



If you are new to working in the business market, you may fear that “talking shop” with business owners at a social gathering could be considered tacky. Fortunately, there is a simple way to get your message across without coming across as tacky. Just ask questions. But not just any questions. Ask questions that anyone meeting you for the first time might feel delighted to answer.

Asking the right questions is the perfect way to prospect in the business market. The following simple questions will tell you something about the business while providing a perfect way to break the ice.

- 1 How did you get your start in the [construction] business?** People like to talk about their personal stories. This is your chance to let him/her shine.
- 2 What do you enjoy most about your work/profession?** This question begs for a positive answer and makes the person feel good about talking to you.
- 3 What advice would you give someone starting out in the [construction] business?** Generally, people like the opportunity to act as a mentor to another person. Answering this question gives a person that chance.
- 4 What separates your company from the competition?** Like the first question, this question lets the business owner tell his/her story. Be prepared to listen because this will give you insight into the aspects of the business that make the business owner proud.
- 5 What significant changes have taken place in your business/profession through the years?** People like to be considered experts in their field of business. This question gives the business owner an opportunity to share his/her expertise.
- 6 What are the issues in your business that keep you up at night?** This question will give you insight into the issues that are bothering the owner. Often these issues will have financial solutions, so listen carefully to the owner’s response.
- 7 What one thing would you do with your business if you knew you couldn’t fail?** Everyone has a dream. This question lets the business owner tell you his/her dreams. These dreams often have financial solutions; so listen carefully to the owner’s response.
- 8 What one sentence would you like people to use in describing the way you do business?** The business owner will often need to think before answering this question. Like question two, this question begs for a positive answer and makes the person feel good about talking to you.
- 9 How would I know if someone would be a good prospect for you?** All business owners will appreciate your efforts to help increase their business.

Asking questions that let the business owner do most of the talking elicits good feelings toward you. Keep your questions casual. It’s the first step toward helping the person feel like they know you, like you and can trust doing business with you.

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