

## GUIDE TO CONVERSATION IN *THE SPY WHO ATE LUNCH*

Interaction with non-player characters (NPCs) is an important part of *The Spy Who Ate Lunch*. Since playing the game is (hopefully) more fun than trying to figure out the proper syntax to use, this Guide provides an overview of the basic system used for conversing with NPCs.

**Saying Hello.** If you just want to initiate a conversation with an NPC without discussing (at least initially) any particular topic, use the form

>JOE, HELLO

Note that if you try to use

>HELLO, JOE

instead (which seems more natural), the parser will get confused and think you're issuing two successive commands (HELLO, which it will understand and assume you're talking to Joe if he's the only NPC in the room, and JOE, which it will not understand because it expects to find a verb and can't find one).

**Asking and Telling.** Most of the conversation in *The Spy Who Ate Lunch* involves asking or telling an NPC about particular topics or asking him for an object. Examples would be

>ASK MOE ABOUT THE MONKEY WRENCH

>TELL LARRY ABOUT CURLY

>ASK SHEMP FOR A POKE IN THE EYES

Of course, not every potential topic for conversation will produce a useful response.

Thus,

>ASK HARPO ABOUT GROUCHO

might produce

HARPO JUST LOOKS AT YOU WITH A GOOFY GRIN AND BEEPS HIS HORN.

**Suggested Topics.** Sometimes, the game will offer you a list of suggested topics for conversation. Thus, if you're talking to Bud Abbott, you might get

(YOU CAN ASK HIM ABOUT HIMSELF, LOU COSTELLO, THE SUSQUEHANNA HAT COMPANY OR THE RITZ BROTHERS OR TELL HIM ABOUT YOURSELF OR LUCILLE BALL)

Note that you are *not* limited to the suggested topics, nor are you limited to conversing when such a list is offered. Thus, when offered the list above, you are free to type

>ASK BUD ABOUT NIAGARA FALLS

Similarly, the following interchange is permitted when you're in a room with Red Skelton:

>RED, HELLO

RED SKELTON SAYS "HELLO. AND MAY GAWD BLESS!"

>ASK RED ABOUT JACK BENNY

If no list of suggested conversation topics is offered, or if one was offered earlier in the conversation and you've forgotten it or just want to see what topics (if any) are suggested at the present stage in the conversation, you can type

>TOPICS

**Non-conversational Interactions.** The mechanics discussed above relate to telling the game what to do when you want to talk to an NPC. Of course, none of this in any restricts your ability to try to interact with an NPC in ways other than talking. You can always try

>POKE MEL BROOKS IN THE EYE

or

>GIVE VEGAMEENAVITAMIN TO FRED FLINTSTONE

or even

>LAUGH AT CARL REINER

whether or not you're currently engaged in conversation.

Sometimes, a non-conversational command may show up on a list of suggested topics. For example, the following interchange might occur when you're talking to Soupy Sales:

>TOPICS

(YOU CAN ASK HIM ABOUT HIMSELF OR THE GREEN PIECES OF PAPER, TELL HIM ABOUT YOURSELF OR SID CAESAR OR THROW A PIE AT HIM)

As always, this list does not restrict your ability to try other things, and there is no guarantee that trying the suggested non-conversational action (or actions) will produce a useful result.

The conversation system used in *The Spy Who Ate Lunch* uses extensions to Inform 7 which were written by Eric Eve (with a minor modification by Robert Rothman).