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影印第2版

# 关键对话

如何高效能沟通

[美] 克里·帕特森 | 约瑟夫·格伦尼 | 罗恩·麦克米伦 | 阿尔·斯威茨勒 著



# CRUCIAL CONVERSATIONS

Tools for Talking When Stakes Are High



KERRY PATTERSON · JOSEPH GRENNY · RON McMILLAN · AL SWITZLER



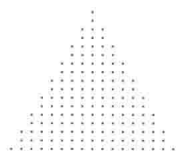
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GUANJIAN DUIHUA

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*We dedicate this book to  
Louise, Celia, Bonnie, and Linda—  
whose support is abundant,  
whose love is nourishing,  
and whose patience is just shy of infinite.*

*And to our children*

*Christine, Rebecca, Taylor, Scott,  
Aislinn, Cara, Seth, Samuel, Hyrum,  
Amber, Megan, Chase, Hayley, Bryn,  
Amber, Laura, Becca, Rachael, Benjamin,  
Meridith, Lindsey, Kelley, Todd,  
who have been a wonderful source of learning.*

## WHAT *CRUCIAL CONVERSATIONS* READERS ACROSS THE GLOBE SAY ABOUT THE BOOK



“Any book is powerful if you can relate to its content, is simple to understand, easy to apply, and is based on research. I have found all of these elements in *Crucial Conversations*. The narrative has a universal appeal and the strength to transcend cultures. I have found it to align closely with Indian values. The skills in *Crucial Conversations* make this world safe enough for humans to express themselves in crucial moments.”

Capt. Charanjit Lehal,  
AGM Training and Development,  
TataSky, India



“I always thought I had good communication skills until I worked in the oil field where profanity and verbal attacks are used as punctuation. I’ve read *Crucial Conversations* four times, and it has totally changed ME! For the first time in my life, I have the courage to talk to almost anyone about almost anything. *Crucial Conversations* is one of the most important books I have ever read.”

Dave Hill,  
Entrepreneur,  
NSA Juice Plus+



“In my thirty-five years in the training profession, I have never experienced content so valuable and so life-changing as what is found in *Crucial Conversations*. I am convinced that if people could read any book that crosses boundaries for skills in team building, performance management, conflict resolution, problem solving, etc., it would be this one.”

Terrie Monroe, Director,  
Organizational Development,  
Children’s Health System



“There are few books that have the potential to impact both one’s professional and personal life. *Crucial Conversations* changed some of my destructive communication styles at home and at work. I attribute the impact it has had on my life to the fact that skills are derived from solid empirical data of social science research. *Crucial Conversations* is truly a life-changing book.”

Ghassan Qutob,  
Regional Director,  
Middle East Region,  
Stallergenes



“Coming in as the new CEO of an organization with many tenured employees, I have had many crucial conversations. Using *Crucial Conversations* as my playbook during this time was paramount in guiding me through each conversation.”

Joanne K. Bryson, CAE,  
Executive Vice President and CEO,  
Oregon Medical Association



“After fourteen years as a classroom teacher, this past year was my first as an administrator, and it was a BIG challenge. While I had no problems conveying ‘not so good’ news to students and their parents, I had the hardest time delivering ‘not so good’ news to teachers. After reading *Crucial Conversations*, I felt prepared to talk to anyone about nearly anything. This book has made my first year as a school administrator a great success.”

Terri Thornton, NBCT,  
Instructional Specialist,  
Luther Branson Elementary,  
Madison County School District



“*Crucial Conversations* has empowered me to be a better husband, father, brother, and manager. I wish I could have read this book thirty years ago. I am so thankful to be a part of something so life-changing and truly hope to pass it forward whenever I get the opportunity.”

Ron McBee,  
CFO, Ingram ISD



“This book was a turning point in my life both personally and professionally. It clarified exactly how you can change the way you react in different moments to get different results. I have regained a strong, loving relationship with my son by using the skills I learned from reading *Crucial Conversations*.”

Riana Avis,  
Surrey, England

## *Foreword to the Second Edition*

No one is more pleased than I am that as I write this, this important book is approaching two million copies in print. I learned a lot from this book ten years ago when the authors first sent me the manuscript. For years I have taught Habit 5: Seek First to Understand. But this book goes even broader and deeper into the fundamental principles of high-stakes communication. It deals with the whole dynamic of crucial conversations in a wonderfully comprehensive way. But even more important, it draws our attention to those defining moments that literally shape our lives, shape our relationships, and shape our world. And that's why this book deserves to take its place as one of the key thought leadership contributions of our time.

