

Small Talk

The Transcript

Ok. So have you ever been like just totally stuck? Like you walk into like, you know, the elevator at work and there's that colleague, you know, the one who only speaks English and suddenly it's like the elevator music is like deafening and your brain is like completely blank.

Oh yeah, I've been there.

Yeah, it's like that moment where you're like, I should say something.

You want to be polite.

But you just, you just can't. So, if that sounds painfully familiar, then this Deep Dive is for you—because we are tackling this head on today. We've got this amazing guide and it's all about small talk in English.

Specifically for German speakers.

Right.—Like imagine you're back in that elevator doors are closing and your colleague, they smile at you. What do you say?

Well, that's the thing. This guy doesn't like, you know, throw you in the deep end. It starts with the basics like things like, "How's your day going?" or, you know, "Wow, this weather is crazy today."

But isn't that a little cliché?

I think so, right.

Like talking about the weather?

It is, but that's the beauty of it. Because weather, you know, it's universal.

True.

Everybody experiences it.

Yeah.

You're instantly finding common ground when you talk about it.

Like we're both humans here on this planet.

Exactly.

Experiencing this together together,

Together dealing with the rain or the sunshine or whatever it is.

Yeah. And who knows? Maybe you both complain about the heat and suddenly you're having a real conversation.

That's it.

So, it's not just like what you say, but the feeling...

The vibe...

And you know what this guide it even gives you like these little phrases you can use to sound natural.

Like what?

Like, you know, "Did you see that new cafe downstairs" or you know, "Those construction workers are starting early today."

I see what they're doing there. They're like inviting the other person to make their own observations, But it's not just me talking at you, It becomes a back and forth.

We're having a moment.

Right.

Now, there's one example I thought was really smart.

Oh, yeah,

The dog example.

Of course.

So like if someone has a dog,

You got it.

"I love your dog. How old is she?"

It works every time?

Come on. Who doesn't love to hear that?

I mean, come on.

Why does that work so well?

Think about it. You're giving a compliment and it's about something that they clearly care about.

Right.

You know, people love their dogs.

They do.

So you're acknowledging something important to them and it creates this like instant warmth. You know, you're showing you're genuinely interested. Plus it's like an invitation for them to talk about their dog, which let's be real, they probably want to.

Right. And that kind of brings us back to the main point.

It's that.

You know, small talk. It's not about these, like, super deep conversations. It's about making these little connections.

Exactly. These little friendly moments.

Right.

It's not about, you know, launching into some big philosophical debate in the elevator. I mean, think of it this way, small talk, It's like oil for a machine.

I like that.

You know, it keeps things running smoothly.

It prevents those awkward silences, it eases...

It's like social lubricant.

You got it.

And then if you both, you know, feel like it, it can lead to a deeper conversation, but you don't have to force it. Ok. So how do we get better at this whole small talk thing? Because I know it can be tough.

Especially in a different language.

Well, this guide had a really interesting tip.

Oh,yeah. What's that?

Practice in the mirror.

Talking to yourself?

I know it sounds a little crazy.

I mean, it does.

But hear me out.

Ok. I'm listening.

There's actually some science behind it.

Oh, really?

Yeah. When you practice...

Even if it's just to yourself...

Even if it feels silly, you build confidence,

I can see that.

And confidence, that's like a superpower...

It is.

When you're communicating...

Yeah,

Because when you're confident, you're more likely to make eye contact—to smile.

You're more relaxed.

You seem more approachable.

Definitely.

So, to wrap this all up for you, dear, listener... Small talk. I know it can be scary,

Especially in a new language.

But what we've learned today is that it's a skill.

You can learn it.

You can get better at it.

With practice.

Right. Just a few simple strategies, a little bit of practice, even if it's in front of your bathroom mirror and you can turn those awkward moments...

Those scary elevator rides...

Into chances to connect with people.

Exactly.

So I want to leave you with something to think about.

Think back to a time when you had a really good small talk experience. What worked for you?

What made it click?

Was it a question you asked?

Was it a compliment you gave?

Was it just, you know, a genuine smile?

Something made it work.

Right.

And figuring out what that was can help you feel more confident.

And more prepared...

In any social situation.

So go out there and practice your small talk.

You got this.

And until next time.

Happy chatting.

Bye.

Transcription: Flixier