

Chatterbox #146 – Privacy

Episode Description

Do you ever feel like somebody's watching you? Today's episode is all about privacy. Join Harp and Andrew as they talk about hackers and online security, governments and national security, and even political scandals!

Sample Dialogue

Andrew: This is one of the common arguments against this type of surveillance and this privacy intrusion, right? People say, "Well, if I'm a good person, I have nothing to hide. There's nothing to be afraid about. The only people that need to worry are criminals and people that are up to no good." Do you agree with this statement?

Harp: Hmm. That's interesting. I assume if I'm doing nothing wrong, and they're doing it in the sake of safety, then there's no real big issue.

Expressions Included in the Learning Materials

- Where it's at
- To hack in / to hack into something
- Creepy
- To be up to no good
- Taboo
- Transparent
- A hot topic
- Behind closed doors
- Room for improvement
- A different angle
- A taste of something



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Note: The words and expressions that appear in **bold text** within the transcript are discussed in more detail in the detailed explanations section that follows the transcript.

Transcript

Harp: Hello everyone. This is Harp.

Andrew: And I'm Andrew, and we're back with another Culips episode.

Harp: Yes. Make sure you check out our website, Culips.com, that's C-U-L-I-P-S.com.

Andrew: And while you're there, sign up and become a Culips member, because when you're a member, you get access to our fantastic Learning Materials, which include transcripts of every episode that we've ever recorded, along with detailed explanations of all the key expressions that we talk about, and you get comprehension quizzes, also for every single episode.

Harp: It's fantastic. And we definitely recommend that you sign up and become a member.

Andrew: And we're also on Facebook and Twitter, so if you use those social networking sites, come on over and check us out.

Harp: Yes, for sure. Come say hi or leave us a suggestion for an upcoming episode.

Andrew: Absolutely.

Harp: So, how are you doing?

Andrew: You know what? I'm pretty tired today. I just got back from a really long trip.

Harp: Oh, yeah? Where did you go?

Andrew: I went to the East Coast of Canada, and I visited Halifax, which is in the province of Nova Scotia. And I also went to Fredericton and Moncton in New Brunswick.

Harp: Wow. That's really cool. I've never been there. How was it?

Andrew: It was pretty amazing, I have to say. I've never been there before either, but it was great. It was a really cool experience. I got to see the Atlantic Ocean for the first time.

Harp: Oh, I'm jealous. I haven't seen it yet.

- Andrew: Yeah. And the scenery is beautiful. I drove from Montreal, and, yeah, it's amazing. You get to see the Saint Lawrence River, and it's fantastic. You should take a road trip out there.
- Harp: I think I'm definitely gonna do that. I've also heard that you can take the train from Montreal to Halifax and it's beautiful as well.
- Andrew: Oh, yeah. I bet so.
- Harp: So which was your favourite of the three cities?
- Andrew: Well, they're all pretty small places. Moncton is really nice, but I think Halifax is **where it's at**. I think that's my favourite for sure.
- Harp: OK. No, I'm definitely gonna have to go there.
- Andrew: Mmhmm. It's very pretty, and very quaint, and you'd love it.
- Harp: Very cool. OK, so let's get started with today's episode. We're gonna be bringing you a Chatterbox episode, and that's where we chat. We pick a topic and we discuss it.
- Andrew: That's right. And today we're gonna talk about a subject that is always in the news and is a very popular topic of conversation here in Canada, and that is privacy.
- Harp: Yes. Privacy. And so we're just gonna chat about it, and we're gonna ask each other some questions.
- Andrew: Mmhmm. So maybe, to start the episode, we should give a definition of privacy.
- Harp: That's a good idea.
- Andrew: Privacy is the right or the freedom to be alone and to not be disturbed. So in Canada, we have the expectation of privacy when we are in our home. We expect that people are not listening or watching or paying attention to what we're doing. And we also expect there to be privacy in certain other areas of life. And this is a big topic in Canada now because, for example, when people are on the Internet, they don't always have the amount of privacy that they think they do.