Furthermore, I am gratified at this book's influence, because I have known these four authors for many years. They are superior people, great teachers, and master trainers. They have created a remarkably synergistic team that has endured for over twenty years. That says a lot about their ability to have crucial conversations themselves. In addition, they have created a world-class organization, VitalSmarts, that has become an engine of leadership, relationship, and personal change material that has influenced many millions of lives around the world. The culture



of their organization is a stellar reflection of all they teach in this volume—and is evidence of the efficacy of these principles.

I write this with my best wishes that the work of this fine team will continue to influence the world for many years to come.

— Stephen R. Covey

July 2011

## *Foreword to the First Edition*

This is a breakthrough book. That is exactly how I saw it when I first read the manuscript. I so resonated with the importance, power, and timeliness of its message.

This book is an apt response to the wisdom of the great historian Arnold Toynbee, who said that you can pretty well summarize all of history—not only of society, but of institutions and of people—in four words: *Nothing fails like success*. In other words, when a challenge in life is met by a response that is equal to it, you have success. But when the challenge moves to a higher level, the old, once successful response no longer works—it fails; thus, nothing fails like success.

The challenge has noticeably changed our lives, our families, and our organizations. Just as the world is changing at frightening speed and has become increasingly and profoundly interdependent with marvelous and dangerous technologies, so, too, have the stresses and pressures we all experience increased exponentially. This charged atmosphere makes it all the more imperative that we nourish our relationships and develop tools, skills, and enhanced capacity to find new and better solutions to our problems.

These newer, better solutions will not represent “my way” or “your way”—they will represent “our way.” In short, the solutions must be synergistic, meaning that the whole is greater than

the sum of the parts. Such synergy may manifest itself in a better decision, a better relationship, a better decision-making process, increased commitment to implement decisions made, or a combination of two or more of these.

What you learn is that “crucial conversations” *transform* people and relationships. They are anything but *transacted*; they create an entirely new level of bonding. They produce what Buddhism calls “the middle way”—not a compromise between two opposites on a straight-line continuum, but a higher middle way, like the apex of a triangle. Because two or more people have created something new from genuine dialogue, bonding takes place, just like the bonding that takes place in a family or marriage when a new child is created. When you produce something with another person that is truly creative, it’s one of the most powerful forms of bonding there is. In fact the bonding is so strong that you simply would not be disloyal in his or her *absence*, even if there were social pressure to join others in bad-mouthing.

The sequential development of the subject matter in this book is brilliant. It moves you from understanding the supernal power of dialogue, to clarifying what you really want to have happen and focusing on what actually is happening, to creating conditions of safety, to using self-awareness and self-knowledge. And finally, it moves you to learning how to achieve such a level of mutual understanding and creative synergy that people are emotionally connected to the conclusions reached and are emotionally willing and committed to effectively implementing them. In short, you move from creating the right mind- and heart-set to developing and utilizing the right skill-set.

In spite of the fact that I have spent many years writing and teaching similar ideas, I found myself being deeply influenced, motivated, and even inspired by this material—learning new ideas, going deeper into old ideas, seeing new applications, and broad-

ening my understanding. I've also learned how these new techniques, skills, and tools work together in enabling crucial conversations that truly create a break with the mediocrity or mistakes of the past. Most *breakthroughs* in life truly are "break-withs."

When I first put my hands on this book, I was delighted to see that dear friends and colleagues had drawn on their entire lives and professional experiences to not only address a tremendously important topic, but also to do it in a way that is so accessible, so fun, so full of humor and illustration, so full of common sense and practicality. They show how to effectively blend and use both intellectual (I.Q.) and emotional intelligence (E.Q.) to enable crucial conversations.

I remember one of the authors having a crucial conversation with his professor in college. The professor felt that this student was neither paying the price in class nor living up to his potential. This student, my friend, listened carefully, restated the professor's concern, expressed appreciation for the professor's affirmation of his potential, and then smilingly and calmly said, "My focus is on other priorities, and the class is just not that important to me at this time. I hope you can understand." The teacher was taken aback, but then started to listen. A dialogue took place, new understanding was achieved, and the bonding was deepened.

