's already talking. He's never been accused of being short on words—which is both his blessing and his curse. He does all the talking...but he also does all the talking.

Jenn, on the other hand, is an introvert. She enjoys people but takes longer to warm up to them. She's confident in herself, but often unsure what to say—especially in those crucial first 5 minutes. She tends to lean on the other person to carry the conversation, only to walk away feeling like she had no control over it.

Maybe you resonate with Jason or Jenn, or maybe you're somewhere in between. You're not sure what to say, you remember something later you wish you'd said, or—ugh—you keep forgetting the other person's name.

Here's the truth: no matter your personality, experience, title, or age, we all face the same exact element in every opening conversation.

What is it?

*The 1st 5 Minutes.*

Everyone gets the same window—rookies, veterans, even the boss. The question is simple:

Do you lose those five minutes—or *leverage* them?

# Three Common Mistakes in the 1st 5 Minutes

Regardless of how long we've been at this game, we all fall victim to at least one of these blunders from time to time.

## We Talk Too Much

We get excited. It's our chance to make a great first impression, so we talk. And talk. Too much. Nervous energy takes over, and suddenly we've become one long run-on sentence.

## We Sell Too Soon

We tolerate just enough small talk to pivot into a pitch. After all, that's why we're here, right? To sell ourselves, our company, our solution. But rushing into sales mode shuts down the very connection that makes selling possible.

## We Don't Have a Plan

Too often, we walk in with no strategy. We "wing it," assuming the conversation will just unfold naturally. But that wastes an opportunity. The 1st 5 Minutes are too valuable to leave to chance.

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# The Big Idea: Connect, Don't Sell

What if we flipped the script?

Connect—don't sell—in the 1st 5 Minutes.

Why? Because the long-term relationship matters more than the short-term sale.

Let me say that again: *We connect, not sell, in the 1st 5 Minutes because we care more about the relationship than the quick win.*

The older I get, the more I see it with such clarity: the real goal is human connection in business. That moment when something clicks between two people.

But connection doesn't happen by chance. It takes intention, new habits, and a commitment to becoming an Elite Business Connector.

If we're intentional with the 1st 5 Minutes, we make them count.

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## The Promise

Imagine walking into any conversation with confidence, knowing you have a proven framework for the 1st 5 Minutes.

That's the "master evil plan" of this book.

You'll learn a framework that helps you leverage those crucial opening moments. You'll pick up practical, repeatable steps you can use right away. You'll know exactly how to move through the 1st 5 Minutes naturally and intentionally.

Your job?

Read. Try. Apply.

As you finish each chapter, put it into practice. Test it in your next interaction. Notice the difference.

By the end, you'll know exactly what to do in those 1st 5 Minutes—if you care more about building relationships than just closing sales.

Let me teach you how to leverage the most critical minutes to build connection, trust, and influence.

## The Framework

This book is broken into three parts:

- **The 1st Minute** – Learn how to read the room, begin the banter, and nail the name (with three simple hacks to lock them in).
  - **The Middle 3 Minutes (2–4)** – Go ALL In: ask curious, continual, and clarifying questions. Learn how to listen for the gold that builds a deeper connection, then know exactly what to learn in each conversation.
  - **The Last Minute** – Avoid common pitfalls, apply the Two-Step Approach, and set yourself up for the rest of the conversation.
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## Personal Experience

When I first tried this framework, I worried it might feel too rigid or robotic. Instead, it gave me guardrails and not handcuffs. A simple structure that made me more intentional, more aware, and way more effective.

I stopped wasting the 1st 5 Minutes—and started owning them.

I even practiced in personal conversations, especially with the 1st Minute. And guess what? It worked there too. Because in personal conversations, business often comes up. The framework gave me a safe place to practice.

But in business—especially in people-facing roles—you’ll have endless opportunities to test this out. Every day is practice.

All you need is a plan: *The 1st 5 Minutes Framework*.

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So I Ask You...

- **Do you talk too much?**

Be honest—do you find yourself dominating the conversation?

- **Do you start selling too soon?**

What would I observe if I shadowed you for the 1st 5 Minutes of a new interaction?

- **Do you have a plan for your 1st 5 Minutes?**

Think about how impatient we are with a slow video in the first 30 seconds. People feel the same way in conversation.

- **What if there's a better way?**

What if you could actually leverage those minutes instead of losing them?

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## You Can Do This

You can learn a fresh method that feels natural and produces amazing results. By the end of this book, you'll know exactly how to create a real connection in those 1st 5 Minutes.

But everything rises or falls on one intangible: **Mindset.**

Let's make sure we have the right mindset to learn everything you can with this framework.



# THE MINDSET OF AN ELITE BUSINESS CONNECTOR

*How Elite Connectors Think Differently—and Win Consistently*

## Why Mindset Matters

Why would anyone want—or even need—to improve the 1st 5 Minutes of a business conversation?

Isn't it supposed to just be natural?

(Quick question: How's *that* working for you?)

Seriously—are you getting the results you want? Are people leaning in, excited to talk with you? Or do you walk away wondering if you connected at all? Or do you even know for sure?

Your **mindset** going into the 1st 5 Minutes means *everything*. If you think your current way of doing things is good enough, nothing will change. But if you're willing to level up, to test a new approach—everything can change.

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## Why the 1st 5 Minutes Matter

Here's the reality:

- How you interact with people (prospects, customers, guests, employees—anyone) will **make or break** your chance to form a real connection.

- That connection is the gateway to trust. And trust? That's the currency of influence.

Did you catch that? Read it again:

How you interact with people in the 1st 5 Minutes will make or break your opportunity for a lasting connection.

And in business, connection is leverage.

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## About Those First Impressions...

This isn't just motivational talk. Research consistently shows that first impressions carry disproportionate weight. Princeton psychologists Janine Willis and Alexander Todorov found that it takes just **a tenth of a second** for someone to form an impression about you. And once formed, those impressions are “sticky”. They color the rest of the interaction. <sup>1</sup>

Even crazier? Harvard Business School <sup>2</sup> found that when people meet for the first time, two questions get answered—usually unconsciously:

1. Can I trust this person?
2. Can I respect this person's competence?

Notice what comes first. Trust beats competence. Every. Single. Time.

That means the 1st 5 minutes aren't fluff. They're your shot at building trust and setting the tone for everything that follows.

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## Enter the Elite Business Connector

Elite Business Connectors understand this. They don't stumble into conversations hoping for the best. They prepare, they adapt, and most importantly, they never stop improving.

What makes them elite?

- They're not comparing themselves to everyone else. They're competing with yesterday's version of themselves.
- They don't dismiss new ideas just because they've "heard it before." Instead, they process, test, and apply.
- They see every interaction as a chance to sharpen their skills.

And that starts in—you guessed it—the *1st 5 Minutes*.

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## The Elite Mindset

Elite Business Connectors have one thing in common: a growth mindset. They don't quickly discount new ideas. They listen, process, and test. They're willing to be wrong if it means they can get better.

Stanford researcher Carol Dweck, who coined the term *growth mindset*, explains that people with a growth mindset believe they can develop abilities through effort and learning—not just talent. That's exactly what we're doing here—developing the ability to connect.<sup>3</sup>

So I challenge you right now to have a growth mindset that allows you to be open to everything The 1st 5 Minutes has to offer you. It's low-hanging fruit.

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## The “Natural Talker” Myth

Some people pride themselves on being “natural” in conversations. You know the type. They say, “*I don't need a framework—I just wing it. I'm great with people.*”

I usually want to ask them, “Are you great with people...or just great at talking about yourself or in general?”

There's a difference.

Here's the problem with being "natural": it's often code for being "unprepared." And when you're unprepared, conversations drift...fast. Most small talk becomes repetitive or aimless within minutes if it's not directed, especially in a business environment.

That's when you get:

- **The Painful Silence:** everyone grabs for their phones.
- **Small Talk Purgatory:** endless weather updates like you're both meteorologists.
- **The Netflix Recap:** 10 minutes on why *this season* of their favorite show was overrated.
- **The Accidental TED Talk:** where someone gives you their unsolicited 18-minute lecture on intermittent fasting.

I like Netflix and I'm all for biohacking, but if I know more about your last binge than your business needs, we've missed the point.

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## What Is Your Mindset?

So, let's get real. You've got this book in your hands, and you have a choice:

- Do you want the mindset of an Elite Business Connector—someone constantly learning, open, and improving?
- Or do you want to keep rolling the dice with the "wing it" approach, hoping today your natural charm kicks in?

If you're willing to set aside your current habits and open yourself up to a new way of thinking about the 1st 5 Minutes, you're about to see results you've never seen before.

And here's the beautiful part: the risk is low.

**Worst case?** You try the framework, decide it's not for you, and go back to what you've always done.

**Best case?** This framework changes the way you connect, builds deeper trust, and creates opportunities you didn't even know you were missing.

Seems like an easy decision. Just sayin'.

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## The Cost of Doing Nothing

Let's ask this question for a second: what's the cost of *not* improving your 1st 5 Minutes?

- Missed opportunities
- Connections that fizzle out
- Sales that never get off the ground
- Relationships that stay surface-level instead of growing into partnerships

It's like going to the gym and skipping the warm-up every time. Eventually, you'll pull a muscle—or in business terms, you'll pull a deal right off the table.

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## Elite Business Connectors Take Action

An Elite Business Connector doesn't just read about new frameworks—they implement them. They:

- Highlight key points
- Process the insights
- Put them into practice the very next day

They approach learning like athletes approach training: with seriousness, consistency, and intensity. Because they know the payoff is worth it. You're a professional, so let's act like one.

And here's the payoff: once you master The 1st 5 Minutes, everything else in the conversation gets easier. The walls drop. The defenses fade. The connection clicks.

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## It's Go Time

So here's where we land: your *mindset* determines everything.

If you're ready to learn, ready to stretch, ready to practice—you're already halfway to becoming an Elite Business Connector.

So, it's go time. Open your mind. Highlighter in hand. Let's get after it.