- Harp: Yup. That's true. Technology has really changed the way people are thinking about privacy because, if I think about myself at home, I never assume that there's gonna be a camera there or someone's watching what I'm doing at home. But now, with the Internet and text messages and even just using the phone, it's kind of like you never know how private it really is because of the government, because people could **hack in**.
- Andrew: It's true. And I think especially after 9/11, there were a lot of new laws passed, anti-terrorism laws, that took away an amount of privacy. Or at least some people think that the right to privacy was taken away. And so things have really changed, and now people are concerned with, like you say, using technology and where their information goes.
- Harp: Exactly. And also, if we think about cities like London, where there are all those cameras everywhere, it's like someone is watching you all the time.
- Andrew: That's right. The government and the police, they're doing this to try and make the cities safer for everybody to live, and this is a good thing, of course. We don't want any dangerous stuff to happen to people in our cities. But at the same time, how do you feel if you're being videotaped when you're walking around outside all the time? Like, in my opinion, that would kind of bother me a little bit. How about you?
- Harp: I have to be honest. I kind of assume it's happening all the time because I like to watch a lot of shows like *24*, where if they're following a suspect, they can always find cameras on things like ATM machines or security cameras at convenience stores. So, I kind of assume they're always following me anyway, if they wanted to.
- Andrew: You know, it's true. Whenever you watch, like, a crime show or a mystery show on TV, they always have great video footage of the suspect, no matter where he is or where she is. So this is right. And I always wonder, "Is that true?" Because if that is true, it's a little bit scary to me that somebody could watch my every movement.
- Harp: Yup. It's a little bit **creepy**. And even on those shows, they always show, like, how they can kind of **hack into someone's computer** and turn on the webcam, and they can watch you that way. So if you really start thinking about it, you could be potentially watched all the time, which is quite **creepy**.
- Andrew: That's interesting that you mention webcams because I have some friends who are really paranoid about being **hacked**, and by somebody controlling their webcam. So what they do is they put a little Post-it note over top of their webcam when they are not using it.
- Harp: That's interesting. I didn't know that there were actually people that thought about it all the time.

- Andrew: And now we're recording on a computer, and I'm looking right at the webcam right now, and I'm wondering, "Is somebody out there looking at me?" I hope not.
- Harp: I have to assume, though, that really I'm not that interesting that anyone would wanna watch me.
- Andrew: Mmhmm. Well, this is one of the common arguments against this type of surveillance and this privacy intrusion, right? People say, "Well, if I'm a good person, I have nothing to hide. There's nothing to be afraid about. The only people that need to worry are criminals and people that **are up to no good.**" Do you agree with this statement?
- Harp: Hmm. That's interesting. I assume if I'm doing nothing wrong, and they're doing it in the sake of safety, then there's no real big issue. But I feel like there's always room for abuse of this, and there's always gonna be someone behind the computer watching. And that worries me, of how it could be abused, the system.
- Andrew: Mmhmm. I think that's really the main concern here, is the abuse of that information, right? And what would happen if that information got into the wrong hands? It could be a pretty nasty situation.
- Harp: Yup. And misinterpretations of what conversations people are having or things that people are doing. There's a lot that requires context, I think. So...
- Andrew: Yeah. But this is the world we live in, where this is a real discussion that people are having. And now, to take, maybe, the focus away from big organizations like police departments and governments, what about smaller organizations, like Facebook? Because, well, Culips has a Facebook page. I have a personal Facebook page. You do as well.
- Harp: Mmhmm.
- Andrew: And almost everybody does these days, and so that means that Facebook is gathering a lot of data about everybody that uses the website.
- Harp: Yup. And it's rare that I think about it too much. I'm pretty relaxed when it comes to things like Facebook or any sort of social media, and I'll post pictures. But I do once in a while think before I would post something kind of controversial. I try to limit my Facebook to my really good friends, but there are some people that are more just acquaintances, so if I don't want to have a conversation with them about something, I wouldn't post it on Facebook. But I'm very careful about my privacy settings, and I keep it very limited to only people who I'm directly connected with. And so I think about it every once in a while, get a little paranoid, and double-check my privacy settings. But... I don't know. What about you?

