



Conversational Comedy



What is your filter?

*It all boils down to love and anger.
Angry people want you to see how powerful THEY are.
Loving people want you to see how powerful YOU are.*

Let your emotions flow through your words

Don't Confuse Volume with Enthusiasm
Be present



General Approach to Developing Comedy in a Conversation

You don't have to be a comedian. You can just be witty or humorous. So there are no rules to how many laughs you get in a minute. In fact when you're just in a conversation at work or with friends at a party, being too "on" can be annoying. But a well-timed quip can make you the funniest person in the room.

Being the wittiest person in the room doesn't mean you're "the life of the party." You don't need to put the lampshade on your head or do big act-outs. Sometimes in a group when somebody says something to the whole table, the witty person will quip a response to a friend sitting next to them. The conversational comedian or humorist isn't outwardly looking for attention necessarily. They are just sharing their alternate take on a situation.

The key to humorous takes on situations is that the humorous take is alternate take that is also TRUE or PLAUSIBLE and doesn't INSULT another person in the room.

Example:

At my nephew's 3-year-old birthday party, my wife and I got him a "Good Dog, Carl" book called *Carl Goes Shopping*. It was about this rottweiler dog who looks after the baby. The books are sweet and humorous.

When our nephew opened the gift everybody was like, "Oh a new 'Carl' book." Then the kid's father was like, "*Nice way to promote child abuse.*" He thought he was being funny.

Put on your humorous glasses

What is humor?

- Be cynical
- Look at everyday situations in an alternate way
- Be vigilant



Take steps to practice a little everyday

When it comes to the material, when you're on stage it's a different world than when you're in a conversation with people. On stage, you're on the stage, you have the mic, you are in charge. That's why the stage is raised and your voice is projected through a P.A. You're elevated perceptively, figuratively and literally. Our social conditioning has put the attention on you.

The stage gives you more flexibility to be irreverent, iconoclastic, ambivalent and sometimes insulting.

When you're with friends, colleagues on equal footing the dynamics are different. You have to be more sensitive to others feelings and be playful.

There are an abundance of ways to develop, maintain and improve your ability to include comedy in your conversations. In this course we are going to focus on the easiest techniques that you can learn and use.

Using M.A.P.

In conversational comedy the M-A-P rule is super important. The material has to be suitable for your audience and the performer.

In other words, always consider who you're talking to and adjust your material accordingly.

If you're talking to your close friends, they know your heart so you'll be able to get away with more racey or inappropriate humor, because they know that deep down inside you don't mean any of it.

With a mixed crowd you can walk the line because you have your friends reassuring the others that your humor is harmless.



With strangers, keep it short and sweet.

Usually benign retaliation works well or self-deprecation.

Remember that superiority is a primary laughter trigger and it is your friend.

Knowing what triggers an audience's laughter is key

Paradox - paradox and paradoxical situations does more than get a laugh it makes you interesting and makes people see you as perceptive, intuitive, and a person that is a thinker. When you use paradox it makes the listener's brain do a dance and it also makes things memorable.

I hate these cookies because I love them so much...

Here are the 3 major approaches to conversational comedy.

1. Quote a sitcom or a joke from T.V. This is useful in work acquaintance situations or when you're at a party or gather with mixed company. It's especially powerful when the subject relates to the topic. 3 sitcoms below are terrific examples of where you can build your repertoire of humorous bits.
 - a. Seinfeld
 - b. Scrubs
 - c. Friends
 - d. Modern Family
 - e. How I met Your Mother
 - f. New Girl



Using sitcoms to develop a feeling of being humorous is a common technique to use when you get started developing your humorous conversational style. The advantage to this approach is that you can be inspired by the material in the sitcom and come up with your own humorous ideas to relatable situations or use the backup plan of quoting the scene in the show. The key to this tactic is that you should DVR your shows so you can get the scene right. There's nothing more frustrating than when you're quoting a scene and someone says, "That's not how it goes!"

- 2. Learn 5-10 short quips or quotes that are relatable in everyday situations**
- 3. Learn and memorize 8-10 jokes.** The best jokes could deal with everyday situations. Driving a Car, Getting pulled over by a cop. Going on a Date. Being Married. Having a Large Family. This may sound stupid but memorizing jokes and repeating them in front of friends is a quick way to develop your
 - a. Timing
 - b. Sense of humor
 - c. Joke telling ability
 - i. Confidence
 - ii. Articulation
 - iii. Presence
- 4. Talk about embarrassing stories that make your listeners feel superior**
 - a. *A student in my class once missed two weeks of school, when the teacher asked her where she was she said, A family member had cancer of the uterus. The teacher said I'm so sorry. Who? The girl was like, "My dad."*



Cliches and Cliche Reformations

Take quotes, book titles, or trending phrases and mantras and do cliches with them.

To truly make a cake from scratch don't you first need to invent the universe?

When you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change...

What would you be if you were finished?

Are you hungry?

Wordplay / Double entendre

Double entendre is where you take the intended meaning of a word that is used in a sentence and react to it as though its meaning is comedic. This is kind of a game. It's fun and playful. But you have to be careful not to be sexual in inappropriate situations

What'd You Call Me?

That's What She Said

I come from a large family... or as doctors call them, "Morbidly Obese."

Simple Truth Ways of looking at Life

To say that there's a highway to hell and only a stairway to heaven, doesn't that say a lot about where most people are going?



When people act surprised that there seem to be so many bad people in the world, just remind them that we've already agreed that there's a highway to hell and only a stairway to heaven.

