



HOW GEN Z BUILDS TRUST AND CLOSES DEALS: A MULTI-GENERATIONAL CONVERSATION

WITH KOLE BUCKLEY & JACKSON HANNAH

CHEAT SHEET

044

THE BIG IDEA

Kole Buckley runs a leasing office where students and their parents walk in already guarded, and Jackson Hannah cold-calls seventy-five strangers a day who never asked to hear from him. Different worlds, same fix: both of them win in the first five minutes by turning a transactional conversation into a transformational one, on purpose, before they ever get to business.

THE GOLDEN RULE

Look at you, not look at me.

The second you make the conversation about closing the deal, the prospect feels it and the wall goes up. Kole and Jackson both do the opposite: they spend the first minute finding out who the other person is before they spend a second finding out what the other person needs from them.

THE FRAMEWORK AT A GLANCE

LEVEL 1 • THE SETUP	LEVEL 2 • THE DEEPER MOVE
Cold Open The first ten seconds before you ask for anything. Most people rush through it to get to business.	Observational Intelligence (OQ) Reading the room. One real detail, noticed and named, before a single sales question.
Small Talk Weather, traffic, "how's it going." Filler that keeps things safely surface-level.	Transformational Conversation Making it about the person, not the process. Selling yourself before you sell anything else.
First Question The one you always ask. Safe, scripted, and easy to shrug off with a one-word answer.	The Second Question "Tell me more about that." The follow-up that proves you were actually listening.

WORD / CONCEPT DEEP DIVE

01 IT'S RECON, NOT SMALL TALK

Jackson doesn't open with the pitch, he opens with something he can see: an award on the wall, a signed baseball, a shirt with a team logo. It is not filler, and it is not flattery. It is one real observation used as the door into the conversation, before either person has said a word about business.

ELITE MOVE:

Before you say anything about why you are there, name one specific, visible detail about the person or the room and ask about it.

"I know you're new to the role. Tell me about that."



HOW GEN Z BUILDS TRUST AND CLOSES DEALS:

A MULTI-GENERATIONAL CONVERSATION

WITH KOLE BUCKLEY & JACKSON HANNAH

044

CHEAT SHEET

CONCEPT DEEP DIVES

02 STOP SELLING THE APARTMENT, SELL THE RELATIONSHIP

It is not about walking someone through a checklist of amenities and square footage. It is about whether they trust the person managing where they will live for a year. Kole learned that the tour matters less than what happens in between the stops, the parts where nobody is asking or answering anything about housing at all.

ELITE MOVE:

Trade one scripted question for a genuine one about their life. Ask what they are studying or what they do, before you ask what they are looking for.

"So what's your major, and what do you want to do with it?"

03 ONE QUESTION IS A FORM, TWO ARE A CONVERSATION

Most first questions are safe enough to answer with a shrug: "how has it been going with your current provider, fine or not fine." Jackson's version digs for a story instead of a rating, and then he stays on it one beat longer than feels natural before he moves to his next point.

ELITE MOVE:

After their first answer, don't jump to your next question. Ask them to say more about the one they just gave you.

"So when you have an issue with that, what does it actually look like to get it resolved?"

CARRY FORWARD QUESTIONS

1. What's one real detail here I can ask about before I ask about business?
2. Did I ask my second question, or did I just move on after the first answer?





HOW GEN Z BUILDS TRUST AND CLOSES DEALS:

A MULTI-GENERATIONAL CONVERSATION

WITH KOLE BUCKLEY & JACKSON HANNAH

044

CHEAT SHEET

“

I THINK THE BEST WAY TO PUT IT IS JUST SWITCHING FROM A TRANSACTIONAL CONVERSATION TO ONE MORE OF A TRANSFORMATIONAL CONVERSATION.

— KOLE BUCKLEY

“

I’M NOT TRYING TO SELL MY PRODUCT, I’M TRYING TO SELL MYSELF TOO.

— JACKSON HANNAH



HOW GEN Z BUILDS TRUST AND CLOSES DEALS:

A MULTI-GENERATIONAL CONVERSATION

WITH KOLE BUCKLEY & JACKSON HANNAH

044

CHEAT SHEET

3 ACTION ITEMS

1 Do a 30-Second Recon Before You Speak.

Before you open your mouth about business, spot one real detail in the room or on the person, a shirt, an award, a photo, and ask about that first.

2 Ask the Second Question Before You Pivot.

When they answer your first question, do not move on. Ask "tell me more about that" once before you get to your next point.

3 Bring Something Memorable, Not Just a Card.

Skip the business card handoff. Leave something small and specific behind, so the next time they think of you, they are not thinking of the other fifty reps who showed up that week.

FEATURED GUESTS

KOLE BUCKLEY

STUDENT LEASING AGENT · YOUNG AMERICA

Kole is 22 and a first-year master's student in sports psychology at Illinois State University, where he also completed his undergraduate degree in business administration. He works full-time as a student leasing agent for Young America, a property management company serving Bloomington and Normal, Illinois, helping students and their families find housing every year. He is also Bryan's son.