Andrew: Yeah. I am like you. I keep my privacy settings really tight, 'cause there are different settings for your profile, right? Some people just share everything with the whole Internet. But me, you have to be one of my friends to be able to see my information. But even on top of that, I don't post very much personal stuff online. It just seems strange to me.

Harp: Yup. I've definitely stopped posting as much as I used to when I was younger. But still, I'm pretty relaxed about it. But then I heard a story last week about a woman who had very secure privacy settings on Facebook, or I don't remember which site it was exactly, but people stole her pictures and then created this false identity around her. And she started appearing on dating sites with other names, and it was one of her friends who saw her picture but with a different name, and it was really bizarre that someone would just take your pictures and then pretend to be you.

Andrew: Yeah. This is another type of identity theft, I guess, and that's scary. I wouldn't want to see my... Not that somebody would steal my picture for a dating site, but I wouldn't want to see my information be abused like that.

Harp: Yeah. So that's when privacy, I think, becomes a more, kind of, poignant topic. It's a bit scary if you don't protect your information.

Andrew: And I actually saw an interesting post on my Facebook this week. And it was from a teacher, a kindergarten teacher, I think, in Toronto. And what she did... She was teaching her class a lesson. She took a picture of herself holding a poster saying, "Let's see how far we can spread this picture." And what she did was tell her students, "How far do you think this picture will spread on the Internet?" And the students all thought, "Oh, it won't go very far, like, maybe our parents will like it or something." But if you look at the comments and the amount of likes, this picture has gone viral worldwide. So it demonstrated the point to the kids that even if they think their information won't spread very far, it can, and it has the potential to be seen by a lot of people. You actually have to think very hard about things before you post them on the Internet.

Harp: I saw that as well, and it's pretty remarkable how many people had shared her pictures. So it can be pretty scary in terms of privacy.

Andrew: Mmhmm. Now, another area where we talk about privacy is in the workplace. And I know that some people have gotten into a lot of trouble about using Facebook and social networking sites at work. And some people have even lost their jobs. Where I work, I'm allowed to look at my Facebook. What about you, Harp?

- Harp: Yup. I'm allowed to use my Facebook. I'm allowed to look at Facebook and Twitter. We don't ban any of the social media sites. But I do work in recruitment, though, and I'm starting to actually check people's Facebook profiles to see, kind of, a little bit about their personality before I would consider hiring them. So it's important to be careful about what you post there.
- Andrew: Yeah. That's true, right? You never know who's looking. It could be your future employer. So it's good to have a... Just like you would have a nice job resume that you would give to the company, it's good to have a good online presence as well.
- Harp: Yup. And the other thing that's interesting, I find, about privacy and work is always the discussion about company email, because people get used to email being private, you know? If you have a Hotmail or a Gmail account, it's your account, and you assume that it's private. And people have this same assumption when it comes to work, but it's actually the company's property and their right to go in and see whatever emails you're sending or receiving. So people have a lot of trouble with dealing with that idea of loss of privacy.
- Andrew: Mmhmm. Because it feels like it's your account, right? It has your name attached to it. But it's really the company's, so they control it, and they can see it. And that makes sense to me. Like I said earlier, you have to think very carefully before you do something that might get you in trouble.
- Harp: Yup. And I've even heard of people getting in trouble for forwarding a joke through company email that is maybe not very politically correct, or...
- Andrew: It's a little bit **taboo**?
- Harp: Yes, exactly. **Taboo**. That's the word I'm looking for. So it's interesting, the idea of workplace privacy.
- Andrew: It's interesting that we're talking about this because there's a little bit of a scandal happening in the United States right now regarding the same issue and Hillary Clinton, because she has a private email server, and she's not using the government server. But people are upset about this because the government server is supposed to be more **transparent**. People can double-check and see what she's writing about. But she decided not to use that and use her own private server, and now people are saying, "Aha. We can't see what you're talking about, but you're a representative of the government, which works for the people." So it's a big ordeal.

