

Conversation gambits

Starting the conversation

- I'd like to focus on in our conversation because.....
- Let us first turn to the picture which...../the question of....
- What strikes me first about this whole issue is.....
- I would like to start by looking at.....
- I suggest we start talking about.....
- Why don't we first address..... if this is okay with you.

Asking for your partner's opinion/engaging the other person

- Is there anything you would like to add?
- How do you feel about...?
- How about you?
- I am curious to hear what your opinion is on that.
- Can you give an example of that?
- Could you be more specific? What do you mean?
- I would be interested to hear what your opinion is on this matter.

Agreeing with your partner

- I admit I have to agree with you on this particular point.
- You have a point here.
- You are right, it cannot be denied that....
- Right! I totally agree with you...
- I totally agree with you on.....

Having reservations/disagreeing with your partner

- Sorry, but that is not the way I see it.
- I see what you mean but I don't believe.....
- Well, I don't quite go along with.....
- I'm not sure you're on the right track when you say that.....because....
- In my view it is not right to assume that.....
- I'm sorry, but I'm not convinced yet because....
- What bothers me about that is..... because....

Asking for clarification

- Sorry, could you repeat what you just said?
- Excuse me, I didn't quite catch that/what you just said. Do you mean... or...?

- Did I understand you correctly? Did you mean to say....?
- I would ask you to clarify your last point/what you just said.
- I'm afraid I did not quite get what you just said.
- When you say..... what exactly do you mean by that?
- Could you explain this to me once more please?

Interrupting politely

- Sorry to interrupt you but....
- Excuse me, can I just stop you for a moment?
- I apologize for interrupting but I think you misunderstood me.

Referring to an earlier point

- What you said earlier was.....
- I'd like to come back to a point you made earlier, namely.....
- I'd like to pick up on what you said about.....

Taking the conversation in a new direction

- I would like to bring up another issue/let us look at another important issue
- Now that we have looked at..... let's think of another aspect, namely.....
- On top of everything we have said so far we also need to consider the fact that...../think of.....
- So far we have only looked at the advantages, let's now consider the drawbacks.
- Something we have ignored so far is.....
- Would it be alright with you if we now focus on.....?

Playing for time

- So, what you are basically saying is that..... Is that right?
- I am trying to figure out how what you said relates to what we said about..
- Let me look at my notes for a second, I want to make sure that.....
- So what you are saying is.....
- Am I right in thinking that you mean.....?
- I guess what I am trying to say is....
- If I understand you correctly you are saying that....

Summarizing

- We have spent a lot of time talking about.... Let's see where we agree and where we disagree.
- We have looked at all the pictures. The pictures that deal withwe don't think are suitable because.....
- To put it in a nutshell...
- Now let's quickly go through the issues again that have been raised.

Ending a conversation

- We are almost finished, and I would like to briefly.....
- Time is almost up so we should reach a decision.
- (In a debate:) I guess we agree to disagree and we will have to.....