

Thinking On My Own **Video: Improving Conversation**

Colby spent the week practicing to improve his informal communication skills. He took time to use the five “W” questions with his mom, dad, and sister during suppertime. He even utilized this strategy when he had a video chat with his grandma and grandpa. Colby now feels more confident and better prepared to speak to people he doesn’t know at the AMVETS annual banquet and awards night.

Now it’s your turn:

1. Create a list of different people you have had a conversation with this week. Next, think about each of these people and try to consider what topics each person might find interesting. Thinking about what other people might enjoy talking about is a great strategy to use during informal conversations.
2. Create a list of topics that you find interesting. Knowing what topics you enjoy will allow you to open up and add to conversations with other people. It will also help others get to know you better!
3. As you talk, really concentrate on listening to the other person. During the conversation, as you get to know them a little better, think about what topics they may be interested in discussing. Then ask questions about these topics.
4. Challenge yourself to speak in class discussions this week. It is always easier to talk about what you know. Find opportunities to speak when you are comfortable with the topic.
5. Pay attention to examples of bad conversationalists-people who only focus on themselves, people who are distracted by technology, etc. Observe how this type of conversationalist can limit the process of communication.