- Harp: It is a big ordeal because all of the emails that she sent and received are all now gone because they were on her private server. The thing I don't understand is that she was in such a high-level position, but I've heard about, for example, Barack Obama can't use an iPhone because the servers aren't secure enough, and he had to use a Blackberry because it's more secure. So how did she get away with not even having to use the government email address? It doesn't make sense to me.
- Andrew: Yeah. I don't know the details about that, but I'm sure there's gotta be some high-level encryption that she could use to keep those emails safe. But, yeah, people are upset about this issue.
- Harp: Yeah. It's **a hot topic**, and I think it's gonna stay hot for a while.
- Andrew: So this brings up an interesting point. We were talking about Hillary Clinton and her right to privacy, but what about a government? Does a government have a right to privacy? Or should they share all of their information with their citizens?
- Harp: I think they should be... It should be the same idea as the workplace privacy situation, that they're government officials. They were elected to be there, and they should be responsible and open and **transparent**. I don't think it should be all hidden. Like, there's a lot of sessions that happen **behind closed doors**, and I think they need to open up the doors and maybe put a camera in there.
- Andrew: Mmhmm. And it's interesting. I know in Canada, and also in America, if somebody wants to get more information about what the government is doing, they can file a freedom of information request. And it's usually journalists that do this, right? They're writing a hot story, and they wanna find out what's going on **behind closed doors**. And the government must send them the documents that they've requested. But the government is allowed to censor these documents, so often, the reporters get an envelope that's filled with paper, and all of the words on the paper will be blacked out except for words like *the* and *is* and *a*. So, really, they're not seeing anything, and this just seems ridiculous.
- Harp: Yeah. Now that I'm thinking about it more, maybe if there's something related to state security, or it's something that we shouldn't have access to, then maybe it doesn't have to be a public document, but there should definitely be oversight. And also, there's a lot of discussion in Montreal about the whole issue of corruption and how it happens more when there're discussions and documents happening in private, and that we should have more stuff online that's searchable online.

- Andrew: It's true that I think there should be more oversight and that there should be more information available to the public and in a way that's easy to understand. But you're also right. I agree with you on both points, that I think, with matters of national security, we do need to think carefully about what we do with these documents. We don't want to give state secrets out to the bad guys, right?
- Harp: No. Exactly.
- Andrew: But, yeah, there's always **room for improvement**, and I think what you're hinting at here is, again, going back to the abuse situation, right? Governments can abuse this information to further their own self-interests, and this could be a problem.
- Harp: Yes.
- Andrew: Cool. Well, I enjoyed that conversation about privacy. Like we said, it's a huge topic, and there's many **different angles**.
- Harp: And lots of different opinions.
- Andrew: That's true. But hopefully, we gave you **a little taste of** what the conversation is like in Canada regarding this issue. And we want to remind you to check out our website, again, at Culips.com. And we're also on Facebook and Twitter.
- Harp: Yes, definitely. Go on over there and say hi. And leave us a comment, and let us know how privacy is regarded in your country.
- Andrew: Mmhmm. And maybe double-check your Facebook privacy settings.
- Harp: Exactly. Or whatever social media platform you use.
- Andrew: That's right. It's always good to be in control of your information.
- Harp: Exactly. So remember, check out the website. And that's it for us today.
- Andrew: We'll talk to you next time. Bye-bye.

Detailed Explanations

Where it's at

When something or some place is hip, fashionable, or popular it is **where it's at**. In this episode, Harp asks Andrew which place he liked best during his East Coast road trip. Andrew responds by saying that Halifax is **where it's at**. In other words, Andrew thinks that Halifax is a very cool city.

This idiomatic expression originated in the USA in the 1950s. It was frequently used in the American hip hop scene of the 1980s and was taken mainstream in the 1990s by the singer Beck with his song **Where It's At**. If you'd like to hear this song, it can easily be found on YouTube.

So, when something or some place is **where it's at**, that thing or place is very popular and really cool.

Here are a couple more examples with **where it's at**:

Lisa: I love your sweater!

Sara: Oh, thanks!

Lisa: Where did you get it?

Sara: I got it at the department store downtown. It was 50% off, too!

Lisa: No way! That department store is **where it's at**. Whenever I go there, I always find good things at good prices.

Sara: Yeah, me too! Love that place.

Ross: OK, the game is about to start. Who's going to win? Make your prediction.