I know these authors to be outstanding individuals and remarkable teachers and consultants, and have even seen them work their magic in training seminars—but I didn't know if they could take this complex topic and fit it into a book. They did. I encourage you to really dig into this material, to pause and think deeply about each part and how the parts are sequenced. Then apply what you've learned, go back to the book again, learn some more, and apply your new learnings. Remember, to *know* and not to *do* is really not to know.

I think you'll discover, as have I, that crucial conversations, as powerfully described in this book, reflect the insight of this excerpt of Robert Frost's beautiful and memorable poem, "The Road Not Taken":

*Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,  
And sorry I could not travel both  
And be one traveler, long I stood  
And looked down one as far as I could  
To where it bent in the undergrowth; . . .*

*I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.*

— Stephen R. Covey

# Preface

When we published *Crucial Conversations* in 2002, we made a bold claim. We argued that the root cause of many—if not most—human problems lies in how people behave when others disagree with them about high-stakes, emotional issues. We suggested that dramatic improvements in organizational performance were possible if people learned the skills routinely practiced by those who have found a way to master these high-stakes, “crucial” moments.

If anything, our conviction in this principle has grown in the subsequent decade. A growing body of research evidence shows that when leaders invest in creating a Crucial Conversations culture, nuclear power plants are safer, financial services firms gain greater customer loyalty, hospitals save more lives, government organizations deliver dramatically improved service, and tech firms learn to function seamlessly across international boundaries.

But we’d be less than honest if we didn’t admit that the most gratifying results we’ve experienced over the past ten years have not come through research numbers, but through the thousands of stories told by courageous and skillful readers who have used these ideas to influence change when it mattered the most. One of the first was a woman who reunited with her estranged father after reading the book. A nurse described how she saved a patient’s life by stepping up to a crucial conversation with a

defensive doctor who was misreading the patient's symptoms. One man masterfully avoided a rift with siblings over a will that threatened to tear the family apart after their father's death. One intrepid reader even credits her Crucial Conversations training with helping save her life during a carjacking in Brazil.

Multiply these stories by our nearly two million readers and you'll have a sense of the meaning and satisfaction we've derived from our relationship with people like you.

## **WHAT'S NEW?**

We've made a number of important changes in this new edition that we believe will make this book an even more powerful resource. Some of the changes help clarify key points, update examples, or strengthen the book's focus. But the changes we are most excited about include summaries of important new research; powerful reader stories that illustrate key principles; links to fun, memorable, and illuminating videos; and an afterword with new personal insights from each of the authors.

We are confident that these changes will not only improve your reading experience, they will also increase your capacity to turn the printed word into productive habits in your work and personal life.

## **WHERE NEXT?**

We're thrilled that so many people have responded positively to this work. To be honest, ten years ago we dared to hope the ideas we shared would alter the world. We had great confidence that changing the way people handle their crucial moments could produce a better future for organizations, individuals, families, and nations. What we didn't know was whether the world would respond as we hoped.

So far so good. It has been immensely gratifying to see so many people embrace the notion that crucial conversations really can make a difference. We've been privileged to teach heads of government, business moguls, and influential social entrepreneurs. The day we held in our hands two copies of our book—one in Arabic and one in Hebrew—gave us an even greater sense of possibility. We've shared the principles in areas of turmoil and unrest, such as Kabul and Cairo, as well as in areas of growth and influence, such as Bangkok and Boston. With each new audience and each new success story we feel a greater motivation to ensure our work makes a lasting difference.

Thus the new edition.

We hope the improvements in this edition substantially improve your experience with these life-changing ideas.

— Kerry Patterson

— Joseph Grenny

— Ron McMillan

— Al Switzler

May 2011

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# *Acknowledgments*

Our gratitude for the contribution of many fine colleagues has grown as our work has expanded around the world. We invite you to join with us in thanking some of those who not only have helped us take these ideas to millions in dozens of languages, but who also have shaped the ideas far more effectively than we could have without them.

Here are just a few of our 100+ colleagues on the VitalSmarts team who are as committed to this work as any of the authors:

James Allred, Terry Brown, Mike Carter, Platte Clark, Jeff Gibbs, Justin Hale, Emily Hoffman, Todd King, Brittney Maxfield, Mary McChesney, John Minert, Stacy Nelson, Rich Rusick, Andy Shimberg, Mindy Waite, Yan Wang, Steve Willis, Mike Wilson, and Rob Youngberg

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