

What Do You Do When You're Not Good at Business Small Talk?



You prepare and practice.

Prepare:

For some, small talk is more anxiety-producing than public speaking, because there's no hiding behind a microphone or written statement. That doesn't mean you can't prepare though. Consider who you will be speaking with. (People in your industry? Potential employers?) What could you learn from them? Mentally prepare a few "conversation starters." Also, prepare an "elevator pitch," a few sentences about what you do, and why you do it.

Practice:

Regularly put yourself in professional networking situations (even if they are virtual). Learn to read cues. If someone seems fidgety and distracted, don't take it personally. Everyone has their own agenda. And remember, business small talk is about building relationships. It doesn't happen overnight. The good news? Business small talk is a skill that can be cultivated.