George: The Knicks are going to win for sure. The Lakers don't stand a chance.

Ross: No way, man. The Knicks are **where it's at**.

George: There's only one way to find out. Turn on the TV so we can watch this game.

Ross: OK, will do.

To hack in / to hack into something

In this episode, Harp and Andrew have a conversation about privacy. One of the things they are worried about is their home computers being **hacked into** by **hackers**.

A hacker is a person who uses a computer to access restricted or private information. The verb we use to talk about the action **a hacker** does is **to hack**. And we use the phrasal verbs **to hack in** and **to hack into something** when **a hacker** breaks into a computer, network, or system in order to steal information.

So, Harp and Andrew are worried about **hackers** stealing their private files and information by **hacking into their computers**.

Here are a couple more examples with **to hack in** and **to hack into something**:

Garrett: Did you hear the news?

Chase: No. What happened?

Garrett: Today's exam has been cancelled!

Chase: Really? What happened?

Garrett: Someone **hacked into the university's computer system** and stole all the answers to the final exams! All exams have been cancelled until the university can rewrite all the tests.

Chase: So this means we get extra study time?

Garrett: Yup!

Chase: Amazing!

Michelle: This is so frustrating!

Carly: What is?

Michelle: I forgot the password to my computer and I'm locked out.

Carly: Really? How could you forget that?

Michelle: I don't know. Anyways, I'm going to have to bring it down to the repair shop to see if they can help me out.

Carly: But you're really good with computers. Can't you just **hack in** or something?

Michelle: No. I have no idea how to do that. I'll leave this one for the experts.

Creepy

When something is **creepy**, it gives you a weird and uncomfortable feeling. In this episode, Harp says that video surveillance is **creepy** because it means someone is watching you at all times. The idea of someone watching your every move would make most people feel uncomfortable, which is why surveillance is **creepy**.

When someone's privacy is violated, it can leave that person feeling scared and uncomfortable. And when you feel these two emotions, you experience a **creepy** feeling.

When a person is **creepy**, that person makes you feel uncomfortable because they act in an inappropriate, offensive, or rude way. This expression is usually used to describe people who act in sexually inappropriate ways. For example, if a man were to continually pursue a woman even after she told him to leave her alone, he would be **creepy**.

Here are a couple more examples with **creepy**:

Amber: Hey, did you know that there is a setting in your phone that tracks your location? If you don't turn it off then all of your movements are recorded.

Travis: Whoa! That's super **creepy**. Can you show me how to turn it off?

Amber: Yes. No problem.

Travis: Thanks! I'd hate for that information to be seen by a hacker or something.

Amber: That was my concern too. I'm afraid of very personal information like that being stolen by a criminal.

Michelle: You know that guy Rick from school?

Mary: Yeah, I do. He's so **creepy**. I hate him!

Michelle: Oh yeah? Why?

Mary: Last year he asked me out three times and each time I told him I wasn't interested. Then one day after school, he tried to follow me home. I had to call the police.

Michelle: That's so awful! Yeah. He asked me out yesterday but I got a weird feeling from him so I said no.

Mary: Please make sure you stay far away from that guy. He has problems.

Michelle: OK. Thanks for the warning!

To be up to no good

When somebody **is up to no good**, that person is either doing something bad or acting very suspiciously, as if they are about to do something bad. In this episode, Andrew says that a common argument for increased surveillance is that only people who **are up to no good** need to worry about more security cameras. In other words, only criminals and people who do illegal things will be affected by more security; people who follow the law don't need to worry about it.

So when a person **is up to no good**, they are doing something bad, illegal, or wrong. Or, they are acting suspicious, as if they have the intention of doing something wrong very soon.

This is an informal expression and is usually only used in casual conversation. It is best avoided in formal contexts.

Here are a couple more examples with **to be up to no good**:

Jeff: Hey, come here.

Kate: What's up?

Jeff: Take a look out the window. See those teenagers in front of our house?

Kate: Oh yeah! I do see them. I wonder what they're doing.

Jeff: I don't know. It looks like **they're up to no good**. I'm going to go tell them to go home.

Kate: OK, good idea, but be careful!

Jordan: What type of a kid were you when you were in high school?