CONNECT WITH KOLE BUCKLEY

► Connect: [LinkedIn](#) — search **Kole Buckley**



JACKSON HANNAH

SENIOR BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT REP · PROVEN IT

Jackson is 23 and a graduate of Trinity Christian College, where he earned a degree in business entrepreneurship with a minor in theology. He works in tech sales as a senior business development rep at Proven IT, a managed service provider covering office technology, IT, cybersecurity, and phone systems, where he builds his own pipeline through outbound prospecting and in-person visits. Jackson has been a family friend of the Buckleys for decades.

CONNECT WITH JACKSON HANNAH

► Connect: [LinkedIn](#) — search **Jackson Hannah**





HOW GEN Z BUILDS TRUST AND CLOSES DEALS:

A MULTI-GENERATIONAL CONVERSATION

WITH KOLE BUCKLEY & JACKSON HANNAH

044

CHEAT SHEET

FEATURED GUESTS

KOLE BUCKLEY

STUDENT LEASING AGENT · YOUNG AMERICA

Kole is 22 and a first-year master's student in sports psychology at Illinois State University, where he also completed his undergraduate degree in business administration. He works full-time as a student leasing agent for Young America, a property management company serving Bloomington and Normal, Illinois, helping students and their families find housing every year. He is also Bryan's son.

CONNECT WITH J.R. BRIGGS

- Website: <http://joshuabandoch.com/> →
- Connect: *LinkedIn* — search *Joshua Bandoch*



JACKSON HANNAH

SENIOR BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT REP · PROVEN IT

Jackson is 23 and a graduate of Trinity Christian College, where he earned a degree in business entrepreneurship with a minor in theology. He works in tech sales as a senior business development rep at Proven IT, a managed service provider covering office technology, IT, cybersecurity, and phone systems, where he builds his own pipeline through outbound prospecting and in-person visits. Jackson has been a family friend of the Buckleys for decades.



HOW GEN Z BUILDS TRUST AND CLOSES DEALS:

A MULTI-GENERATIONAL CONVERSATION

WITH KOLE BUCKLEY & JACKSON HANNAH

044

CHEAT SHEET

BONUS DEEP DIVE • THE SCIENCE OF THE FIRST IMPRESSION

Observational Intelligence sounds like a soft skill, but the research on first impressions says it is closer to a hard requirement. People form durable judgments about trustworthiness and competence in seconds, and in sales specifically, those snap judgments predict real outcomes. Here is what the research actually says about what Kole and Jackson are doing on instinct.

[1] Willis & Todorov (2006) found that people form stable trait judgments, trustworthiness, competence, likability, from a 100-millisecond glimpse of a face, and that longer exposure barely changes the verdict. The first impression Kole's parents form of him happens before he finishes his first sentence.

[2] Ambady, Krabbenhoft, & Hogan (2006), studying real sales managers, showed that judges could pick out the more effective salespeople from a 20-second audio clip of a job interview, no pitch required. Effectiveness reads as a "thin slice," which is exactly the window Kole and Jackson are working with in a cold call or a walk-in tour.

[3] Arndt, Evans, Landry, Mady, & Pongpatipat (2014) tested how customers react to salespeople's credibility-building statements and found that interpersonal, relationship-building statements built credibility more reliably than statements about expertise. It backs up Kole's instinct to build rapport before he ever proves he knows the product.

[4] Wiener et al. (2024) found that the products people visibly display change how, and how well, strangers start conversations with them, with distinctive or common-ground objects producing deeper, more enjoyable exchanges. That is the mechanism behind Jackson's barbecue sauce and Masters goodie bags: a physical conversation starter that outperforms a business card.

REFERENCES

Sources cited in this cheat sheet, verified live at time of publication.

"First Impressions: Making Up Your Mind After a 100-Ms Exposure to a Face." Willis & Todorov, Psychological Science, 2006.

[View Source →](#)

"The 30-Sec Sale: Using Thin-Slice Judgments to Evaluate Sales Effectiveness." Ambady, Krabbenhoft, & Hogan, Journal of Consumer Psychology, 2006.

[View Source →](#)

"The Impact of Salesperson Credibility-Building Statements on Later Stages of the Sales Encounter." Arndt, Evans, Landry, Mady, & Pongpatipat, Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management, 2014.

[View Source →](#)

"Product-Facilitated Conversations: When Does Starting a Conversation by Mentioning a Product Lead to Better Conversational Outcomes?" Wiener et al., Journal of Consumer Psychology, 2024.

[View Source →](#)



BY BRYAN BUCKLEY

THE 1ST 5 MINUTES

Everything Kole Buckley and Jackson Hannah do on instinct, the recon before the pitch, the second question, the memorable follow-up, is the same architecture Bryan lays out in **The 1st 5 Minutes**: personal first, professional in the middle, problem last. Whether you are walking a prospect through an apartment or cold-calling your seventy-fifth business of the day, the book breaks down exactly how to build that opening minute so the rest of the conversation earns trust instead of demanding it.

[Get the Book → bryanbuckleyspeaks.com](https://bryanbuckleyspeaks.com)



TURN YOUR 1ST 5 MINUTES INTO YOUR COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE — LEVERAGE OR LOSE IT.

Bryan Buckley is the leading authority on the 1st 5 Minutes of a business conversation — 5X author, speaker, corporate trainer, and podcast host. He helps sales professionals and leaders develop, deepen, and master their business communication skills so every conversation counts.

✉ Bryan@BryanBuckleySpeaks.com / 630-689-7606

[BOOK A 30-MIN CALL →](#)

