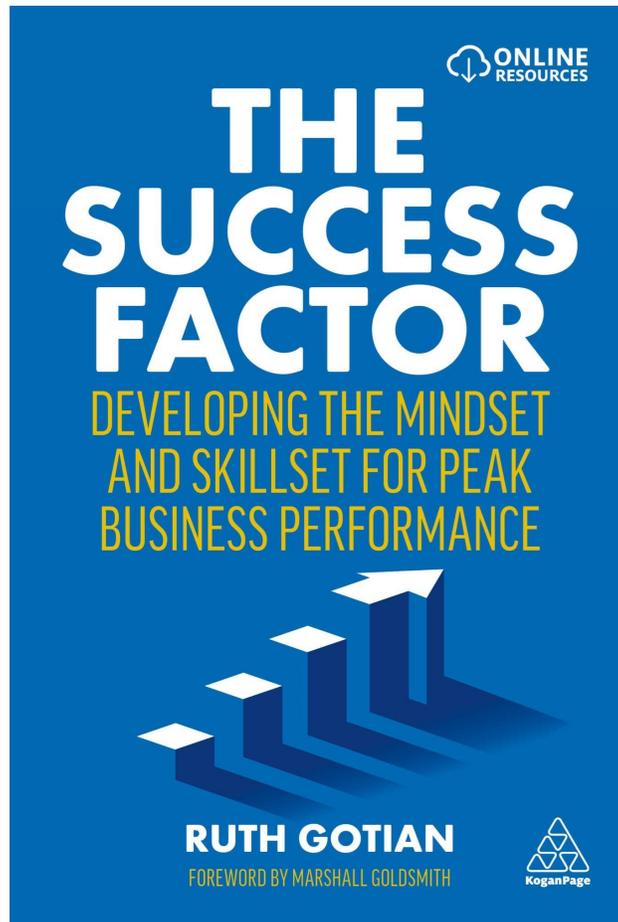


THE SUCCESS FACTOR

NETWORKING CONVERSATION STARTERS
THAT MAKES YOU STAND OUT AND BE MEMORABLE.



Ruthgotian.com

13 CONVERSATION STARTERS

THAT MAKE YOU STAND OUT AND BE MEMORABLE

My mentor, Dr. Marie Volpe, told me, “There is nothing new under the sun. What is new is how you look at it.”

She is right.

High achievers are always looking to learn something new. They seek the gaps in knowledge between two seemingly known ideas and make that delta the emphasis of their thought leadership. They hope to find a new purpose for something old.

One of the ways high achievers get new ideas is by surrounding themselves with interesting people both inside and outside their industry.

My book, *The Success Factor*, shares many stories of high achievers, including Nobel Prize winners, astronauts, and Olympic champions, who were not afraid to learn something new or admit they did not have the answer.

You can do this too.

Attending networking events is one way to meet new people, but not the only way. Those social events can be stressful, especially for those depleted by over-stimulated settings. But even for those who thrive with background noise, introducing yourself to someone you do not know is stressful. On the other hand, starting a conversation with a stranger at any hierarchy level can be done effectively. All it takes is a little advanced planning.

You need starter sentences, benign conversation starters, that you can use to kick off any conversation.

The following conversation starters are inspired by my book, *The Success Factor*, and my work with high achievers. I hope you use them the next time you meet someone new. You can purchase *The Success Factor* [here](#), and access hundreds of articles for free which I’ve written for *Forbes*, *Psychology Today*, *Harvard Business Review*, *Nature*, *Scientific American*, and others at www.ruthgotian.com

I hope you use these conversation starters and find yourself more comfortable meeting new and interesting people. Before starting, what is essential to understand, when you meet someone new, it is not about what you can get from them. That would make it transactional. So instead, work on building a relationship where your new acquaintance can get to know, like, and trust you.

Finally, after you've read *The Success Factor*, I would greatly appreciate it if you could leave a review on Amazon. It helps others find the book more easily (thanks to the Amazon algorithm, which is partially based on the number of reviews).

Shine on,

Dr. Ruth Gotian

AFTER HEARING SOMEONE'S TALK

- 1. I enjoyed your talk, especially the comment you made about...*
- 2. I really enjoyed your talk. I work in the same area and would love to chat with you about...Would it be OK if I sent you an email to set up a time to chat?*
- 3. I know you have experience in....I'd love your perspective on how to...*
- 4. I just started in this field and noticed....I would love to hear how you overcame the challenge of...*

AFTER HEARING SOMEONE ON A PANEL

I related to what you said about...

AS EVERYONE IS LOGGING ON TO ZOOM

Where are you based?

AT A COCKTAIL PARTY

What an interesting (purse, necklace, socks, etc)...

AT A VIRTUAL OR IN-PERSON CONFERENCE

What was your favorite session so far?

AT AN IN-PERSON CONFERENCE

Did you have to travel far to get here?

REACHING OUT TO PEOPLE ONLINE

1. *I saw your post on Twitter regarding your work on _____. I work on _____ and was interested in how I might be able to implement your technique. Might you have 15 minutes for a quick phone chat to discuss? I'd be grateful for your perspective.*
2. *Just wanted to send you this quick note to wish you a happy (holiday, birthday, anniversary). I saw on LinkedIn that you...I've recently completed...*
3. *I noticed you have a very large and diverse following on LinkedIn. I was wondering if you could share some tips on how to expand my network beyond my immediate field or industry.*

REACHING OUT TO AUTHORS

I read your article about...I really appreciated your focus on....I am considering launching something similar in my organization and was wondering if you had time to chat. I'd love to hear your perspective about what hidden challenges I should expect.

FINAL THOUGHTS

When someone asks you “what do you do?” don't tell them your title, as it means little outside of your organization. Instead, share with them the problem that you solve. Read my article in Forbes about it [here](#).

It's too easy to jump into the conversation and think about what you can get from the new person. Please don't do that. Aside from perspective, don't ask for anything; not a job, internship, or introduction. Your new acquaintance will not dip into their social capital, also

known as their network until you have demonstrated your worth. Simply put, you need to prove that you are someone they can know, like, and trust. For starters, give more than you receive. See how you can help *them*.

To get the full story and hear from some of the greatest high achievers of our generation, you can purchase *The Success Factor*.

You can also read hundreds of my articles for free, which are available on my website, ruthgotian.com

You can watch my video interviews with high achievers, including many who are in the book *The Success Factor*, on YouTube on The Mentor Project's [channel](#).

Good luck and shine on!

Dr. Ruth Gotian

Adapted from *The Success Factor: Developing the Mindset and Skill Set for Peak Business Performance* by Ruth Gotian (Kogan Page, 2022).