

How to Change the Subject in Conversations

More practice. Same idea: transition phrase, then one new question.

THE IDEA

Transition phrase, then one new question.

You do not need a smooth transition. You just need to move forward.

"Anyway" is always available. It always works.

FULL PHRASE BANK

One-word exits

- "Anyway..."
- "Right..."
- "So..."

Soft transitions

- "By the way..."
- "That reminds me..."
- "Speaking of which..."
- "On a different note..."
- "Changing the subject slightly..."
- "Before I forget..."

When the topic is too personal

- "I would rather not get into that, but..."
- "That is a bit complicated. Anyway..."
- "Let us talk about something else."

All of them work. Choose the one that feels most natural.

TRANSITION DIALOGUES (READ ALOUD)

Dialogue 1: Topic too complex

A: "...and then the algorithm recalculates the base rate according to..."

B: "Anyway, have you been busy this week?"

A: "Yeah, actually. Very busy."

Dialogue 2: Topic too personal

A: "So what happened between you and your previous manager?"

B: "That is a bit complicated. On a different note, how is your new project going?"

A: "Oh, it is going well, actually."

Dialogue 3: Natural topic shift

A: "...I have not been sleeping well lately."

B: "Sorry to hear that. By the way, did you end up watching that film you mentioned?"

A: "Oh yes! It was really good."

PRACTICE ROUND

Read each situation. Choose a transition phrase and ask a new question. Say it out loud.

1. The conversation has been on the same topic for too long and you want to move on.
2. Someone asks about something personal that you do not want to discuss.
3. The vocabulary is getting too technical and you are losing the thread.
4. You suddenly remember something you wanted to ask.
5. The conversation is getting heavy and you want to lighten it.

MISTAKE RECOGNITION

What is wrong with each attempt to change the subject?

6. "Actually, wait, sorry, can we talk about something else? I mean, not that this is boring, just, um..."
7. "Hmm. So. Um. Anyway. So. Um. Have you been busy?" (said very nervously with long pauses)
8. *(says nothing, just nods and smiles until the topic changes on its own)*

Note: The first over-explains. The second is hesitant but the instinct is right: "anyway" works. The third is the most common: waiting instead of moving. All three are fixed by the same thing: say the transition phrase confidently, then ask the question.

SELF-CHECK QUESTIONS

9. What are the two parts of the technique?
10. Why does "anyway" work so well as a transition?
11. When you want to change a topic that is too personal, what can you say?
12. What do you do after you ask your new question?

QUICK TEST

Which transition phrase fits each situation? Choose from the bank above.

13. You want to ask something completely unrelated.
14. Someone just mentioned something that connects to what you wanted to say.
15. The topic is getting too complicated for you to follow.
16. You want to shift gently without it feeling abrupt.

Possible answers: 1. Anyway / Before I forget | 2. That reminds me / Speaking of which | 3. Anyway / Right | 4. By the way / On a different note

TODAY'S SMALL ACTION

Today, when you feel stuck in a conversation, use one transition phrase.

Ask a simple new question after it. Keep moving forward. **That counts.**