

## SMALL TALK 'SINS'

### 1. Giving too many details.

"The person who insists on telling everything will soon lose his audience," say Baber and Wayman. Sketch the broad outline; don't color everything in.

### 2. Don't Brag

Nothing will drive another person away faster than hearing you brag about your accomplishments. Worse yet is bragging about your possessions. Let others sing your praises. The effect will be greater.

### 3. Don't interrogate

It's fine to express an interest in the person you are talking with by asking questions. Know when to back off, however. No one likes to feel he or she is being cross-examined.

### 4. Don't play one-upmanship

Your new acquaintance tells you that he has just closed a \$1 million deal. Resist the impulse to tell him that you just closed a \$5 million one.

### 5. Don't seek free advice

Never ask for advice that you would be paying for if you met this person in a business situation.

### 6. Don't interrupt

Let the other person finish his or her thoughts before you begin to speak.

### 7. Don't hold back

Do you clam up when the conversation comes around to you? It can be frustrating to others if you refuse to ever reveal anything about yourself. If you don't want to talk about personal details at a business get-together, find other things that you can talk about.

### 8. Don't try to make converts

You may enjoy white water rafting. That doesn't mean you should make it your mission to win over everyone else you meet.

### 9. Don't give unwanted advice or evaluate other people's lives

Playing Ann Landers to those you have just met will turn them off and drive them away.

### 10. Don't come across as a bigot

Leave your preconceived notions at the door when you attend an event. Avoid making comments about people based on their sex, color or nationality.