



CONNECTION SELF-EVALUATION ASSESSMENT

How Intentional Are You Really in the Moments That Matter Most?

A NOTE BEFORE YOU BEGIN

You're either leveraging your 1st 5 Minutes or losing them. This assessment tells you which one.

Do you really know how others experience you in the first five minutes? Take 10 minutes and find out. Most people believe they're better at first impressions and early conversations than they actually are. This evaluation is not designed to grade you — it's designed to reveal you. Answer honestly, not aspirationally.

Score yourself based on what you consistently do, not what you're capable of doing on your best day. Your final score will be one that changes how you see every conversation going forward.

SCORING SCALE

- 1 = Rarely / Never**
- 2 = Occasionally**
- 3 = Sometimes**
- 4 = Usually**
- 5 = Consistently / Always**

SECTION 1 — PRE-GAME: What You Do Before the 1st 5 Minutes Begin

#	Self-Reflection Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1	Before a meeting, call, or event, I intentionally research the person I'm about to connect with.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	I identify at least one Lead Talking Point (LTP) — a personal or professional insight about the other person — before our conversation begins.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	I set a clear intention for what connection outcome I want from the interaction before it starts.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	I clear my mental distractions (phone, other tasks, last meeting) so I can be fully present before walking into a conversation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	I think about the other person's world and what's on their mind — not just what I plan to say.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	When I know I'll meet someone new, I look for common ground, shared interests, or mutual connections in advance.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

SECTION 2 — THE 1ST MINUTE: The Instant You Open Your Mouth

#	Self-Reflection Statement	1	2	3	4	5
7	I am intentional about my first words — they are focused on the other person, not on me or what I sell.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8	I avoid leading with my title, company name, or pitch in the first 60 seconds of a new conversation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9	I use Observational Intelligence (OQ) — noticing things around me or about the person — to spark natural, personalized conversation starters.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10	I ask a genuinely curious opening question that invites the other person to talk about themselves.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐



#	Self-Reflection Statement	1	2	3	4	5
11	People would describe my energy and presence in the first moments of meeting them as warm, engaging, and memorable.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12	I never walk into a conversation and immediately talk about what I do before I've shown interest in who they are.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

SECTION 3 — THE MIDDLE 3 MINUTES: Deepening the Connection

#	Self-Reflection Statement	1	2	3	4	5
13	I consistently ask a minimum of two questions (2QM — Two Question Minimum) before I talk about myself.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14	I practice Double Clicking — asking a follow-up question that takes the conversation one level deeper.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15	When someone is speaking, I am genuinely listening — not planning what I'll say next.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
16	I use Locked-In Listening — giving visible, physical signals (eye contact, nodding, leaning in) so the speaker feels truly heard.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
17	I dig deeper into what people say rather than hopping to a new topic after each answer.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
18	I find and build on Click Accelerators — shared experiences, passions, or beliefs — that rapidly create rapport.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
19	I naturally ask follow-up questions that show I was truly listening, not just waiting for my turn to talk.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
20	I avoid dominating conversations and am mindful of the speaking-to-listening ratio.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

SECTION 4 — THE LAST MINUTE: Locking In the Connection

#	Self-Reflection Statement	1	2	3	4	5
21	I end conversations with a clear, memorable moment — not just a vague “we should talk sometime.”	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
22	I proactively identify a next step or follow-up before the conversation closes.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
23	After a conversation, I make a note of key personal details shared so I can reference them later.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
24	I leave people with the impression that they were the most important person in the room during our conversation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

SECTION 5 — ALL IN (Ask / Listen / Learn): Your Conversation DNA

#	Self-Reflection Statement	1	2	3	4	5
25	I ask more than I tell in professional conversations.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
26	I genuinely learn something new from almost every conversation I have.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐



27	I am as comfortable — or more comfortable — listening as I am speaking.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
28	I naturally connect what I learn about someone to how I can serve or add value to them.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
29	I approach every new interaction with a “look at you” mindset — not a “look at me” mindset.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

SECTION 6 — CONSISTENCY & HABITS: The 5 Before the 5 and the Three-Peat Rule

#	Self-Reflection Statement	1	2	3	4	5
30	I practice these conversation skills consistently — not just when the stakes are high.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
31	I reach out to at least 5 meaningful contacts on a consistent, proactive basis (5 Before the 5 mindset).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
32	I reinforce key commitments or connection points across multiple touchpoints (Three-Peat Rule) — following up more than once.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
33	I treat every interaction — from the barista to the boardroom — as a chance to practice connection.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
34	I review and intentionally improve how I showed up in conversations after they happen.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

SECTION 7 — WORDS & LANGUAGE: How You Communicate in the Moment

#	Self-Reflection Statement	1	2	3	4	5
35	I am intentional about the words I choose — avoiding phrases that create distance, defensiveness, or disconnect.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
36	I use “speak up” language that affirms, invites, and encourages others to open up.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
37	I am aware of when my word choices unintentionally make conversations about me rather than the other person.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
38	I calibrate my language to match the context — professional vs. casual, high-stakes vs. relationship-building.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

SECTION 8 — SELF-AWARENESS: Your Blind Spots in Conversation

#	Self-Reflection Statement	1	2	3	4	5
39	I have received honest feedback about how others experience me in the first few minutes of meeting me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
40	I am aware of nervous habits or unconscious patterns that may undermine my first impression.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
41	I can honestly say my perception of how I connect with others matches what others would say about me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
42	I recognize when a conversation isn't clicking — and I know how to pivot rather than plow through.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
43	I actively seek to grow my conversational intelligence — reading, learning, practicing intentionally.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐



SECTION 9 — HIGH-STAKES MOMENTS: When It Really Counts

#	Self-Reflection Statement	1	2	3	4	5
44	In high-stakes meetings (sales calls, leadership conversations), I am more focused on connecting than performing.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
45	I consistently show up the same way in important conversations as I do in casual ones.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
46	I have a repeatable, intentional approach to starting conversations — not just a “wing it and hope” strategy.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
47	When I'm nervous or under pressure, I still prioritize the other person over my own agenda.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
48	I can confidently say that the 1st 5 Minutes of my current conversations give me a distinct competitive advantage.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

SECTION 10 — THE FINAL VERDICT: Two Questions That Separate Intention From Reality

#	Self-Reflection Statement	1	2	3	4	5
49	If someone were evaluating me right now on the 1st 5 Minutes of our last conversation, I would be comfortable with that score.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
50	The way I show up in the first five minutes of a conversation is something I am genuinely proud of.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

YOUR RESULTS

Add up your scores and discover where you truly stand.

SECTION-BY-SECTION BREAKDOWN

Section	Questions	Your Score	Notes
Section 1 – Pre-Game	1-6	___ / 30 max	Lowest scoring area? ☐ Y ☐ N
Section 2 – The 1st Minute	7-12	___ / 60 max	Lowest scoring area? ☐ Y ☐ N
Section 3 – Middle 3 Minutes	13-20	___ / 100 max	Lowest scoring area? ☐ Y ☐ N
Section 4 – The Last Minute	21-24	___ / 120 max	Lowest scoring area? ☐ Y ☐ N
Section 5 – ALL IN (Ask/Listen/Learn)	25-29	___ / 145 max	Lowest scoring area? ☐ Y ☐ N
Section 6 – Consistency & Habits	30-34	___ / 170 max	Lowest scoring area? ☐ Y ☐ N
Section 7 – Words & Language	35-38	___ / 190 max	Lowest scoring area? ☐ Y ☐ N
Section 8 – Self-Awareness	39-43	___ / 215 max	Lowest scoring area? ☐ Y ☐ N
Section 9 – High-Stakes Moments	44-48	___ / 240 max	Lowest scoring area? ☐ Y ☐ N
Section 10 – The Final Verdict	49-50	___ / 250 max	Lowest scoring area? ☐ Y ☐ N

TOTAL SCORE _____ / 250

SCORE INTERPRETATION GUIDE

Score Range	Level	What It Means
195-250	Connection Elite	You lead with others consistently and have strong 1st 5 Minutes habits. Sharpen the edges – mastery is never finished.
145-194	Connection Competent	You have real strengths, but gaps are costing you relationships and opportunities you may not even know you're missing.
95-144	Connection Developing	You're capable, but operating on autopilot. The 1st 5 Minutes framework will unlock a new level of intentionality.
48-94	Connection Emerging	Significant opportunity ahead. Most people in this range believe they connect well – but the score reveals the gap. The good news: this is entirely learnable.

1. Which section produced your lowest score — and does it surprise you? Why or why not?

2. Think of a relationship or opportunity that didn't go as well as you hoped. Looking back, what happened in the 1st 5 Minutes of that interaction?

3. Where is the biggest gap between how you think you show up and how you actually show up?

4. What is one specific conversation habit that, if you changed it, would immediately improve your connections?

5. Who in your life is naturally exceptional at the 1st 5 Minutes? What do they do that you don't consistently do?

6. What would be different in your business, career, or relationships if you operated at a consistent score of 200+?

THE GOOD NEWS

Everything on this evaluation is a learned skill — not a born trait.

The 1st 5 Minutes framework gives you a repeatable, proven system to close the gap between where you are and where you know you're capable of being — in every conversation, every connection, every opportunity.

BY BRYAN BUCKLEY

You Get Five Minutes. What Will You Do With Them?

Most business conversations are lost before they even begin. We talk too much, sell too soon, or stumble through awkward small talk—wasting the most critical moments of any interaction.

But what if you had a proven plan to leverage those first five minutes instead of losing them?

In *The 1st 5 Minutes*, business connections expert Bryan Paul Buckley offers a simple, repeatable framework to turn every business conversation into a powerful connection.

Whether you're an extrovert who talks too much or an introvert who freezes up, this book shows you exactly what to say—and when.

Available on paperback, audio book and digital version.



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Hosted by 5X author and business connections expert Bryan Buckley, the Elite Business Connector Podcast is the audio home of the 1st 5 Minutes framework — where every episode gives you something you can use in your very next conversation. Most people think they're better at connection than they actually are. This podcast exists to close that gap — one episode, one conversation, one connection at a time. Subscribe and start connecting differently.

The podcast is available on [Apple Podcasts](#), [Spotify](#), and [YouTube](#).



**BRYAN BUCKLEY IS THE LEADING
AUTHORITY ON THE 1ST 5 MINUTES
OF A BUSINESS CONVERSATION.**

He's a 5X author, speaker, corporate trainer, and podcast host. He's been in the corporate world for decades and now leveraging his experience to help others develop, deepen, and master their business communication skills.