

Be prepared to be amazed...

## 10 ways to have a good conversation by Celeste Headlee

**BEFORE WATCHING**      Check the following words and expressions? How can you use them in a sentence?

- **to pontificate about something** – to speak or express opinions in a pompous or dogmatic way
- **a pundit** – a person who gives opinions in an authoritative manner usually through the mass media
- **to equate** – to treat as equivalent, or comparable
- **condescending** – characterized by a patronizing or superior attitude toward others
- **weeds** – here: useless details

Why do we sometimes fail to have good conversations? Suggest as many reasons as you can think of!

**WHILE OR AFTER WATCHING**      Listen to the beginning of the talk and answer the questions.

- According to Celeste, why do we have problems when having conversations? *Play the video up to 3:00*  
*seemingly trivial issues can be risky (like the weather or health)*  
*we're not listening to each other*  
*we're polarised – we have different opinions about many topics*  
*we seem to have lost the balance between speaking and listening*  
*we tend to communicate by phone more often than face to face*
- What's the problem about teaching children and teenagers?  
*they lack conversational competence*  
*they engage with each other through screens*  
*they don't have opportunities to improve their interpersonal skills*
- According to Celeste, which advice about conversations shouldn't we accept? *Play the video up to 4:26*  
*look the person in the eye*  
*think of interesting topics to discuss in advance*  
*look, nod and smile to show that you're paying attention*  
*repeat back what you just heard or summarize it*

Listen to Celeste's tips and explain what she means by saying:

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| 1. Don't multitask.                            | 6. Don't equate your experience with theirs. |
| 2. Don't pontificate.                          | 7. Don't repeat yourself.                    |
| 3. Use open-ended questions                    | 8. Stay out of the weeds.                    |
| 4. Go with the flow.                           | 9. Listen.                                   |
| 5. If you don't know, say that you don't know. | 10. Be brief.                                |

[Check the script for details.](#)

**AFTER WATCHING**      Answer the questions. – Students' own answers