Each chapter is on average a four-minute read. Will you commit to taking four minutes a day to sharpen your connection skills to learn how to connect at an elite level in the 1st 5 Minutes?

The clock is about to start, but before it does, we need to talk about what to do **before** the first minute even begins.

# BEFORE THE CLOCK EVEN STARTS

*Win the Conversation Before It Even Begins*

## Meet Jamie

Jamie is newer to sales. She likes people, but oh, those 1st 5 Minutes always make her nervous. Pre-game jitters, if you will. She feels like these nerves—and specifically the ambiguity in the first crucial minutes—are sabotaging potentially great conversations from actually connecting.

What Jamie wants (and honestly needs) is a calming factor when walking into this business conversation that gives her confidence and a sense of anticipation. She wants to connect without feeling like she's fumbling. And that's exactly what this preparation time is designed to do for her.

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## Pre-game: The Warm-Up Before the Game

Every sport has warm-ups. Those moments prepare you to perform at a high level. You stretch, you loosen up, and you get in the right headspace before the real game begins.

Business—especially sales—is no different. Before you meet a customer, you need your own warm-up routine. That's where the Pre-game comes in.

Think about this: pro athletes don't roll into a game cold, mumbling, "I'll just wing it today." Not a chance. They go through rituals.

Steph Curry takes hundreds of shots before tip-off. Coco Gauff runs her same warm-up sequence before every match, rehearsing every serve and forehand. And musicians like Ed Sheeran treat soundcheck like game time—dialing in vocals, instruments, and energy before the crowd ever arrives.

Preparation isn't luck—it's the launchpad for performance. Why? Because it calms nerves, sets focus, and builds confidence.

Your version of that is to **Pre-Read the Room**. It's your mental and conversational warm-up that makes the 1st 5 Minutes flow naturally, rather than forcing it.

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## The First Habit of Elite Business Connectors

Elite Business Connectors do the little things that make a big difference. They don't wing it; they prepare.

The first habit, as we'll learn in detail in the coming chapters, is to Read the Room.

Reading the Room means scanning and getting a pulse of the people and the environment. It's what happens in the 1st Minute of the 1st 5 Minutes. But here's the key: you don't have to wait until you walk in cold.

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## Three Benefits of Pre-Reading the Room

You *pre-read* the room to make your real-time reading even more effective.

## 1. Gain Key Intel

What if you could get a head start? A piece of information that helps you connect faster and guide the conversation more naturally? That's what key intel gives you.

## 2. Calm Your Nerves

If meeting new people makes you nervous, intel is your safety net. You walk in with conversation starters specifically tailored to this person—not scrambling for words. That confidence changes everything.

## 3. Increase Your Confidence

When we feel prepared, our confidence increases because, at a minimum, we have a plan going in, eyes wide open.

The point? Who wouldn't want to walk into a business conversation having key intel that calms your nerves and increases your confidence to focus on connecting! Simple math, my friend.

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# Where to Find Intel

Here are two of the best sources to Pre-Read the Room:

## Company Website

- How long have they been in business?
- Public or private?
- One office or multiple locations?
- How do they describe themselves—in their own words?
- Can you find your contact listed?

## LinkedIn

- **Company Page:** What's posted there that's different from the website? What topics do they care about?
- **Individual Profile:** Job title, career history, time in role, education, interests, and what they share or post.

Even a quick scan gives you intel you can use in the 1st 5 Minutes.

LinkedIn is like professional Facebook, minus the vacation photos and political rants (usually). If someone posts about winning an industry award, that's a golden lead talking point. If they post about "thought leadership in supply chain innovation," well...maybe bring caffeine.

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## The Advantage

Learning how to Pre-Read the Room before the clock even starts gives you an unfair advantage. For example, if you look me up on [LinkedIn](#), here's what you'd find in seconds:

- Author
- Speaker
- Podcaster
- IoT / M2M Expert
- Graduate of Liberty University
- Toastmasters Certified Speaker

Boom. Instant conversation starters. You could bring up my books, podcasts, or alma mater, and I'd be impressed you did your homework. It takes less than a minute—but that moment of key intel makes a massive difference.

Another real-life example: A colleague of mine once noticed on LinkedIn that the VP he was meeting with had just run a marathon. Instead

of diving straight into business, he opened with, “Congrats on finishing your marathon—what was that experience like?” That one question sparked a detailed and passionate story about training, travel, and the energy of race day. The VP lit up, the room relaxed, and the connection deepened before they ever touched a business agenda. Preparation creates opportunities like that.

How do you leverage moments like this for instant connection? You *Pre-Read the Room*.

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## Prepping for the 1<sup>st</sup> 5 Minutes

So, your pre-game plan is simple:

- Take a couple of minutes to Pre-Read the Room.
- Collect intel.
- Walk in with confidence.

Because once that clock starts, you’ll be ready to move straight into the 1st Minute of the 1st 5 Minutes.

And let’s be honest: nerves don’t go away on their own. But with intel in your pocket, you’ve got powerful *tools* you can use. You’re not just walking in hoping for magic—you’re walking in ready to make it happen.





# PART ONE

## The 1st Minute

### **Big Idea: Think PERSONAL**

You're walking up to someone, maybe for the very first time. You might be at a conference, a meeting, or a social event. This is someone you hope to connect with.

What do you say?

Most people leave this first minute up to chance. They think, I'll just see where the conversation goes. The problem? When you leave the first minute to chance, you waste it. And here's the reality: researchers at Princeton University found that we form impressions of strangers in a tenth of a second. That's faster than you can say, "So...how about this weather?"

I used to be one of those people—letting conversations “go where they may.” (Spoiler alert: they rarely went anywhere.) Now? Every business conversation I enter has what I jokingly call my “master evil plan” for the 1st Minute: **Get Personal**. Make it about *them*, not me. No more aimless small talk.

And if you’re wondering, “Why connect before I sell?”—it’s simple. You care more about the long-term relationship than the short-term sale. Because let’s be honest: nobody has ever said, “Wow, I love how fast that guy tried to sell me something. Really made me feel special.” Set a goal for that first minute, stick to it, and watch what happens.

So what if you walked into that first minute with a loose plan—something that still feels natural but gives you direction right away? That’s exactly what the next three chapters will show you. You’ll learn how to Read the Room so you know what to say, Begin the Banter so the conversation flows naturally, and Nail the Name so you never have to fake your way through another introduction. Master these three moves, and you’ll own the first 60 seconds of any business conversation.

# READ THE ROOM

## *The Unfair Advantage of Seeing What Others Miss*

### Ready, Set,...

Josh is willing to give the 1st 5 Minutes Framework a real shot. He's comfortable with people, so that's not the problem. If he's being honest, his real growth area is learning how to make the most of those opening moments. He knows he can be far more intentional.

So the day before a big meeting, Josh tries something new: he "Pre-Reads the Room." He spends just a few minutes looking up the company and the person he'll be meeting. And he's shocked. In minutes, he picks up enough intel to walk into that room with options. He's lowered his nerves and increased his confidence. A win-win at no additional charge. Brilliant!

Now Josh has two clear choices when the meeting begins:

- Lean on what he found by Pre-Reading the Room.
- Rely on OQ to Read the Room in real time.

Love me some options.

Either way, he's walking in with a plan. And trust me—walking in with a plan beats walking in blind every single time. Yeah, don't be *that* guy!

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## Developing OQ

Here's the truth: Reading the Room requires a new kind of intelligence—**OQ: Observation Intelligence**.

You've probably heard of IQ (intelligence quotient), EQ (emotional intelligence), and even SQ (social intelligence). But in the 1st 5 Minutes, OQ is king.

Observational Intelligence (OQ) is the ability to notice, interpret, and draw meaning from what's happening around you.

Most people? They're terrible at it. In those first few minutes, they're either too busy going with the flow or stuck in their heads. They are thinking about what they're going to say instead of noticing what's happening right in front of them.

But not you. Not anymore.

You're about to develop a connection superpower. Because an Elite Business Connector locks into the environment, scans the room, and picks up every scrap of intel available. Then they use it—immediately—in the 1st 5 Minutes.

Research by UCLA psychologist Dr. Albert Mehrabian found that when we communicate feelings and attitudes, up to 93% of meaning comes from *nonverbal cues*—55% from body language, 38% from tone of voice, and only 7% from actual words. <sup>4</sup>

Translation: if you're not observing, you're missing almost the entire conversation from the start.

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## Let's Get Practical

Here's an easy way to start sharpening your OQ. When you observe the person and his or her surroundings, look for one of these four categories:

- **Wearing:** What style or type of shirt, dress, shoes, watch, or jewelry are they wearing?

- **Carrying:** What’s on the bag or cup in their hand, what type of laptop (or laptop decals), what book are they reading?
- **Showing:** What pictures, diplomas, awards, or sports memorabilia are on their desk or wall, what kind of view out the window, what music is playing in the background?
- **Sharing:** What are they already talking about when you join?

Pick one. That’s your opening.

When you comment on what you noticed from OQ, you instantly have the advantage because you’re talking about what *they’ve already chosen to show the world*.

And hey, sometimes this is just plain fun. I once noticed a guy’s socks had tacos on them. My opening line? “Those socks are making me hungry. Does Taco Tuesday start early for you?” We spent the first minute bonding over Mexican food and family traditions. By the time we got to business, it felt like we were already friends—and of course, ready for lunch.

---

## Define Your Lead Talking Point

Why do we Read the Room? So you can define your **Lead Talking Point (LTP)**.

Your LTP is the very first comment you make based on what you notice. Sometimes it comes from your Pre-Read intel. Other times, it comes from OQ in the actual moment.

Both work. Personally, I like walking in with a prepped LTP—but staying open to pivot if something better pops up in real time.

Examples:

- From Pre-Read: “I saw you went to Michigan State—are you still following the Spartans this season?”

- From OQ: “That’s a fantastic travel photo—where was it taken?”

