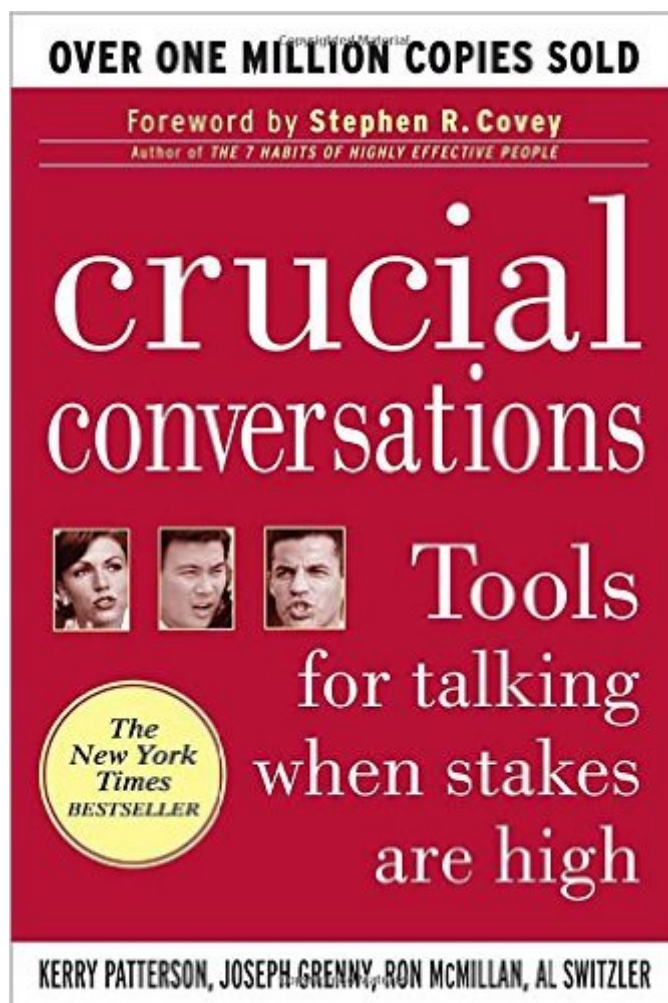


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# Crucial Conversations: Tools For Talking When Stakes Are High



## Synopsis

Learn how to keep your cool and get the results you want when emotions flare. When stakes are high, opinions vary, and emotions run strong, you have three choices: Avoid a crucial conversation and suffer the consequences; handle the conversation badly and suffer the consequences; or read *Crucial Conversations* and discover how to communicate best when it matters most. *Crucial Conversations* gives you the tools you need to step up to life's most difficult and important conversations, say what's on your mind, and achieve the positive resolutions you want. You'll learn how to: Prepare for high-impact situations with a six-minute mastery technique Make it safe to talk about almost anything Be persuasive, not abrasive Keep listening when others blow up or clam up Turn crucial conversations into the action and results you want Whether they take place at work or at home, with your neighbors or your spouse, crucial conversations can have a profound impact on your career, your happiness, and your future. With the skills you learn in this book, you'll never have to worry about the outcome of a crucial conversation again.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I bought this book after undergoing a first, miserable mediation session with my soon-to-be-exhusband. The stakes are high--it's our property settlement, and my husband had been cashing out the savings and spending them, while leaving me to take care of the 2 mortgages and other obligations. It was easy, but not very productive, to point out where I felt he was wrong. I started reading *Crucial Conversations* and using the tools as well as I could, while watching our mediator model them. I stopped participating in the accuse/counter-accuse game, and focused on

bringing information to the table, while I used the crucial conversation tools to keep our discussions productive. The book starts out with a self-assessment to determine your own communications strengths and weaknesses. My biggest faux-pas with my husband was to cause Respect violations. The CC tools gave me a usable set of actions to take to set things back on track: \* Apologize (I'm sorry if that sounded disrespectful.) \* Contrast (I don't want to make you out to be the bad guy, I'm just concerned that I won't have any funds left to cover the emergencies.) \* CRIB - Commit to seek mutual purpose (I'll stay in this process as long as it takes for us to reach agreement.) - Recognize the purpose behind his strategy (It's understandable that you're unhappy with our situation and that you're trying to do something to feel better.) - Invent a mutual purpose (I want us both to be happy and secure after the divorce.) - Brainstorm new strategies (Maybe we can just focus on the numbers for now, and put off worrying about how we're going to divide things until later.

We all face situations in life where things are tense and saying the right things is crucial. This is what the authors call a "crucial conversation." As opposed to a casual discussion, crucial conversations happen between two or more people when opinions vary, stakes are high, and emotions run strong. Whether you are approaching a boss who is breaking his or her own policies, critiquing a colleague's work, or talking to a team member who isn't keeping commitments, keeping the conversation productive can be very difficult. The main technique the authors teach is the talent of dialogue. This is the free flow of meaning between two or more people. People who use this technique are able to find a way to get all relevant information from themselves and others out in the open and make it safe for everyone to add their meaning to the shared pool. These people try hard to ensure that all ideas find their way into the forum; and as this "pool of shared meaning" grows, it helps people by exposing them to more accurate and relevant information so they can make better decisions. In this, the 2nd edition, the book adds access to new material including a video vault that illustrates each of the authors' techniques being acted out, new case studies, and new tools to help you maneuver effectively through crucial conversations. This wise and witty guide gives you the tools you need to step up to life's most difficult and important conversations, say what's on your mind, and achieve positive outcomes.

When I obtained a copy of Crucial Conversations, I had very high expectations of this book having read the authors' outstanding earlier work, *The Balancing Act*. I must say I wasn't disappointed; in fact, I was delighted! Crucial Conversations is an extremely insightful and very practical book. Indeed, it is a very rare combination to find a book that contains profound ideas as well as provides

actionable tools and Crucial Conversations delivers both. The book addresses a topic that is largely misunderstood and vastly underestimated: high stakes dialogue. The authors define crucial conversations as those where 1) stakes are high, 2) opinions vary, and 3) emotions run strong, or in other words, much of both our professional and personal lives. We're all involved in crucial conversations at home and at work but most of us are not very aware of the interpersonal dynamics at play and/or we're unskilled in how to respond differently. The book helps the reader first understand the principles involved in "crucial conversations" but then also helps the reader develop real skills and abilities to choose or change their communication patterns. The end result is remarkable. The book's impact is a much bigger idea than simple communication--it's all about effective human interaction and getting results with and through people. The book is highly readable, extremely engaging and actually quite fun. It is filled with illustrations and stories from all walks of life: business examples, personal examples and family examples. The fact that the principles and skills the authors teach can be applied in all dimensions of life--work, home, personal--is very appealing to me and made the book extremely helpful on many fronts.

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