Breanne: I was a bad kid, actually. I didn't study very hard and I **was always up to no good**. What about you?

Jordan: We were complete opposites! I was a geek. I didn't have too many friends, didn't get into trouble, and got straight A's.

Breanne: Being a teenager is so funny! Who would've thought way back then that we'd end up working at the same company?

Jordan: Yeah. Life is weird!

Taboo

Something that is embarrassing, immoral, or disrespectful can be described with the adjective **taboo**. It can also be called **a taboo**. In this episode, Harp talks about a person she heard about who was fired because he sent a **taboo** email while at work. The content of this email was probably something rude, sexual, or racist—three things that can all be considered **taboo**.

The word **taboo** entered English in a very interesting way. It's a loan word borrowed from the Tongan language, which is spoken in the island nation of Tonga. The explorer James Cook visited the island in the late 1700s. He kept a diary of his trip and wrote the following about the customs of the Tongans: "When any thing is forbidden to be eaten, or made use of, they say, that it is **taboo**."

In modern-day English, we use the word **taboo** to describe topics that can't be discussed casually because they would offend someone or be disrespectful.

Here are a couple more examples with the adjective **taboo** and the noun **a taboo**:

Brian: Have you ever really offended anyone?

Lorina: I accidentally broke **a taboo** once.

Brian: Oh, interesting! What did you do?

Lorina: When I was about 15, I was at a church service with my parents and I stubbed my toe while we were walking into the church. It hurt so badly that I automatically yelled out a swear word.

Brian: Oh no! Swearing in church is definitely **taboo**. What was the reaction?

Lorina: Everyone was shocked. I got a lot of stares!

Todd: Hey, mind if I ask you a question?

Henry: Not at all. Go for it.

Todd: Well, I know you've done a lot of travelling in the past and I'm going on a big trip next year. It'll be my first time outside of Canada. Do you have any tips or advice you could pass along?

Henry: My advice is to do a lot of reading about the countries you'll visit before you leave. Learn about the history, culture, customs, and **taboos**. Not only will the locals appreciate it, but you'll enjoy your stay much more, too.

Todd: Great advice. Thanks!

Transparent

In this episode, Andrew and Harp talk about how they believe the government should be **transparent**. When a government or organization is **transparent**, it is open and honest with the public. A **transparent** government believes that citizens have the right to access information about how their country is run. So, a government that is truthful and open with its citizens can be called a **transparent** government.

Originally, the adjective **transparent** was only used to describe materials that are see-through (like glass or plastic). This meaning is still used today, but now we also use this word to describe governments and organizations that are honest and open with the public. When a government or organization is **transparent**, they don't hide any information about how they operate. Instead, they share information with the public so it is easy to understand what they do and why they do it.

These days, the word **transparent** is used very often during election campaigns. Political candidates often run on campaigns that promise open and **transparent** government.

Here's one more example with **transparent**:

- | | |
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| Monica: | So, the election is coming up soon. Have you decided who you're going to vote for? |
| Mark: | No. I haven't decided yet. |
| Monica: | What issues are important to you? |
| Mark: | There are lots of important issues that the new government will have to address, but I think the priorities for me are the economy and openness. |
| Monica: | Yeah, I totally agree. I hope whoever wins this election is more transparent than the previous government. |
| Mark: | Yes. I strongly believe that citizens have the right to know how the country is being governed. |
| Monica: | I couldn't agree more! |

A hot topic

While Harp and Andrew discuss the recent Hillary Clinton email scandal story, Harp mentions that this story is a **hot topic**. A **hot topic** is a current event, story, or issue that is frequently talked about or discussed. Usually a **hot topic** involves a political issue or a celebrity scandal.

When you watch a celebrity news show on TV or listen to a political talk show on the radio, the issues and stories that are discussed can be described as **hot topics**. Harp says the Hillary Clinton email scandal story is **a hot topic** because it is being discussed by many people right now and everyone has strong opinions about the story.

So, any current event or news story that is frequently discussed is **a hot topic**.

Here are a couple more examples with **a hot topic**:

Aaron: Did you hear the news about Tom Cruise?

