

Crucial Conversations

Patterson, K., Grenny, J., McMillan, R., & Switzer, A. (2002). *Crucial conversations: Tools for talking when stakes are high*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

What is a *crucial conversation*?

These are the day-to-day conversations that affect your life; but with these differences:

1. Opinions often vary
2. Stakes are high
3. Emotions tend to run strong

Points to keep in mind before having crucial conversations:

- Examine Your Motives
 - What do you want from this discussion?
 - What is your underlying motive?
 - Remember that the only person you can directly control is yourself
- Take Charge of Your Body
 - Are you leaning forward?
 - Are you speaking more loudly?
- Avoid Common Deviations
 - Wanting to win: Correcting facts, fighting over details
 - Seeking revenge: Wanting to see the other person suffer
 - Refusing the sucker's choice: Feeling like caught between two ugly options (*either/or* thinking) instead of a third option (*and* thinking)
 - Hoping to remain safe: Silence and avoidance instead of discomfort
- Remember STATE
 - Share your facts – facts are the least controversial and most persuasive
 - Tell your story – your perspective on the facts
 - Ask for others' paths – invite others to share their facts, story, and feelings
 - Talk tentatively – stories are stories, not facts; state them tentatively
 - Encourage testing – invite opposing views, listen carefully, play devil's advocate