

BONUS 2

Conversation Openers

10 lines by archetype — ready to use tonight



Memorise 2–3 of these (the ones that sound most like you). The goal isn't a script — it's a starting point that gets you past the blank-moment panic.

■ The Wallflower

■ WALLFLOWER · At a small event or mixer

"Have you been to one of these before? I'm still figuring out how these things work."

Why it works: Disarming honesty — makes them the expert and you approachable.

■ WALLFLOWER · When you're both near the food / drinks

"I always end up here. What's your tactic for these events?"

Why it works: Self-aware humour. Invites them to share — zero pressure on you.

■ The Ghost

■ GHOST · Online community or LinkedIn

"Your post about [topic] hit differently — I've been thinking about it since."

Why it works: Specific compliment about their thinking, not their credentials.

■ GHOST · DM to someone you admire

"I don't usually reach out cold, but [their work / post / talk] genuinely changed how I think about X."

Why it works: Honesty about reluctance makes you memorable. Specificity makes you credible.

■ The Depth-Seeker

■ DEPTH-SEEKER · Roundtable or small group discussion

"What's a problem you're working on that you haven't fully solved yet?"

Why it works: Bypasses small talk entirely. Signals you want a real conversation.

■ DEPTH-SEEKER · After someone gives a talk or shares an opinion

"The thing you said about [X] — I've believed the opposite for years. Can I push back a little?"

Why it works: Respectful challenge creates instant engagement. Boring agreement doesn't.

■ The Strategist

■ STRATEGIST · Targeted introduction at an event

"I specifically wanted to meet you — I work in [area] and I think what you're doing with [their work] is exactly the direction things are heading."

Why it works: Direct, specific, flattering without being sycophantic.

■ STRATEGIST · Cold LinkedIn or email outreach

"I've been following your work on [topic] — I think we're solving adjacent problems. Worth a 15-minute call?"

Why it works: Leads with value alignment, not a favour. Specific ask, low time cost.

■ Any Type

■ ANY TYPE · Universal — works in almost any context

"What are you working on right now that you're genuinely excited about?"

Why it works: The single best networking question. Skips titles, gets to passion and purpose.

■ ANY TYPE · Wrapping up a good conversation

"I've really enjoyed this — can we continue it properly? I'd love to grab a coffee."

Why it works: Momentum close. Strike while the connection is warm.

REMEMBER

The opener is just a door. The conversation on the other side is where the magic happens.

Once you get past the first 60 seconds, your natural curiosity takes over. Trust it.