Erika: Of course I heard! It's **a hot topic**! Everyone's talking about it.

Aaron: I can't believe he's going to make another *Mission Impossible* movie. I'm so excited.

Erika: Well, the series is super popular and generates tons of money, so it makes perfect sense that he'd want to make another one.

Nathan: Want to watch TV for a bit?

Maria: Sure, why not? What would you like to watch?

Nathan: There's a political show on in 10 minutes that's pretty good. Let's watch that.

Maria: Hmm. I don't know if I'm in the mood for something serious.

Nathan: Well, it's a show about politics but it's really a comedy show. I think you'll like it. They make jokes about all the **hot topics** happening right now.

Maria: Ah, OK. Sounds good, let's check it out.

Behind closed doors

In this episode, Andrew and Harp explain that some government meetings take place **behind closed doors**. When a meeting occurs **behind closed doors**, it is held privately and the details are not shared with the media or the public.

So, when a meeting is held or a deal is made **behind closed doors**, the details of the meeting or deal are secret and private.

Harp and Andrew mention that they don't like it when governments make decisions in meetings that are **behind closed doors**. Instead, they prefer open and transparent governments. However, they realize that in some situations (for example, national security) meetings must take place **behind closed doors**.

So when a meeting occurs **behind closed doors**, the public is prohibited from learning about the meeting because the proceedings are private.

Here are a couple more examples with ***behind closed doors***:

Laura: I heard a rumour that all the managers in our company had to attend a special meeting today.

Erin: Really? I didn't hear anything about it.

Laura: I wonder what they discussed.

Erin: That's a good question. The meeting must have happened **behind closed doors** because, like I said, I didn't even know it happened!

Laura: Yeah. It makes sense, I guess. If everyone in the company knew everything, there is a high chance the competition would learn inside information about how we do things here.

Erin: Yeah, exactly. That's why certain information is kept private.

Tim: You'll never guess what happened to me today.

Fredrick: What happened?

Tim: About 5 years ago I bought some stocks in the ABC Company.

Fredrick: OK.

Tim: Well, today it was announced that ABC has been bought by the XYZ Company. I just found out that my stocks doubled in price!

Fredrick: Wow. Congratulations!

Tim: Thanks! The deal between the two companies was actually made **behind closed doors** last year, but the information was just announced to the stock holders today.

Fredrick: So, what are you going to do with the extra money?

Tim: Oh, I'll probably just reinvest it in more XYZ stock.

Fredrick: Good idea.

Room for improvement

When something can be improved, we can say that there is **room for improvement**. For example, in this episode, Andrew and Harp talk about national security. They are concerned that privacy rights become threatened by national security measures like surveillance. Harp and Andrew realize that national security is important; however, they feel that there is **room for improvement**. In other words, national security can be improved so that privacy rights are respected.

This expression can be used in many different situations. When something can be made better or improved, there is **room for improvement**.

Here are a couple more examples with **room for improvement**.

Jerry: You made a presentation at school yesterday, right? How did it go? Have you received any feedback from your teacher?

Laura: I thought it went pretty well. My teacher gave me a B. She said that I did a good job but there is **room for improvement**. Next time, I think I'll be able to get an A.

Jerry: Hey, a B isn't bad! Congratulations!

Boss: Can I talk to you in my office for a few minutes?

Employee: Sure. No problem.

Boss: I just wanted to have a quick talk about the report you handed in last week.

Employee: Yes. What did you think?

Boss: Well, to be honest, there is a lot of **room for improvement**. There are a lot of changes that need to be made before we can show this to our clients.

Employee: OK, I understand.

Boss: Please take another look at the report and make the changes that I've suggested by next week.

Employee: OK. No problem.

A different angle

When talking about privacy, Andrew says that it is a big topic, with many **different angles**. When an issue or subject can be looked at from **different angles**, it means there are multiple ways of looking at the issue. For example, some people may think that increased security is a good idea, even if this means less privacy. On the other hand, some people may hate the idea of giving up their right to privacy for increased security. Because there are many ways to look at the issue of privacy, we can say that this subject has **different angles**.

An angle is a way of looking at an issue or problem. So, when there are **different angles** to an issue, there are multiple ways of viewing or understanding the issue.