Notice the difference? Both are personal, both open doors, and both invite the other person to talk about their world and what matters to them.

---

## Why It Works

There’s psychology behind this. A study published in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* found that people consistently *underestimate* how satisfying deeper conversations can be. In experiments led by Kardas, Kumar, and Epley (2021), participants expected small talk to feel easier and deep talk to feel awkward—but the opposite was true. When they actually went deep, they walked away feeling *more connected, engaged, and positive* than they anticipated.<sup>5</sup>

In short: going beyond “How’s the weather?” isn’t just refreshing—it’s scientifically proven to make conversations more meaningful.

People love to talk about themselves—it literally lights up the same part of the brain as eating chocolate or winning money (my wife prefers to eat chocolate while I prefer making money).

Translation: observation + curiosity = *instant connection*.

And isn’t that what we want in a conversation? For someone to seek out connection with us? We notice when it happens because of its rarity. You’re going to change that from now on and make it the default.

---

## Not an Option

Reading the Room is not a “nice to have.” It’s the first skill of the 1st 5 Minutes Framework.

- Observation Intelligence (OQ) is your edge.

- Use the four categories: Wearing, Carrying, Showing, and Sharing.
- Define your Lead Talking Point (LTP) before or during the moment.

So, are you with me? All you've done to this point is research—either ahead of the time when you Pre-Read the Room or in the moment using OQ as your Read the Room.

You should feel good about your options when actually saying your opening line.

Between us girls, I would feel so much more confident and ready to engage in conversation. And I call that “Begin the Banter.”



# BEGIN THE BANTER

## *How to Make Your Opening Comment Resonate*

### Confidence Boost

Lisa feels so much better now that she doesn't have to walk into a customer meeting without a plan, hoping the other person carries the conversation. She's naturally shy, but the concept of the Lead Talking Point (LTP) has given her new confidence.

Before each meeting, she now Pre-Reads the Room—researching the company and person—so she has multiple points to bring up. She's also sharpening her OQ (Observational Intelligence) by Reading the Room in real time.

Now Lisa is ready to put it all together and can confidently Begin the Banter. Mad kudos, Lisa!

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### Why Banter Matters

Banter is the natural back-and-forth of the conversation. And often a conversation struggles the most at the beginning as you try to get off the ground. Why? It's left to chance.

Not you, and not anymore.

Your banter will now be prepared and calculated, and you'll know it's going to land with someone because you've Pre-Read the Room or Read

the Room. You'll know exactly what you're going to say, with the ultimate goal of instant connection.

Let me overstate the reality of the situation: *almost nobody does this intentionally*. It's a huge advantage for you because your goal is to be Quick to Connect.

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## The Golden Rule

Pro Tip: Never—and I mean never—start with “How are you?”

It's overused, rarely answered honestly, and does nothing to build a real connection. Instead, lead with something safe, simple, and specific—a lob pitch that gets a positive response and breaks the silence.

Think of banter as conversational WD-40. It loosens things up so everything runs more smoothly.

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## Banter Is an Acquired Skill

Banter begins when you *leverage* that Read the Room intel (pre-read or observed) and your LTP into an easy, mutual conversation.

Banter isn't about prying or being clever—it's about making the other person feel comfortable. It's more art than science because it's always situational and personal. The science is the research, and the art is knowing if/when you're going to use that research in the moment.

Your LTP should make it easy for them to respond. It should catch them off guard (in a good way), instantly getting their attention *because* it's not the usual approach. And for those following along at home, that's a good thing!

## Practical Examples

Here are a few go-to lead talking points that leverage observational intelligence:

- Great watch—where'd you get it?
- Love the shoes—what brand?
- You're obviously a sports fan. Did you grow up playing sports?

Simple, human, and easy to answer.

Another very specific example: if someone wears their watch on the right hand, that's often a lefty giveaway. So, since I'm left-handed, the banter usually goes something like this:

*Me:* "Are you left-handed by chance?"

*Them:* "Yeah, how did you know?"

*Me:* "Your watch—it's almost always a lefty tell."

*Them:* "Nice catch."

*Me:* "Did you know only 10% of the population is left-handed?"

Washington, Lincoln, Einstein, Jobs—famous lefties."

*Me:* "Really? Didn't know that."

*You:* "Of course, so were Hitler and Stalin. Maybe leave those off the list."

Light, fun, memorable.

It may seem trivial, but to lefties (a small tribe), it's an instant connection. That's the power of banter—it turns small details into quick rapport.

## Pre-Read = Extra Kudos

Remember that part of beginning the banter is showing an interest in the person as a human *and* demonstrating that you've done your homework. For example, if you were meeting me, you could:

- Comment about Chicago, my hometown.
- Bring up one of my books.
- Reference an episode of my podcast.
- Give an opinion on one of my posts or articles.
- Mention Liberty University.

Any one of these would result in a comment from me, an easy conversation...and instant points for knowing your subject (me!) Why? Because it shows you took two minutes to Pre-Read the Room. Most people won't. That's what makes it (and you) stand out.

Intel + OQ = unfair advantage.

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## Try to Find the Funny

Now let's add some humor. Humor disarms, builds trust, and makes you memorable.

In the book *Humor Seriously*, the authors, drawing on research from behavioral science and psychology, argue that humor isn't about being a comedian—it's about bringing “authentic levity” to serious situations.

Here are a few go-to one-liners you can use when Reading the Room:

- “I promise I wasn't stalking your LinkedIn profile...okay, maybe just a little.”
- “That watch says executive. The socks say rebel. I respect the balance.”

- “I see the sports memorabilia—am I on safe territory with my team loyalty, or do I need to tread carefully?”

Humor works because it’s personal, it’s situational, and it proves you’re paying attention.

My dad always told me, “Get them to smile, then make them laugh.”

I’m no comedian, but I’ve learned that humor early in a conversation makes people relax and want to engage. I find “finding the funny” is my superpower. It puts a smile on people’s faces and lightens the mood.

It’s also about understanding your audience. Jimmy Fallon nails it: “What’s funny right now, to this group only? That’s the fastest way to get a group laughing.”

(And don’t underestimate *callbacks*—reusing something funny from earlier. It bonds you instantly because it’s shared.)

---

## Practice Begin the Banter Everywhere

Here’s the key: don’t wait for business meetings. Practice everywhere—at the grocery store, the gym, your kid’s soccer game.

I’m notorious for beginning the banter when I travel by asking two simple words: “Where’s home?” Or to a fellow business traveler, “What puts you on a plane consistently?”

Quick. Easy. Personal. And it gets someone talking about their world right away. Plus, because I travel so much, there’s a good chance I’ve been in their state or even their city, so I can quickly kick-start the conversation.

Notice one thing. Comment. Banter. Repeat.

The more you experiment with OQ and deliver your LTP, the more confident and aware you will become in this crucial first minute.

Elite Business Connectors are good because they *practice* their craft. They try something, evaluate how it came off, then keep what works and drop what doesn't.

And you can too.

---

## Did You Notice This?

And here's something intentional: *we haven't introduced ourselves yet.*

That comes next. The sequence always matters:

1. Read the Room
2. Begin the Banter
3. Circle back with your name

In the next chapter, we'll see how you move naturally into the next step...on your timing and when you're absolutely ready.

# NAIL THE NAME

*Because 'Hey, You' Isn't Good Enough*

## Hi, I'm Kevin

This is how Kevin always introduces himself—and then instantly forgets the other person's name. Frustrating. He wants to remember, but it just doesn't stick. His mind is everywhere else, and unfortunately, focusing on someone's name has just never been a high priority.

Maybe you can relate?

In my research for *Elite Business Connector*:

- **75%** of professionals said remembering names is a high priority.
- **Almost 75%** also admitted they quickly forget names.
- **Only 36%** consistently remember.

So yeah—most of us struggle. But here's the good news: this is fixable.

---

## Why We Forget Names

There are specific reasons why we simply forget someone's name. Understanding them will help us make some needed adjustments:

### We say we're "bad with names."

This is the #1 excuse. People claim they're terrible with names but great with faces. Maybe that's your scapegoat one-liner. C'mon, man. Saying that wires your brain not even to try. And honestly? It sounds like you don't care.

Reality: there's no such thing as a good or bad memory—just a trained or untrained one.

From here on out, drop the excuse. Be elite. You're good with names.

## We're not ready to receive it.

When someone introduces themselves, you're still sizing them up—their face, clothes, vibe. Their name flies past you before you're ready to catch it. That's on us.

Solution: Don't lead with names if you can help it. Read the Room → Begin the Banter → then swap names. By then, you'll be ready.

## We're focused on what we'll say next.

The silent killer. While they're saying their name, your brain is busy crafting your response.

Kevin Horsley, author of *Unlimited Memory*, nails it: “People don't actually hear the name because they're trying to be interesting instead of trying to be interested.”<sup>6</sup>

Ouch. But true. Forgetting isn't a memory problem—it's a focus problem.

---

# How to Nail the Name Every Time

Nailing the name has a strategy. We don't leave it to chance just *hoping* we remember names.

## Control the timing.

Sequence matters: Read the Room → Begin the Banter → then slide into introductions. They're engaged, you're focused, and remembering is way easier.

## Be ready to receive it.

Names are coming. Lock in. Focus. That little shift makes a huge difference.

## Use the “Three-Peat.”

Drop their name three times:

- Beginning: “Great meeting you, Jeff.”
- Middle: “That’s a good point, Jeff.”
- End: “Glad we met, Jeff.”

Not overkill—just enough to show respect, build rapport, and cement it in your memory.

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# Name-Remembering Hacks

Sometimes we just need a little kick-start to help us remember names.

Here are a few:

- **Get the spelling:** My name is forgettable...unless you lock in on “*Bryan with a Y.*” People remember it months later. Ask: “Sean or Shawn?” “Cathy C or Kathy K?” Unique spellings stick—and they know you care.
- **Ask for the story:** Names often have origins. Ask about them. I once met a woman named Safari. She didn’t know her origin, so we made one up: conceived on a safari...in Cleveland. She laughed—and I never forgot her name.
- **Handle tough names with care:** Don’t fake it. Try, ask if you’re close, and keep at it. People appreciate the effort. If needed, ask if they use a nickname. (*Pro Tip:* Someone with a tough name has

heard it butchered a thousand times. You trying earns instant respect.)

