

The First Minute

by Chris Fenning

A printable to-do list of the most effective habits from this book. Check one off each day you do it.

MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT SUN

01 Memorize the CARE framework for your next networking event

Patel and Lim: Connect (name + one observation), Ask (one specific question), Respond (share something brief), Exit (warmly). Practice until it is automatic.

MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT SUN

02 Practice 'the curious reply' - mirror back what you heard before responding

Patel and Lim: 'So what I'm hearing is...' shows people you were actually listening. It's disarming and builds immediate trust.

MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT SUN

03 Use the 'TED rule' for storytelling: Tune in, Express, Describe

Patel and Lim: short, structured stories are more engaging than long rambling ones. Aim for 3 sentences, 30 seconds, and one clear emotion.

MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT SUN

04 Give one genuine compliment before the first three minutes are up

Patel and Lim: not flattery - a specific, observation-based compliment about something you genuinely noticed. The brain responds to specificity.

MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT SUN

05 Learn and use the 'olive chain' - connect your thought to theirs before pivoting

Patel and Lim: 'That's a great point about X - it reminds me of Y.' The olive chain keeps the conversation flowing without derailing.

MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT SUN

06 Master the art of the graceful exit with one positive forward-motion statement

Patel and Lim: never end a conversation flatly. End with something: 'This was great - let's do it again' or 'I'll send you that article.' Leave momentum.