Quicker: That's why there's a highway to hell and only a stairway to heaven.

Laughter is the best medicine...

Unless weed is the medicine, then laughter is a side-effect.

Your Turn:

The early bird gets the worm...

Everytime we're together my heart skips a beat...

Paradoxes

Humans are the only people who will cut down a tree, make paper out of it and write on it, "Save the Planet."

I like to write "Save the Planet, Recycle White Trash."

Is it wrong for a vegetarian to eat animal crackers?

If you work hard for 8 hours a day, maybe one day you can become the boss where you work 12.

Irony

Every single day I learn that there's still so much to learn.



Self-deprecation

It's usually a safe bet to be sure you lift up everyone in the room with your humor while making them feel superior. Being able to make fun of yourself is a sure-fire way to do this.

Have a “Saver” Line

If a joke doesn't work, you could always say something like:

“Sometimes when you make a joke nobody laughs, did you know this? I KNOW this.”

Or do a play on this with the relatable ponderable: *If a tree falls in a forest and nobody's there to hear it, does it make a sound?*

If you do a joke and nobody laughs... is it funny?

Cliches and Cliche reformations

Watch the video for the explanation of cliché reformations.

Popular Quotes

Every day is a great day, just try missing one. - Dale Carnegie

If you look at what you have in life, you'll always have more. If you look at what you don't have in life, you'll never have enough. -Oprah Winfrey

Signs

In Vegas they have this sign in the casino that says, “98% Return” I'm thinking finally I'm part of the 2 percent.



I saw a billboard for a doctor right there on Reseda Blvd. it said, *"Dr. Viral" Takes most insurance plans.* If your name is Dr. Viral you're probably the one who's going to need insurance.

Ponderables

- *Is it wrong for a vegetarian to eat animal crackers?*
- *If I forget how to spell plagiarism, can I copy it from the dictionary?*
- *If cows laugh, does milk come out of their noses?*
- *What's another word for thesaurus and where do I look it up?*
- *So Facebook can hear every word I say through my phone but McDonald's can't hear when I say "no cheese."*
- *If you went into a bookstore and asked for the self-help section, would that be defeating the purpose?*
- *I was in line at the airport kinda obstructing an aisle and this guy came up and said, "Can I sneak by?" I said, "No, because you just told me."*
- *I went to a General store. They said "Can I help you find anything?" I said, "Not specifically."*
- *If every period ends with a sentence, does that make it a crime?*

Also look at:

- Humorous Toasts
- Roast Jokes

Observations

- Pizza is weird. It comes in a square box, but when you open it the pizza is round, then you take a piece and it's triangle. They shouldn't call it pizza, they should call it food geometry.
- How old do you have to be before you figure out love?
- People say nothing is impossible, but I do nothing all day -- Winnie the Pooh.



- In life it's important to know when to stop arguing with people and just let them be wrong.

Do's and Don'ts

- Don't assume that people you're talking to want to hear racy humor. Better to stay on the safe side and keep it clean.
- Don't assume that you know anyone's politics. Even a good joke about a politician can backfire royally if the people don't share the same politics. If you're a comedian in front of a crowd it's different than being in a conversation. If you're going to do political jokes in a mixed audience, make them self-deprecating.
 - One of my favorites is *"I belong to no organized political party. I am a Democrat."*
- Don't make the jokes all about you.
- Don't jump in at every opportunity because you want to get a laugh or show people how funny you are.
- Do wait for the right opportunity especially in a room full of strangers.
 - This actually depends on your personality. I'm a pretty confident person but I hold off on making jokes for the sake of making the jokes when I'm in mixed company. I've said things I thought were funny and they were more inappropriate than funny to the people that were in our group. So I hold off and wait for opportunities that are more simple and harmless.

Common Interactions:

Q: Did you find everything you're looking for?

A: I found the wine and the candles but I couldn't find a soulmate. You have mahi-mahi, but I'm not into twins.

Q: Would you like more coffee?



A: Keep pouring till my blood type is French Roast.

Q: How did you sleep?

A: I made a few mistakes.

Q: That's \$2138.

A: I thought it was twenty-twenty-two

Q: Would you like fries with that?

A: If it will make me fatter, then yes.

Q: Would you like to try our new bacon brioche sandwich?

A: I would like to try everything on the menu, but I only have time for lunch.

Your Turn:

Q: Would you like cheese on your pasta?

A:

Q: Do you know how fast you were going?

A:

Q: Are you free tonight?

A:

Q: What do you want for breakfast?

A:

Q: What does your fortune say?

A:



Q: What would you be if you were finished?

A:

Q: How many ounces in a cup?

A:

One of the most common questions asked on Google is “How to get pregnant?” You think that question is asked mostly by a man or a woman? And if it’s a woman, do you think Google is like, “Would you like me to tell you or show you?”

The Key to Conversational Comedy

Summary

One important thing to remember when it comes to conversational comedy is that the comedy that occurs doesn’t have to be a “genius” joke. Your goal is not to bring down the house or kill. It’s just to come up with alternate interpretations of perceived or intended meanings of a specific idea in a conversation.

Practice is Key

It is of utmost importance to get your practice in. Learning these techniques is like learning a language. It takes application and practice to become fluent. But if your perception and grasp of double entendre for 15 minutes a day over a weekend, you’ll notice that come Monday you’ll be hearing words and phrases in a different way and being able to respond to them in an alternate of intended manner.

Practice makes perfect, but comedic practice makes perfect punchlines. :-)