- **Help them out, too:** Don't assume they remember you. Save them the awkward "*Hey, man*" moment: "Hey Rick, it's Bryan with a Y." That one line is a lifesaver.
  - **If you forget, own it:** Don't fake it. Say: "*Please remind me of your name.*" That's way better than: "*I forgot your name.*" Notice the difference in tone? One's humble, the other's careless.
  - **Write it down:** After a meeting, jot the name and a detail or two. In group settings, I'll sketch the table, label where people sat, and put their names in those spots. It's nerdy but effective.
- 

## Humor Helps Too

Sometimes, memory hacks stick because they're funny. Try these tricks:

- If someone's named *Sandy* and they hate the beach, make a mental picture of them building a sandcastle in the office.
- A *Mike*? Picture him holding a giant microphone.
- A *Grace*? Imagine her tripping down the stairs. (Okay, maybe that's just me.)

Humor creates sticky images. Your brain loves sticky.

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# Why Names Matter More Than You Think

Dale Carnegie, in his classic *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, wrote, “A person’s name is to that person the sweetest sound in any language.”<sup>7</sup>

Brain-imaging studies show that hearing our own name lights up areas linked to self-perception and reward.<sup>8</sup> Translation? When you use someone’s name, their brain throws a tiny party.

And here’s the kicker: remembering a name is free, but the ROI is massive. You’ll stand out instantly—not because of your pitch, but because you cared enough to remember.

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## The 1st Minute in Action

- **Step 1: Read the Room.** Pick up environmental or personal cues.
- **Step 2: Begin the Banter.** Break the ice with something safe, simple, or funny.
- **Step 3: Nail the Name.** Lock it in. Repeat it. Respect it. Use it.

Master these three, and you’ll instantly separate yourself as an Elite Business Connector.



# THE 1ST MINUTE

## *Quick Action Checklist*

### **Focus: Think PERSONAL**

Your goal in the first 60 seconds is to instantly make it about the other person, enter their world with something relevant to them, and nail that name!

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### **Read the Room**

- Use Pre-Read intel (LinkedIn, website) every chance you can to prep.
  - Develop your Observational Intelligence (OO) to maximize your options.
  - Scan *before* you speak—what are they wearing, carrying, showing, or sharing?
  - Lock in with strong eye contact and body language: full attention from the start.
- 

### **Begin the Banter**

- Lead with your Lead Talking Point (LTP)—something personal, safe, and specific.
- Work on developing your banter since it's an acquired skill.
- Find the funny: a quick smile or laugh disarms faster than anything.

- Keep it about *them*—banter should make them comfortable, not spotlight you.
- 

## Nail the Name

- Time it right: Read → Banter → *then* exchange names.
- Be ready to catch it—listen with focus, not while thinking about your next line.
- Use the Three-Peat Rule: say their name at the beginning, middle, and end.
- Get the spelling or story behind their name—it creates connection and memory hooks.
- If you forget, own it: “Please remind me of your name.”

Need some help with this section? Grab my free resource: “**The System Elite Connectors Use to Remember Names.**” Go to [media.bryanbuckleyspeaks.com/resources](http://media.bryanbuckleyspeaks.com/resources) or simply scan this QR code:





# PART TWO

## The Middle 3 Minutes

### **Big Idea: Think PROFESSIONAL**

You're in. The first minute went great—you read the room, began the banter, nailed the name. You've built momentum.

Now comes the heart of the framework: The Middle 3 Minutes.

This is where most conversations derail. Some people stay stuck in shallow small talk, while others cannonball straight into “Here’s my pitch!” mode. But not you. You’re leveling up.

In these three minutes, the focus shifts from *personal* to *professional*. You’re not selling—yet. You’re guiding. You’re going **ALL In**—Ask, Listen, and Learn.

And these three actions are not just filler; they are your secret weapon.

- **Ask** with curiosity.
- **Listen** with empathy.
- **Learn** what makes them tick.

That's what separates an Elite Business Connector from just another eager seller. Master these three skills, and this stretch stops being filler and becomes a launchpad for connection, trust, and future business.

# ASK

## *Use Questions to Build Trust and Ignite Connection*

### It's Not You, It's Me

Richard is outgoing and thrives in a group. He's engaging, asks lots of questions, and seems dialed in to you and what you are saying. And here's the truth: when I'm with someone who has the gift of asking good questions, I'm drawn to them.

Why? They make the conversation about me—not about them. That builds trust and rapport quickly.

The goal of asking questions in the Middle 3 Minutes is simple: to click with the other person and build a real connection on the professional side.

So, what kind of questions actually work in a business conversation?

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## Three Types of Questions

### Curious Questions

*Keyword: Interest*

Remember when you were a kid and asked question after question? Research shows that young children ask many *why* and *how* questions. And when they do, they're not simply seeking adult attention; they're actively seeking information.<sup>9</sup>

Yet as adults, we've lost our curiosity and rarely ask questions—let alone a *good* question.

My dad's three favorite words were: "Tell me more." That's relentless curiosity, and it's powerful.

Curiosity says, "*Look at you*" instead of "*Look at me.*" It creates an organic flow, puts the spotlight on the other person, and makes them feel seen. People can sense if you're genuinely interested, so sincerity matters.

*Pro Tip:* If the person isn't talking, ask more questions. Give them space to find their voice in the conversation.

Here are a few quick and curious questions you can use right away:

- "What's been the highlight of your week so far?"
- "How did you get started in your career?"
- "What's something you're learning right now?"

## Continual Questions

*Keyword: 2QM (Two Question Minimum)*

Here's the problem with most people: They ask one question and stop, or they don't listen well enough to follow up.

But the first answer is rarely the main course—it's just the appetizer. The real connection comes with follow-up questions.

That's why I live by **2QM**: always ask at least two questions in a row on the same topic.

Example:

1. "Where did you go to college?"
2. "Why did you choose that school?"
3. (Optional 3rd) "What was your major?"

It's not complicated, but it's powerful. Asking two questions in a row on the same subject especially shows genuine interest and gets the other person to open up.

*Reality check:* Sometimes they won't ask a single question back. That's okay. Mad kudos to you—because it means you're doing the work of an Elite Business Connector.

A study in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* found that follow-up questions (especially “Why” or “Tell me more” types) are strongly linked to being rated as more likable and more competent.<sup>10</sup> In other words, the better you are at follow-ups, the more people want to keep talking with you.

And remember, the ultimate 2QM is my father's three words: Tell Me More! Seriously, it's the safest response ever, requires zero creativity, and is incredibly effective.

## Clarifying Questions

*Keyword: Intentional*

This is where curiosity meets strategy. Clarifying questions are calculated—they have a purpose.

The danger? Using them to manipulate.

The real goal? Building trust.

If you've Pre-Read the Room, use clarifying questions to pull in what you already know:

- “I saw you've been at your company for 12 years—what's kept you there?”
- “So you studied finance at U of M—what drew you to that field?”
- “I saw your post about \_\_\_—tell me more about that.”

If you haven't Pre-Read the Room, lean on solid professional questions:

- “How long have you been in your role?”
- “What's the most rewarding part of your job?”
- “What's the biggest challenge right now?”
- “What made you choose this profession?”

*Pro Tip:* Refine your questions so each builds on the last, creating momentum rather than a checklist of random questions.

Communication expert Edgar Schein wrote that “*humble inquiry*”—asking questions you don’t already know the answer to—is one of the fastest ways to build trust in professional relationships.<sup>11</sup>

Oh, and don’t be the guy who asks, “So...what do you do?” three times in the same conversation. Unless you’re writing a sitcom script, it’s not a great look.

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## The Bottom Line

Curious, Continual, and Clarifying questions make up the *Ask* part of the ALL In approach. They show you’re interested, help you go deeper, and set you apart from the average business conversation.

Remember: in the Middle 3 Minutes, questions aren’t filler—they’re the glue that builds connection in the professional focus of the 1st 5 Minutes.

And now that you know how to Ask, it’s time to sharpen the next skill in the ALL In approach: Listen.

# LISTEN

## *Less Mouth, More Ears: The Overlooked Skill of Elite Connectors*

### Do You Hear Yourself?

One of my all-time favorite movie scenes in the cerebral classic *Dumb and Dumber* is where Lloyd and Harry are sitting in the heart-shaped bathtub. Harry asks Lloyd why his girlfriend broke up with her. He responded that she said he wasn't a very good listener. Lloyd then asks what else she said.

Lloyd's response? "I don't know. I wasn't really paying attention."

Spot on for most of us and sadly true (minus the heart-shaped bathtub, obviously).

Listening helps you avoid the "Interrupter Syndrome." You know the type: the guy who cuts you off mid-sentence with, "Oh yeah, that happened to me too! Let me tell you all about it!"

Newsflash: nobody likes that guy. Don't be Kevin the Interrupter.

It's easy when you feel like you have something in common with the other person, and you hijack the conversation. You mean well, but now you've made it about you and not the other person.

(*Pro tip*: try this phrase: "Me too! But back to you.") This lets the other person know you've had a similar experience, while keeping the focus on them. And you can always remember this moment and circle back to it with your own experience.)