Most complicated issues or big problems can be looked at from **different angles**. Each **angle** offers a different perspective and a different way of understanding the issue.

Here are a couple more examples with **a different angle**:

Christopher: Could you give me a hand with my homework? I'm having some problems solving this question.

Jessica: Sure. I can give it a try. What's the subject?

Christopher: Math.

Jessica: OK. Let me take a look.

Christopher: Sure. I just don't get it.

Jessica: Well there are many **different angles** you can take when solving a problem like this. Take a look at this formula that I've written out for you. I think it will help you out.

Christopher: Oh, this is awesome! I didn't think of taking this approach to solving the problem. Thanks!

Jessica: No problem. I'm happy I could help.

Kevin: Do you think the government should legalize drugs?

Crystal: That's a good question. I know some politicians have talked about doing it. I'm not sure. What do you think?

Kevin: I know some European countries have legalized some drugs and this has reduced the crime rate. It's a complicated issue with a lot of **different angles**, but I'm glad that politicians are at least considering it.

A taste of something

This episode is about privacy—a big and complicated issue. Andrew says that the subject is too big to be discussed completely, but he hopes that this episode gives listeners **a taste of the topic**.

When you get **a taste of something**, you experience something new for a short period of time. You don't get to experience or understand the whole issue, but you are introduced to it for the first time.

In other words, Andrew hopes that this episode provides Culips listeners with an introduction to the topic of privacy in English. Although it is impossible to cover all of the different angles in the episode, this introduction provides **a taste of** what the conversations about privacy look like in a Canadian context.

Here are a couple more example with **a taste of something**:

Barry: What are your plans for the summer?

Judy: I'm doing an internship at a broadcasting company.

Barry: Oh, really? That's so cool. Do you want to work for a broadcaster when you graduate?

Judy: I'm not 100% sure, but I hope that this experience will give me **a taste of** what it would be like to work in the broadcasting industry.

Barry: Yeah, it definitely will. Enjoy and good luck!

Judy: Thanks!

Brian: My wife and I just bought a sailboat and are going to go for a weekend sailing trip next month. Would you like to come with us?

Todd: Sounds fun, but I'm not sure I'd be a good sailor. I think I might get seasick.

Brian: Oh, really? Well, how about this? Next Monday I'm taking the boat out for a little test drive. You could come with me and that would give you **a taste of sailing**. If you feel sick, then maybe it's best that you don't come with us on the trip. If you feel fine, then you'll know you would be able to handle a longer trip.

Todd: Hey, that's a great idea. Sure, I'd love to go with you on Monday.

Brian: Perfect!

Quiz

1. **What do we call a current issue or event that is very popular and is discussed by many people?**
 - a) a hot topic
 - b) a hot pot
 - c) a hot talk
 - d) a hot stuff

2. **Meetings that are private are held where?**
 - a) before closed doors
 - b) before closed windows
 - c) behind closed windows
 - d) behind closed doors

3. **What does it mean when you get a taste of something?**
 - a) You are introduced to something new.
 - b) You have a small bite of a delicious food.
 - c) You have excellent style and fashion sense.
 - d) You offend someone by doing something rude.

4. **Which adjective describes open governments and organizations?**
 - a) see-through
 - b) clear
 - c) transparent
 - d) translucent

5. **Among the following people, who is creepy by definition?**
 - a) a salesperson
 - b) a teacher
 - c) a stalker
 - d) a senior citizen

6. Which of the following is considered taboo in Western culture?
- a) exercising
 - b) relaxing
 - c) drinking and driving
 - d) working
7. What does it mean when something is described as being where it's at?
- a) It's expensive.
 - b) It's far away.
 - c) It's old-fashioned.
 - d) It's cool.
8. What do we call someone who commits cyber-crimes by virtually breaking into computers?
- a) a peddler
 - b) a goofball
 - c) a hacker
 - d) an activist
9. True or false? When someone is up to no good, it means they have committed a crime.
- a) true
 - b) false

Quiz Answers

1.a 2.d 3.a 4.c 5.c 6.c 7.d 8.c 9.b

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