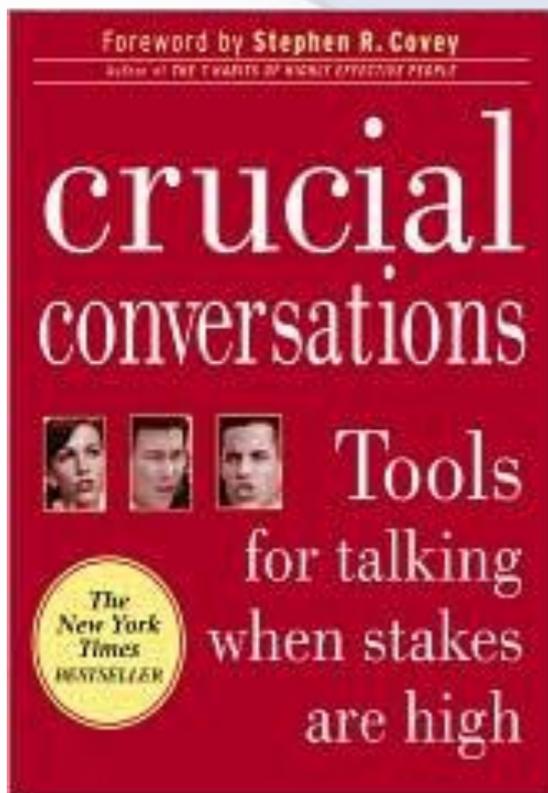




LEADERSHIP

BOOK OF THE MONTH

WELCOME



Crucial Conversations

Tools for Talking When Stakes are High

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Meet Your Leadership Team



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BOOK SUMMARY

People live together and apart at the same time. We have deep relationships and share work with one another, yet we live within our own strengths, emotions, and perspective. The potential of any one individual is extremely high, yet the potential of the collective wisdom is unlimited...IF we can get it all out on the table.

Crucial Conversations exist when the stakes are high, opinions vary, and when emotions run strong...and it is in these conversations where our greatest potential lies. This book outlines ways to deliberately handle these conversations in a healthy and productive way.

GOOD STUFF

Crucial Conversations creates a new language around communications and how they can best be handled. It approaches the issue in a very human way that stimulates our desire to relate to others while feeling good about us. You will read some real and concrete methods for getting control of yourself and staying focused through those challenging moments that pop up in everyone's life.

This topic is so universal, that everyone can learn something. This is the type of book you want to own multiple of copies of so you can give them away to others.

NOT-SO-GOOD-STUFF

There are so many techniques that it might be overwhelming to try and use them all. You can pick up a common theme in the techniques, but it is easy to get a little lost, especially in the heat of a crucial conversation!

BOTTOM LINE

This topic is universal! Start having deliberate conversations.

CONVERTING IDEAS INTO ACTION

3 KEY CONCEPTS

- 
-  Shared Pool of **Meaning**
 -  Start With the **Heart** - What Do You Really Want?
 -  Maintain Mutual **Purpose** and Mutual **Respect**



KEY CONCEPT #1

Shared Pool of Meaning

- **BOOK** - Perhaps the core concept of the book is the “Shared Pool of Meaning”. Every difficult conversation has multiple perspectives, opinions, and even variations of the “facts at hand”. These combine to make our own personal “pool of meaning”. We live in our own pool.
- **DON** - When a conflict arises (which is a good thing by the way as long as it is handled well), it is too easy to get lost in our own forest of thoughts. We make the unconscious universal mistake that “everyone else MUST think like I do”. We don’t spend time trying to hear to the other person’s perspective in our effort to get out our own perspective.
- **RANDY** - Think about what a difference it would make in your relationships if you started from the premise that you and the other person really did want the best for each other. Thinking that way would encourage you to indeed create a shared pool of meaning.