## The Eight Types of Listeners

There are different **types of listeners**—and knowing which one you are is the first step to getting better. (*Adapted from Maxwell Leadership Podcast with a little of my own commentary.*)

1. **Preoccupied:** Always on their phone, fidgeting with their watch, or glancing at the door. These folks scream, “I’ve got somewhere else to be.” This is why the 1st minute—Read the Room and Begin the Banter—is critical. If someone is distracted, you need to work harder to earn their attention.
2. **Out-to-Lunchers:** They’re there physically, but their brain is on a beach somewhere. Blank stares. Nods at random intervals. Asking them questions snaps them back into reality. Nothing wakes up an Out-to-Luncher like being pulled into the conversation.
3. **Interrupters (aka Hijackers):** Just waiting for you to inhale so they can jump in. They assume they already know where you’re going. (Spoiler: they don’t.)
4. **One-Uppers:** If you ran a 5K, they ran a marathon—backward, uphill, in the snow. Every story you tell is just a stepping stone to their “better” one. Best move? Let them finish, then circle back.
5. **Whateverers:** Their body language says, “I don’t care.” Arms crossed, face blank, maybe even a yawn. *Pro Tip:* Find a topic that actually matters to them—fast—or the conversation’s dead on arrival.
6. **Combatives:** Hostile, defensive, always ready to pounce. They’re not listening to understand; they’re listening to argue. The trick? Don’t match their energy. Stay calm, find common ground, and ease them back toward connection. Asking a different question is key.

7. **Analysts:** The fixers. They think they're amazing listeners, but really, they're just waiting for their chance to diagnose your problem like Dr. Phil. Well-meaning, but often exhausting.
8. **Engagers:** Here's the gold standard. Undivided attention. Eyes, ears, mind, and heart tuned in. They encourage you to talk, reflect back on what you said, and help you discover your own solutions.

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Which one sounds most like you? (And if you just said, "Oh, I'm totally an Engager," you might want to ask your friends for a second opinion.)

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## Why Listening Matters

Thomas is a great talker. Get him going, and he's off to the races. But here's the problem—Thomas is a horrible listener. Everyone knows it except him. He tries, but he just can't help interrupting. And it happens constantly.

To someone like me, that's an instant turnoff. My body may be in the room, but my mind is already drafting a grocery list or imagining what I'd look like as a contestant on *Survivor*. And here's the truth: most people feel the same way.

\* \* \*

In the Middle 3 Minutes, you're already ahead of most people—you've asked questions (Step 1). But the quickest way to blow all that progress?

Two words: Not listening.

All the goodwill you earned by asking a thoughtful question vanishes the second you hijack the conversation.

According to Psychologist Carl Rogers, “The biggest block to personal conversation is one man’s inability to listen intelligently, understandingly, and skillfully to another person.”<sup>13</sup>

And research backs this up. A study by Zenger and Folkman found that the most effective leaders are those rated highest in listening skills. Even more interesting: people who feel heard are far more likely to trust, engage, and collaborate.<sup>14</sup>

Translation? Listening isn’t just polite—it’s profitable.

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## The Four Levels of Hearing

Let’s break this down further. We also listen at different levels, regardless of what type of listener we are (mostly).

1. **Non-Listener:** Out of the loop, unless you snap your fingers in their face.
2. **Passive Listener:** Hears bits and pieces, but misses the bigger meaning.
3. **Average Listener:** Gets most of the words but misses tone, context, or body language.
4. **Active Listener:** The boss level. They hear words, tone, body language, context—all of it. They’re fully present.

Most people are hanging out at Level 2. Not terrible, but nowhere near elite. If you’ve made it this far in the book, you want more.

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## Your Listening Goals

When you're in the moment, focus on these actions:

- Listen More
- Talk Less
- Listen Actively

Because here's the truth: if you don't listen, you can't *understand*. And if you can't understand, there is no real conversation. And remember, rockstar, you're there to help the customer, which requires listening to them and their needs. Seems obvious, but few actually really listen.

Here's your challenge for the next business conversation:

1. Ask a question.
2. Notice how quickly you want to jump back in.
3. Fight the urge. Stay quiet. Listen with eyes, ears, and full attention.

At first, it will feel weird—like you're supposed to fill the silence. But that moment of restraint? That's where the connection deepens.

Silence isn't your enemy here. Just leaving 2–3 seconds of silence after someone finishes talking not only makes them feel heard but often prompts them to share more. So, yes, embrace the awkward pause.

For kicks and giggles: If you need to practice, try it at home. Ask your teenager a question, then don't talk. You'll get about a five-second pause, an eye roll, and then—boom—an answer.

Congratulations, you're now an active listener.

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## Keep Things Moving

Try to see how long you can keep the conversation moving by simply asking curious, continual, and clarifying questions.

Ask a question, then go all 2QM on them by asking a second question, then another question. See how long you can keep them talking by being the question asker and listener.

But to keep the questions going, you must also be an active listener.

People walk away thinking, “Wow, that was a great conversation,” even if they did 80% of the talking. And who do they trust more as a result? You.

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## Listening = Influence

Want the fast lane to influence? Listen better than anyone in the room.

Author Kate Murphy put it perfectly in her book *You're Not Listening*: “Good listeners are like trampolines. They are somebody you can bounce ideas off of—who you can trust to reflect your thoughts back to you without judgment.”<sup>15</sup>

That's influence.

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## The Transition

So now you've:

- **Asked** good questions.
- **Listened** with focus and discipline.

The final piece? **Learning** from what you've heard—and using it to connect at an even deeper level.

Because listening without learning is like catching rain in a bucket full of holes. The good stuff just leaks away.

So that's precisely where we're headed next: how to **Learn** during those Middle 3 Minutes.

# LEARN

## *The Intel Advantage: Using What You Learn to Stay Ahead*

### Now What?

Samantha has come a long way. She's learned how to ask the right questions (curious, continual, clarifying) and sharpened her listening skills. But now she's wondering: *What do I do with all this "downtime" while listening? Is there some master plan here?*

Absolutely.

In the Middle 3 Minutes, we're going **ALL In** on the professional side of the person. Remember, the ultimate goal isn't the short-term sale but the long-term connection. We're asking questions (A), listening intently (L), and now learning (L).

Since it's possible to listen without *really* listening, we're going to learn to listen with purpose.

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### Listening to Talk vs. Listening to Learn

Too many people are "listening posers." They nod along, but they're really just waiting for their turn to talk. You know this guy—the one who jumps in the second you take a breath.

That's not listening. That's waiting. Not a fan of that guy.

As we've learned, few people truly listen, especially in a business context. Even fewer actually learn from what they hear. And if you can master this, you'll instantly stand out.

In fact, research from *Harvard Business Review* shows that active listeners are viewed as more trustworthy, competent, and likable.<sup>16</sup> Translation: if you're actually learning instead of pretending, you're already ahead of 80% of the people in the room.

When going ALL In, the goal isn't just to listen—it's to listen **to learn**.

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## What We Learn When We Listen

A study in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* showed that people who disclose appropriately are liked more—and they also like others more—creating a virtuous cycle for relationship building.<sup>17</sup>

As you listen, you're collecting intel in two critical areas:

### The Person

- **Wiring:** Are they extroverted, introverted, or ambiverted (somewhere in between)?
- **Style:** Do they prefer to talk or listen? Are they guarded with information? Use humor?
- **Interests:** What lights them up? What gets them talking?

You'd be amazed at how much you can uncover during this phase. And if you started gathering intel even before you met through a quick LinkedIn Pre-Read, you've already possibly learned about:

- Work history (experience)
- Education
- Skills
- Activity (posts, comments, shares)
- Projects
- Licenses & certifications

This gives you instant credibility in the Middle 3 Minutes. Combine that with the **2QM rule** (always ask a second follow-up question), and you'll go deeper faster.

## Their Preferences

Learning preferences is a cheat code for building trust. It shows you care about them more than yourself. A few things you can notice:

- Are they a morning person or afternoon person?
- Do they prefer email, text, or a call?
- Would they rather video call or meet in person?
- Do they prefer frequent updates or just final answers?
- Do they like being “wined and dined,” or do they appreciate small, thoughtful gestures?

*Pro Tip:* Write this stuff down. Don't rely on memory. I've told myself “I'll remember” too many times—only to forget. Capture preferences right away.

## Use What You Learn Later

Listening isn't just about the moment—it's about the follow-up. When you circle back later with what you learned, the connection goes deeper.

For example:

- If they're introverted, engage them with thoughtful questions and sprinkle in humor they enjoy.
- If they're a big sports fan, check in after their team's game: "Big win for your team last night!" or "Tough loss—how are you holding up?"
- If they mentioned a project or big meeting, follow up: "How did that presentation go?"
- If they prefer text over email, respect that to get a quicker response.

One guy I met last summer nailed this. I had mentioned my daughter was playing in her national volleyball tournament. A week later, he reached out to ask how she did. Do you think he won points with me?

Major.

Why? Because he used the *intel he learned* to reconnect.

This is rare. Most people don't do it. But you will—because you're going ALL In.

Most people can barely remember what they had for lunch yesterday, but if you remember *their* big meeting from last week, you'll look like a mind reader.

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## The Trap: Learning Without Using

Here's the danger—you listen, you learn, and then you do...nothing.

It's like buying a treadmill, setting it up in your basement, and never using it. Technically you “have” it, but you're not getting the benefits.

The true power of learning shows up later—when you *act* on it. Here are a few quick ways to use what you learn:

- Send a quick follow-up email or text: “Thanks for sharing about your project. Rooting for you!”
- Share a relevant article or resource: “This reminded me of our conversation...”
- Reference what they said in your next meeting: “Last time, you mentioned X—how's that going?”

It's simple, but it's also elite.

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## The Takeaway

The third step of the ALL In approach is simple but powerful: **Learn.**

- Ask questions with curiosity.
- Listen with intent.
- Learn about the person and their preferences.
- Use that intel later to reconnect.

Do this, and you'll move from being just another salesperson to being an Elite Business Connector.



# THE MIDDLE 3 MINUTES

## *Quick Action Checklist*

### **Focus: Think PROFESSIONAL**

Your goal is to move from *personal to professional* by going ALL In—Ask, Listen, and Learn. Build credibility, gather intel, and deepen trust so the transition to the problem feels natural.

