

# What to tell people

**Do you hate getting asked “Tell me about yourself” or “What do you do for work?”**

Get used to it. It’s not going to stop. And, you need to figure out how to answer these questions, or you are going to get stuck at go, and really discouraged because almost every conversation feels awkward and ends with no hope of a job lead for you. **Good news! I’m going to teach you how to handle this w/ a really easy script!**

**Nothing kills a conversation faster** than opening up with *“I need a new job”* or *“I’m unemployed”* So don’t do this! Instead, start off with something positive (THEM!) and let the conversation naturally lead to your job search. Here’s a much better way:

## How to guide a good conversation:

### 1. Focus 1<sup>st</sup> on THEM!

- Hi! How are you?
- How is ... (*ask about something they care about, like kids, car, travel*)
- Are you planning anything fun right now?
- What are you doing for work these days? (*If you don’t already know*)

### 2. Mention 1 fun personal thing you’re doing now

(*I just bought a puppy, I’m planning a big trip, etc.*)

### 3. Focus FORWARD on your future work:

Tell them what you want for your next job, but keep it **positive, hopeful and EASY** to understand. Do NOT lead in with *“I’m unemployed”* or *“I need a new job.”*

Start by telling them what you’re looking forward to in the future. Examples:

- I’m actually on the hunt for my next big adventure.
- I’m exploring (*name your target job / area of expertise*)
- I’m doing market research right now ... just trying to connect with people who are working in that space. Do you happen to know anyone?

**Okay! Time to write your own “focus forward” script:**

Okay! Time to write your own “focus forward” script:

---



## What I’m going to tell people

- I’m actually on the hunt for \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Keep your body & voice positive, bright + hopeful)
  - I’m exploring \_\_\_\_\_.
  - I’m doing market research right now ... just trying to connect with people who are working in that space. Do you happen to know anyone like that?
-

# What to tell people: SCRIPTS

“What are you looking for? How can I help?”

This is an easy one! IF you have identified your target job. If not, you’ve got some work to do this week ... and the next section is going to help you do that!

“Oh! Thanks for asking. I’m on the hunt for a job in (name your target job). I’m in market research mode right now, so I’m looking to chat with people who are doing that job right now in the healthcare or financial services (name your own target industries) industries. Do you happen to know anyone that works in that space? O, do you know of any professional groups or associations I should be connected to in that arena?”

“Oh! Thanks for asking. I love working directly with customers. I’m on the hunt for a job answering phones in the healthcare industry. Do you happen to know anyone in the healthcare industry?”

“Why do you want a new job?”

If you’re bored at work:

“Have you ever been in a job you’re really good at, but it just isn’t much fun anymore? I’m there right now. I’ve kind of reached my peak, and I’m looking for my next mountain to climb. I’m really excited about the possibility of (name the job you’re interested in getting next).”

If you have a bad boss ...

*Don’t tell people you have a bad boss. That’s just not a conversation you want to get into, unless you have to. Find ANOTHER REASON that you want to leave this job and talk about that instead. Briefly. Then, LOOK AHEAD to what you want your NEXT job to look forward.*

“When I took this job, I was really excited about (name one thing you were excited about). That’s just not a big part of my job anymore, so I’m thinking about finding a new job that will let me do my favorite things, like (name 1-2 of the things you want to do in your next job).

## If you lost your job due to COVID ...

“My company was hit really hard by COVID. They started cutting people right away, and I was laid off in (name the month). I’m excited to look at some opportunities in (name your focus forward ... target job).

## If you lost your job before COVID ...

“I lost my job because of (insert reason that is NOT about you, but something at the company that was out of your control and contributed to the situation). And then COVID hit., So, tough timing ... but that’s okay. I’ve had some really cool conversations with companies in the (name your focus-forward target zone). That’s what I’m looking forward to next. Do you happen to know anyone working in that space?”

## If your company was sold + new mgmt. came in and cleaned house ...

“Have you ever worked for a company that got bought by another one? Well, things get a little wild and the new company usually likes to bring in their management team. That’s what happened. There were a lot of duplicate positions, and mine was one of them. They kept their current leaders and let the rest of us go. Looking forward to what’s next, I’m on the hunt for (name your target job).

## If you’ve been unemployed for a long time ...

A number of ways to handle this ... depending on your situation. Here are some examples:

“You know, this is the first time I have ever been laid off in my life, and I took the opportunity to take some time off and do some real soul-searching. I did some assessments, took some classes, made my garden beautiful. I figured out what I love to do, and what I want to do next in my career. It’s (name your target job). I’m actually really excited about it, and I’ve been networking with some people who are working in that space. Do you happen to know anyone?”

“It’s so weird. I’ve never had trouble finding a job before. But this time around, I just haven’t found the right thing yet. I’m really focused on doing my best work, which is in (name your target job). Do you happen to know anyone who works in that area?”

If you got fired ...

Here's what Steve finally learned to say about getting fired. It's all true, but he leaves out the part about his really bad attitude and the fact that he refused to attend any of their Tuesday morning sales meetings with the new boss. That stuff should never come up in a casual conversation ... or a job interview, unless someone really digs in.

“Well, the first two years were really fun. I had a blast helping that company grow from scratch. I was pulling in \$8.5million a year in sales for them. Then, they got a lot bigger and needed to hire a VP of Sales. You know, I'm really good at growing start-ups. Once things get to a certain size, and they need to start hiring more junior salespeople, they need to hire a sales manager. All of a sudden, things change a lot and that's just not fun for me anymore. It was time for me to move on and help another start-up make a ton of money. Looking ahead, I'm excited to find a company like (name your target job). “

**PRACTICE MAKES THIS ALL MUCH EASIER!**

Once you have an outline for what you think will be a good answer, ask a friend to let you practice on them. Try it on for size. Get their feedback. They might have some GREAT ideas about what else you can say.