ACTION ITEM #1

“HOW TO” – Use The Words “I” and “You” When Expressing Your Feelings

The hardest part of having a Crucial Conversation is dealing with your own emotions. Are you committed to being responsible for your own feelings and emotions? Then take charge and be responsible for your own feelings. No one else can make you feel sad, angry, mad, or even happy for all that matters. You are choosing to let your emotions get the best of you. Would you like to change that? Here is a great technique to practice:

Step 1. Identify a situation where you are placing the blame for your feelings on someone else in a relationship that is important to you.

Step 2. Arrange for an unhurried time to talk with the person who is upsetting you. Tell them you are struggling with something and that you would like to talk to them about the situation. Ask them if they would be willing to hear you out. To reduce the pressure even more, agree that you only want to talk about the situation and that there is no pressure to solve the problem in this meeting.

Step 3. In the conversation take complete ownership of your feelings. You can do this by saying I feel angry (or your emotion) when this situation occurs. Let the other person know that you are not blaming them for how you feel. Compare this approach to “you make me angry.” The approach takes the pressure off the other person and acknowledges that you alone are responsible for how you feel.

Step 4. Invite the other person to help you create a shared pool of meaning around why the situation is upsetting you so much. When you are taking responsibility for your own feelings and you create a safe environment to dialogue about something, it is amazing how much progress you can make.



KEY CONCEPT #2

Start With the **Heart** -What Do You Really Want?

- **BOOK** - When entering a crucial conversation, it is extremely important to develop focus. What is it that "I" really want from this conversation? This may seem like a selfish place to start, but where else would you get clarity about what it is that you need to get out of a conversation.
- **DON** - Sometimes in the heat of battle, we lose our focus on what it is that we really want to accomplish. When we don't have that focus, we become easily distracted by the moods of others, our own perceptions, and by short-term and unhealthy goals. This is true in life and it is true in any conversation.
- **RANDY** - It is not anyone else's job to make me happy. Unless I am clear about what I want from a relationship, how can I ask someone else to give me what I want? Clarity starts with me. Get clear about what you really want and align your behavior towards others around that clarity.

ACTION ITEM #2

“HOW TO” – Determine What is Really Most Important to You in Your Key Relationships.

Step 1. Identify and list five important relationships in your life.

Step 2. For each of the people you listed above, identify and write down three to five things that you really want most out of that relationship.

Step 3. Now do an honest personal evaluation and determine if your behaviors and actions towards those people listed above are consistent with what you want most out of those relationships.

Step 4. Diligently align your behavior and conduct towards those people in a way that supports what you want most out of those relationships.

Extra credit!

Step 5. Ask one or two of the people above to participate in the same exercise and then share your answers with each other. Agree to work with each other to stay aligned around what is mutually important to both of you.



KEY CONCEPT #3

Maintain Mutual **Purpose** and Mutual **Respect**

- **BOOK** - Great outcomes of crucial conversations come when all parties work together with the same purpose and in the knowledge that all parties are worthy.
- **DON** - In order to address conflict, we must admit that “false certainties” exist, and find the common ground. We should also acknowledge that within organizations, complexities and a lack of purpose could cause unforeseen results as people develop their own purposes.
- **RANDY** - At the end of the day what people want most in life is respect. Give it to them and you will give both you and them healthier and stronger relationships.

ACTION ITEM #3

“HOW TO” – Use One of the Best Relational Silver-Bullets...RESPECT

Step 1. Identify three relationships that need a little boost. Rate each relationship on a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being extremely poor and 10 being extremely high-quality.

Step 2. Commit to show each of those people more respect for the next 30 days. It can be as simple as acknowledging them with a smile or a hello. It could be offering to bring back coffee or lunch when you are fetching your own. Or, offering to help take care of part of their workload. Show them respect whether they deserve it or not for the full 30 days.

Step 3. At the end of the 30 days, re-rate each relationship and see what impact upping the ante on respect has had on each relationship. I bet you will be pleasantly surprised. *I dare you to try it.*