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### ASK

- Come ready with curious questions (show interest, not ego).
  - Always apply the **2QM Rule** (Two Question Minimum). Don't stop at one—follow up to go deeper.
  - Mix in clarifying questions to show you've done your homework (Pre-Read intel) or to steer the conversation with purpose.
  - Pro Tip: Curiosity says, “Look at you” instead of “Look at me.”
- 

### LISTEN

- Fight the urge to interrupt. Let silence breathe—it shows respect and draws out more.
- Resist one-upping, problem-projecting, or hijacking. Stay fully present.
- Tune in with your eyes, ears, and body language (active listening > passive hearing).
- Notice tone, pace, and non-verbal cues—they often reveal more than words.

## LEARN

- Capture intel in two buckets:
  - **The Person** (personality, wiring, interests, style)
  - **Their Preferences** (communication style, priorities, habits)
- Write it down. Don't rely on memory—document details after the meeting.
- Use what you learn later. Bring it back up in follow-ups to show you care and that you were listening.
- Pro Tip: Remember—learning now sets up leverage later.

Need some help with this one? Grab my free “**30 Connection Questions for Stronger Business Conversations.**” Go to [media.bryanbuckleyspeaks.com/resources](http://media.bryanbuckleyspeaks.com/resources) or simply scan this QR code:





# PART THREE

## The Last Minute

### **Big Idea: Think Problem**

You've connected personally in the first minute. You've gone professional in the middle three. Now comes the moment most people fumble: **What's next?**

How do you pivot from connection into the actual business at hand—without sounding pushy or awkward?

This is where the Last Minute comes in. Your goal isn't to close the sale—it's to surface the *real problem* your customer is facing.

Because here's the truth: people don't buy products. They buy relief. And if you can help them clearly define their pain, your solution becomes the natural next step.

In the following three chapters, you'll learn how to avoid the common traps that kill momentum, apply a simple Two-Step Approach to gain clarity, and carry that same intentionality beyond the opener into the rest of the conversation. Get this right, and you'll never feel like you're "selling" again—you'll just be solving problems people actually want solved.

# THREE PITFALLS

## *What to Avoid in the Last Minute*

### Meet Jacob

Jacob is working the 1st 5 Minutes Framework. He used the first minute to connect personally, begin the banter, and define his Lead Talking Point (LTP). He nailed the connection.

Then he moved into the Middle 3 (minutes 2–4), going professional with strong questions, listening, and learning. His Pre-Read and Read the Room prep gave him plenty of material to engage with.

But now comes the big moment: **What's next?** How do you go from connection into the actual business at hand—without killing the vibe, sounding pushy, or fumbling the transition?

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### What's the Problem?

By this point, you know the customer both personally and professionally. You've built credibility. You've avoided two common mistakes—jumping into a pitch too soon or wasting time on random small talk.

Now it's time to uncover the problem this customer is facing (or will soon face) that you could potentially solve.

Think about it: I'm far more likely to share a real challenge if I believe you actually care about me first—not just the sale. If you've asked

thoughtful questions and listened well, I'll trust that you can help define or solve the problem.

This is the hidden gold most business conversations never reach. And if you're in sales, it's the **single most critical part of** talking with a new prospect.

---

## Three Pitfalls We Face in the Last Minute

### 1. We Think We Already Know

You've been doing this forever. You "saw the problem a hundred miles away." But here's the danger: when you assume, you stop listening. And when you stop listening, you lose the connection you worked so hard to build.

**Solution:** Go back to ALL In. Ask clarifying questions to confirm your theory. Listen like it's brand-new intel. Then learn from their exact language.

Making assumptions in business is like diagnosing someone with the flu because they sneezed once. Spoiler alert: it might just be allergies.

### 2. We Wait for Them Just to Tell Us

Most customers aren't going to gift-wrap their problem and hand it to you. They might hint, half-share, or be hesitant. Why? Because vulnerability takes trust.

**Solution:** Anticipate this. Ask questions that gently surface pain points without being pushy. Think surgeon with a scalpel, not lumberjack with an axe.

Example bridge questions:

- “What challenges are you seeing right now?”
- “What’s been most frustrating in your role lately?”
- “If you could wave a magic wand and fix one thing, what would it be?”

### 3. We Feel Awkward Asking

Nobody likes to ask, “So... what’s your problem?” It feels clunky and confrontational.

**Solution:** Use softer entry points. Phrasing matters. You can still surface the problem with confidence and care.

Remember, you’re there to solve a problem for a customer. It might take some time to uncover, but it all comes down to exactly *how* you ask your questions. We got you. Keep reading.

---

## How to Get Clarity: Apply ALL In

Here’s how to actually cut through the fog and land on the real problem:

### Humility

Drop the assumptions. Your job isn’t to be the smartest person in the room—it’s to be the most curious. Ask curious, continual (2QM), and clarifying questions. Then zip it and listen.

*Harvard Business Review* found that people who asked follow-up questions were consistently rated as more likable and trustworthy.<sup>18</sup>

Translation: curiosity builds connection.

## Perspective

Learn the problem through their lens. Capture their exact phrasing. If they say, “*We’re drowning in admin work,*” don’t reframe it as, “*So you’re looking for automation software.*” Stay in their language. Their words become your north star when framing a solution.

Pro Tip: Keep a “phrasing log.” Jot down the exact terms customers use. Later, when you repeat those words in your follow-up, they’ll feel understood—and you’ll earn instant credibility.

## Impulse Control

Here’s the unsexy truth: your impatience is the enemy. Your impulse to jump in with a fix? Deadly. Sit in the discomfort of silence. Resist the urge to finish their sentences.

Think of it like fishing—you don’t yank the line the second you feel a nibble. You wait, let it tug, then set the hook. Same here.

---

## The Takeaway

The Last Minute isn’t about selling—it’s about surfacing what really matters.

- Avoid assumptions.
- Don’t wait passively.
- Ask with confidence.
- Apply ALL In to find clarity.

Because here’s the truth: anyone can pitch a solution. But only an Elite Business Connector has the patience, humility, and curiosity to uncover the *real problem first*.

McKinsey's research details how fixing early journey pain points (e.g., first-bill disputes, onboarding frictions) measurably improves retention and customer value—clear evidence that identifying problems early pays off.<sup>19</sup>

Selling without defining the problem is like prescribing medicine without a diagnosis. You'll look professional doing it—but you're basically handing out Tic Tacs.

So let's take what we learned from these three pitfalls and avoid them, and let's apply *The Two-Step Approach*.



# THE TWO-STEP APPROACH

## *Why Clarity Wins Before the Pitch*

### Meet Tara

Tara learned from the Three Pitfalls. She realized she often assumed the customer would either freely share their problem—or that she already knew it, no matter what they *actually* said. It was humbling for her to notice those assumptions, and eye-opening to admit she wasn't always listening for clarity. Mad kudos, Tara!

Now, she's ready to make the necessary adjustments. She's discovered the power of the last minute, and instead of guessing, she's ready to apply the **Two-Step Approach** to bring complete clarity to her last of the 1st 5 Minutes.

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### Why the Last Minute Feels Awkward

Let's be honest: this is the moment where many conversations wobble. Up to this point, everything feels natural—banter, names, questions, listening. But when it's time to pivot into the “real reason” you're meeting, things can suddenly feel clunky.

Some people rush in too quickly, practically blurting out, “Okay, so let me tell you about our product!” Others hesitate, wait too long, and leave the air filled with awkward silence. And then there are the nervous ones who tiptoe around the point, hoping the customer just volunteers their problems like it's story time at the library. (Spoiler: they rarely do.)

Imagine if doctors handled conversations like some businesspeople:

*Patient:* “Doc, my knee hurts when I run.”

*Doctor:* “Perfect! I’ve got a special on elbow surgery today. Let’s book it!”

Ridiculous, right? Yet that’s what it feels like when you pitch without first clarifying the real problem. Don’t be the doctor selling elbows.

The good news? You can remove that awkwardness completely. And it doesn’t take a gimmick or slick line—it just takes the **Two-Step Approach**.

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## Step 1: Repeat the Problem

I cannot overstate the importance of this first step. Repeating the problem may feel obvious—or even unnecessary—but it’s essential. What we hear and what they mean are often miles apart.

This one simple phrase is a game-changer: “If I’m hearing you correctly, the problem you want solved is...”

That’s it. Fill in the blank with what they’ve actually said...in their own words.

But note that this repeating of the problem comes *after* you ask them to state the problem in *their* words.

### Why This Works

- **For You** – It forces you to pause and check that you really understand. No assumptions, no shortcuts.
- **For Them** – It reassures them you’re listening, you care, and you’re aligned with what matters to them.
- **For Both** – There is clarity on both sides of the actual problem that needs to be solved.

Reflective listening (repeating back what someone has said) significantly increases feelings of trust and accuracy in communication. In other words, when you paraphrase their problem, they not only feel heard—they believe you “get it.”

And let’s be real: how many people in their professional lives truly feel understood? When you do this, you set yourself apart instantly.

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## Step 2: Transition to the Solution

Once the problem is crystal clear, now—and only now—you can transition to the solution.

Notice I said *transition*, not *pounce* or *pitch*. Too many people blow it here. They’ve been friendly and relational for four minutes, then in the fifth minute—BAM!—they whip off the mask and reveal their true self: pushy, transactional, and desperate to close.

That’s the classic Jekyll and Hyde move. And trust me, it’s unsettling. I’ve watched salespeople undo four minutes of trust in four seconds of pressure.

Don’t be that guy.

The right transition feels smooth, not forced. Think gentle curve, not sharp corner. You’ve earned the right to talk about solutions—but your pace and posture matter. Remember:

- Long-term relationship > short-term sale.
- Connection first, transaction second.

# Creating the Weight and Pain of the Problem

Here's the secret sauce: before you transition to your solution, you need to let them *feel* the weight of the problem. Why? Because people don't buy products—they buy relief.

In *Prospect Theory*, researchers Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky found that people are twice as motivated to avoid pain as they are to pursue gain<sup>20</sup>. Translation: the more clearly they feel the pain of the problem, the more motivated they'll be to embrace your solution.

