

## Utilize four-minute conversations



A lot can be accomplished in a four-minute conversation. It's long enough to make a solid connection and a good impact; it's short enough to maintain a quick pace and uninterrupted flow.

A short conversation—10 to 30 seconds—may satisfy basic social norms but it's not long enough to truly connect with someone. It will seem polite but likely be ineffectual. But in 240 seconds, a solid and profitable connection can be made.

Conduct your own experiment to see if this is true. The next time you're mingling with a group of people, engage in a few short conversations and in a few four-minute conversations and sense the difference. When you arrive at work tomorrow, instead of slowing down just long enough to say a brief hello to your office mates, come to a complete stop and spend four minutes with each person or group.

The constructive use of four-minute conversations can make a huge difference in human encounters, particularly the following.

### First four minutes of reengagement

Marriage counselors tell us that a critical time in all marriages is when husband and wife reengage at the end of the day. Prioritize that time and it will enhance your relationship; neglect that opportunity and you'll damage it. The same window of opportunity occurs when your kids get home from school and when you first see your office mates following the weekend.

### First four minutes of a new encounter

You never get a second chance to make a first impression. When you meet someone for the first time, carefully orchestrate the encounter. Be nice. Be genuine. Make it easy for people to enter your personal space. Show interest in the other person. Talk more about the other person than you do about yourself, but talk about yourself, too.

### Summary

**What?** - A lot of good can happen in a four-minute conversation.

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*Think with me*

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**So what?** - This should be a “tool” in our relationship toolbox.

**Now what?** - Immediately start using this relational technique.

**Leaders** - This is a great people skill for your team members to embrace. It’s also a good tool for you to use as you relate to people in your organization.