So how do you create this weight without sounding like a therapist?

Simple: keep asking questions.

- “How does this issue impact your team?”
- “What's the cost of leaving this unresolved for another six months?”
- “How is this affecting your day-to-day workload?”

These questions do two things:

1. They deepen their own awareness of the problem.
2. They signal that you're not rushing—you're still making it about them.

And here's the kicker: sometimes they'll talk themselves into urgency without you having to “sell” them at all. That's when you know you've done it right. Also, doing 2QM (two-question minimum) right now can bring more focus on the customer's pain, creating more value for your solution.

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## The Takeaway

The Last Minute (The Problem Minute) isn't about selling—it's about surfacing what really matters. Through the Two-Step Approach of repeating the problem then transitioning to the solution, you:

- Avoid assumptions
- Don't wait passively
- Ask with confidence
- Apply ALL In to find clarity

Because here's the truth: anyone can pitch a solution. But only an Elite Business Connector has the patience, humility, and curiosity to uncover the *real* problem first.

And when you do? Your solution doesn't feel like a pitch—it feels like the natural, obvious next step.

This sets you up perfectly for the rest of the business conversation and the primary purpose you're there with the customer.



# 5 MINUTES+

## *How to Carry Connection Beyond the Opener*

### Only the Beginning

Andy is experienced in sales; in fact, he's the boss. For him, it's not about good versus bad—it's about good versus better. He's not content with being “pretty good” at connecting with people; he's obsessed with becoming an *Elite Business Connector*.

To his credit, even at his high level, Andy knows there's always room to grow. That's what separates pros from amateurs: the humility to keep improving.

The 1st 5 Minutes Framework was a game-changer for Andy. Until then, he realized he had been leaving those first precious moments of a conversation up to chance. Sure, sometimes they went fine. But often, he wasted the opportunity.

Now, by breaking it down into the **1st Minute**, the **Middle 3 Minutes**, and the **Last Minute**, Andy had structure and confidence. He nailed the connection and built credibility.

But he wasn't done yet.

Because as strong as the first five minutes are, the *rest of the conversation* is where the real business happens. That's where 5 Minutes+ comes in.

## Why 5 Minutes+ Matters

You've done all this prep. You've nailed the connection. You've drawn them in.

And then what?

The danger is falling back into old habits—shifting into autopilot pitch mode and undoing everything you just built. It's like running the perfect warm-up, then pulling a hamstring as soon as you are out of the starting blocks.

Research from McKinsey found that 70 percent of buying experiences are based on how the customer feels they are being treated.<sup>21</sup> This means their buying experiences are based on a *feeling*—not the product itself.

Translation: if you suddenly stop connecting and start blasting features, you lose them.

5 Minutes+ is about keeping the same intentionality you showed at the start and carrying it throughout the rest of the business conversation. It's about staying curious, human, and engaged—because that's what builds trust and influence.

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## Five Ways to Implement 5 Minutes+

### 1. Keep the 1st 5 Minutes Mindset

This isn't, "Glad that's over, now back to business as usual." The mindset that built trust in the opener must carry forward.

Think of it like dating: just because you impressed them during the appetizer doesn't mean you can belch your way through dinner. Just sayin'. Consistency matters.

Stay intentional, keep rapport alive, and remember—you're here to connect, not just sell.

## 2. Connection First

Never forget: this is a person, not a dollar sign. Easy to say, but hard to do—especially when the adrenaline hits and you're itching to pitch.

So slow down. Treat the person across from you like a long-term relationship, not a one-night sale.

*Pro Tip:* Ask yourself mid-conversation, “Am I building a bridge...or burning one?”

## 3. Continue to Ask Questions

Don't slip into monologue mode. That's where most pitches die—death by PowerPoint.

Questions keep the conversation alive:

- “Do you have any questions before I go further?”
- “How does that sound to you so far?”
- “What would make this part of the process easier for you?”

Each one does two things: keeps them engaged and shows you're paying attention.

Translation: curiosity doesn't just build connection—it builds credibility.

## 4. Listen (Really Listen)

This is where most people fall apart. They nod, but don't hear. They ask, but don't process.

Remember: asking questions without listening is like ordering food at a restaurant, then leaving before it arrives.

The discipline here is challenging: resist the urge to jump in. Silence may feel awkward, but it gives people room to reveal the good stuff.

And here's the kicker: people will literally pay you for information if you listen. Information that can shape your pitch, tailor your offer, and make your solution irresistible.

## 5. Learn in Real Time

Don't just listen so you can talk again. Listen to *learn*. The responses you get can contain pure gold:

- Confusion you can clear up.
- Objections you can address.
- Insights that change your approach mid-meeting.

Think of it like live market research. You don't need to wait for the “postmortem” after the meeting—you're adapting in the actual moment.

Research from Salesforce shows that 66% of buyers expect salespeople to tailor solutions to their specific needs.<sup>22</sup> That's impossible unless you're learning in real time.

So, make every response count. Capture it. Use it. Adjust.

---

## Keep the Human Connection

Now, let's be real. Even with all the frameworks in the world, humans crave more than structure—we crave connection. That's where humor, one-liners, and stories come in.

Humor disarms. Stories stick. Questions engage. Use them often.

I once had a boss who dragged me into meetings just for this reason. Not because I was the smartest in the room (I definitely wasn't), but because I kept people engaged. I'd keep the energy up, break the tension

with a line, and know exactly when to pause for questions. That skill got me invited to meetings well above my pay grade—and it created real value.

I once heard someone say, “The difference between a sales pitch and a TED Talk is about 400 fewer PowerPoint slides.” Keep that in mind.

---

## Keep It Going

That’s what 5 Minutes+ is about: carrying forward connection, curiosity, and care long after the first handshake.

- Keep the mindset alive.
- Focus on connection, not just conversion.
- Ask questions.
- Listen like it matters.
- Learn in real time.

Do this, and you’ll never “lose” a conversation by flipping into robot pitch mode. Instead, you’ll become the person they *want* to keep talking to—the one they trust, remember, and call back.

Because at the end of the day, the 1st 5 Minutes earns you the stage, but it’s the 5 Minutes+ that earns you the relationship.



# THE LAST MINUTE

## *Quick Action Checklist*

### **Focus: Think PROBLEM**

Your goal in the final 60 seconds is to pivot from connection to purpose—surfacing the real issue that opens the door for deeper business.

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### Repeat the Problem

- Confirm what you heard in their words: “If I’m hearing you correctly, the problem is...”
  - Why?
    - **For You** → Clarity. You actually understand the problem.
    - **For Them** → Confidence. They know you’ve got it right.
  - Pro Tip: Don’t “translate” their words. Repeat them exactly. That phrasing becomes your secret weapon later.
- 

### Transition to the Solution

- Smooth is the keyword—no Jekyll & Hyde switch from friendly to pushy.
- Keep long-term relationship > short-term sale.
- Bridge naturally:
  - “What would solving this free you up to do?”
  - “If this challenge went away, what impact would it have on your team?”
- Remember: you’re not closing yet—you’re positioning.

## 5 Minutes+ Mindset

The clock doesn't stop at 5. Carry the same principles forward:

- Keep the 1st 5 Mindset—Stay intentional.
- Connection First: Person > Pitch.
- Ask Questions: Don't slip into monologue mode.
- Listen: Don't bulldoze past their answers.
- Learn in Real Time: Adjust on the fly based on what you hear.

Need some more guidance with this one? Grab your free **“3 Critical Steps to Effectively Close the 1st 5 Minutes”** Go to [media.bryanbuckleyspeaks.com/resources](http://media.bryanbuckleyspeaks.com/resources) or simply scan this QR code:



# CONCLUSION

## *The Power of the 1st 5 Minutes (and Beyond)*

You've made it. We've walked through the framework step by step—breaking down something most people ignore: the 1st 5 Minutes of a business conversation.

Here's the big idea one last time: how you connect in those opening moments determines what happens in every moment after.

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### The 1st Minute: Think Personal

We started with the 1st Minute—where the goal is to connect personally, not pitch. That's where you:

- **Read the Room:** Use Pre-Read intel and Observational Intelligence.
- **Begin the Banter:** Use humor, curiosity, and a lead talking point.
- **Nail the Name:** Remembering names builds instant trust.

This first minute isn't filler—it's foundation. And if you blow it, it's tough to recover. But if you nail it, you create instant momentum.

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### The Middle 3 Minutes: Think Professional

Then we transitioned from the personal into the professional to go ALL In. The Middle 3 Minutes are about connection at a deeper level:

- **Ask** curious, continual, and clarifying questions.
- **Listen** actively, resisting the urge to interrupt.
- **Learn** about the person—their wiring, interests, and preferences.

Think of this part as the glue. Questions show interest, listening builds trust, and learning gives you the intel to personalize everything that comes next.

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## The Last Minute: Think Problem

Finally, we turned to the last 60 seconds. This is where you pivot with purpose. Not by bulldozing into a pitch, but by surfacing *the problem that really matters*.

- Avoid assumptions.
- Don't sit back and wait for them to volunteer the issue.
- Ask bridge questions to uncover challenges naturally.

Then apply the ALL In mindset—humility, perspective, and impulse control—to gain clarity. If needed, repeat the problem in their words to confirm. Only then do you earn the right to transition into the solution.

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## 5 Minutes+: Stay Intentional

And here's the secret sauce: it doesn't stop at 1st 5 Minutes. The mindset that carried you through the opener has to stick with you through the rest of the business conversation.

- Keep asking questions.
- Keep listening.
- Keep learning.
- Keep the human connection alive—with humor, stories, and genuine care.

This is what separates Elite Business Connectors from everyone else. They don't just make a good first impression—they sustain it.

## This Could Be You...

Sarah pulls into the parking lot fifteen minutes early. She's meeting a new prospect—a VP who could become her biggest client this quarter. Old Sarah would've walked in cold, hoped for the best, and probably talked way too much out of nervous energy.

Not today.

She pulls out her phone and does a quick LinkedIn scan. Bingo: the VP played college lacrosse, recently posted about their company's sustainability initiative, and—jackpot—graduated from the same university as Sarah's brother. She walks in with three solid Lead Talking Points and zero anxiety.

The VP greets her in the lobby. Sarah notices the framed lacrosse photo on the wall behind the desk. “Is that you?” she asks, nodding toward it. “I saw you played at Maryland—my brother went there too.”

The VP lights up. “No kidding! What year?”

Sixty seconds in, and they're already laughing about old campus stories. Sarah nails the name using the Three-Peat, and the banter flows naturally from personal to professional.

Then she shifts gears—smoothly. She goes ALL In with questions: curious, continual, clarifying. She listens with full attention, picking up on the VP's frustration about their supply chain delays. Instead of jumping straight into her pitch, Sarah repeats the problem back in the VP's exact words: “So if I'm hearing you right, the real issue is the lag time between order and delivery eating into your quarterly numbers?”

“Exactly.”

No pressure. No pushiness. Just clarity.

By the time they wrap up, the VP isn't just interested—they're asking *Sarah* when they can meet again.

That's what happens when you stop winging it and start working the framework. Sarah didn't become the slickest salesperson in the room. She just chose connection over transaction—and it changed everything.

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## Final Challenge

So here's my challenge to you:

- Don't just read this book—*apply it*.
- Use the 1st 5 Minutes framework today.
- Test out ALL In with your next business conversation.
- Practice surfacing problems with clarity next week.

You'll mess it up sometimes. You'll forget a name. You'll jump in too fast. You'll ask a question that lands flat. That's okay. Every interaction is practice.

Over time, you'll get sharper, smoother, and more confident. And one day, you'll look back and realize you're no longer surviving the 1st 5 Minutes—you're owning them.

\* \* \*

I'd love to hear from you. Let me know what resonated, what you're going to try, and your progress. You can reach me here:

[Bryan@BryanBuckleySpeaks.com](mailto:Bryan@BryanBuckleySpeaks.com)

You've got this now!

# WOULD YOU LEAVE A REVIEW FOR ME?

If this book sharpened your communication, elevated your confidence, or gave you a new framework for connecting in business...

Would you take 60 seconds to leave a quick review on Amazon?

Your feedback helps more business professionals—just like you—discover *The 1st 5 Minutes Framework*. It also signals to Amazon's algorithm that this book is worth sharing with those who need it most.

You don't need to write an essay—just 2–3 sentences about your key takeaway or why you'd recommend it.

(Search Amazon for this book or go to <https://a.co/d/8R2PXwe> to leave a review.)

Huge thanks in advance. It means more than you know—and yes, I read *every single one*.



# FREE BONUS FOR LEADERS

*[Ebook] The 1<sup>st</sup> 5 Minutes for Sales Leaders*



If you are a leader, you know that it's one thing to master these connection skills for yourself. It's a completely different thing to help your sales team improve their ability to connect quickly and confidently.

Now that you've learned the material in this book (and are hopefully sharing it with your sales team), I've put together a guide just for you. It's a practical roadmap for

passing along the lessons of this book, empowering your team to sharpen those 1<sup>st</sup> 5 Minutes skills themselves.

Completely free, as a congratulations for making it to the end!

Go to <https://media.bryanbuckleyspeaks.com/resources> or scan the QR code to grab your free copy.





# HOW CAN I HELP?

## Can You Help a Brutha Out...

You've made it to the end—and maybe you're thinking:

“I wish other people on my team (or my boss) could read this book—or better yet, have Bryan come in and teach The 1st 5 Minutes Framework.”

If that's you, you're my kind of reader or leader. I love working with people who *don't just talk about improvement*—they seek it, invest in it, and take action.

After all, awareness without action changes nothing.

And here's what I've learned over the years: I can usually tell within the first few minutes of a conversation if a leader is ready and willing to implement the Elite Business Connector philosophy. When that light bulb goes on, the next question is always:

“Okay, Bryan, what exactly do you do—and how can you help us?”

It's a fair question. And here's the truth: nobody else teaches what we do.

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## Why Teams Bring Me In

Great leaders know the difference between a team that *talks* and a team that *connects*.

They're looking for the following:

- A **trusted voice** who knows how to inspire action, not just attention.
- An **expert guide** to help their teams master *The 1st 5 Minutes Framework*.

- A **partner in training** who tailors content to their culture and goals.
- **Accountability coaching** to turn the message into measurable change.
- **Ongoing development** for business professionals who want to lead with influence.

In short, they want their teams to walk into every business conversation prepared, confident, and ready to connect.

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## So, What's Next?

Now that we've reached the finish line, you've got four choices:

### **1. Do Nothing (a.k.a. the worst decision ever)**

You've come too far to stop now. You've seen what's possible. Doing nothing guarantees one thing: nothing changes.

### **2. Do It Yourself (the hardest decision ever)**

Sure, you could try to apply it all solo. It's doable, but let's be real—it's not efficient, and it's rarely effective. You'll spend more time reinventing the wheel than rolling it.

### **3. Some Assembly Required (the craziest decision ever)**

Bringing in random trainers or piecing together bits from other systems might feel like progress—but if they're not experts in *business connections* or *The 1st 5 Minutes Framework*, it's like hiring a swim coach to teach your team how to play golf.

### **4. Hire Elite Business Connector (best decision ever)**

Action Step: Schedule a **30-minute strategy call** with me to see how your team can master *The 1st 5 Minutes Framework* to discover how I can

help them leverage the most critical minutes to build connection, trust, and influence.

Here's my calendar link: <https://calendly.com/bryanpaulbuckley/30min>

Let's take 30 minutes together for me to ask, listen, and learn (ALL In - did you see what I just did there?) about your company and how I can serve you and make you look good in any way moving forward.

Same Side,  
Bryan Buckley

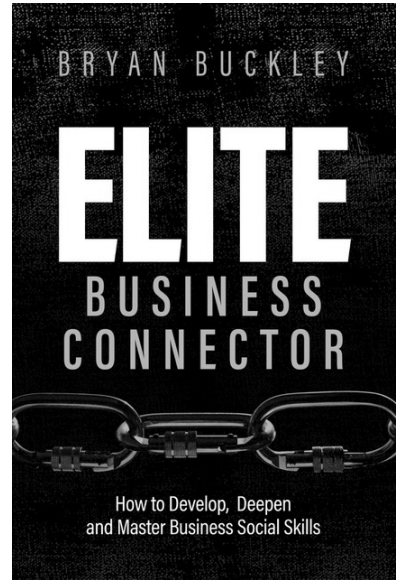


# WHAT YOU SHOULD READ NEXT

## *Elite Business Connector*

*How to Develop, Deepen, and Master Business Social Skills*

Throughout the book, I've referenced what I call an **Elite Business Connector**. This is the person who excels at the highest level of making real business connections. They're driven to be their absolute best, constantly learning and practicing anything it takes to be elite.



But here's what truly sets them apart:

- They know that **connection** is the differentiator.
- They've discovered this **truth**: Your *communication* leads to a *conversation* that creates a *connection*.

## Why This Book Matters

If your work requires you to be around people constantly, it can be exhausting.

- It's tough to always know what to say.
- It's awkward when a conversation fizzles out after two sentences.
- It's frustrating when small talk never seems to get deeper.

And all of that can leave you wondering: How do I actually create an authentic, lasting connection?

That's the ultimate goal—and it's precisely what this book helps you do.

## What You'll Learn

**Elite Business Connector** gives you the framework, tools, and mindset to build stronger relationships and influence in any business setting.

Each chapter layered practical steps on top of one another, building your ability to move from communication → to conversation → to connection.

## Available Now

Time to elevate your business connection skills to elite status.

This book is available in multiple formats on Amazon: **hardcover, softcover, Kindle, and Audible**—so no excuses, right? Keep it close. Revisit it. Practice it. And most importantly, apply it.

Because the next conversation you have could change everything.

# WHAT YOU SHOULD LISTEN TO NEXT



The *Elite Business Connector Podcast* is for business professionals who want to master the art of connecting with others to grow their revenue and customer loyalty. Hosted by speaker and business connection expert Bryan Buckley, this podcast moves beyond the standard communication tactics to focus on

developing meaningful, authentic relationships.

Episodes alternate between content-driven guides on the specific tools every business connector needs and interviews with subject-matter experts.

## Who Is It For?

- Business professionals who interact with people regularly.
- Sales professionals looking to build stronger connections and trust.
- Corporate teams wanting to improve communication and performance.

Find it on your favorite podcast app.



# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Bryan Buckley** is a business connections expert who thrives on helping people connect—especially in the business world.

He’s discovered that his secret superpower is *connection*—the ability to turn everyday business conversations into meaningful, lasting connections. With decades of experience, Bryan has developed a practical framework that helps everyone—from the rookie just starting out to the seasoned rock star—master the intangible but game-changing skill of business connection.

Bryan is a 5X author, speaker, and podcaster. He wrote the Amazon bestseller *The Elite Road Warrior: Six Energy Habits to Master the Business Travel Life* and hosts the popular *Elite Road Warrior Podcast*.

A husband of one and father of five, Bryan and the Buck Fam call the Chicagoland area home, where their loyalty to Chicago sports is undying (and often to his demise most years).

His latest mission? To help business professionals develop, deepen, and master their ability to connect—because better connections create better business.





# NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Willis, Janine, and Alexander Todorov. "First Impressions: Making Up Your Mind After a 100-ms Exposure to a Face." *Psychological Science*, vol. 17, no. 7, 2006, pp. 592–598. [https://cpb-us-w2.wpmucdn.com/voices.uchicago.edu/dist/f/3051/files/2021/02/WillisTodorov\\_PS2006.pdf](https://cpb-us-w2.wpmucdn.com/voices.uchicago.edu/dist/f/3051/files/2021/02/WillisTodorov_PS2006.pdf).
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