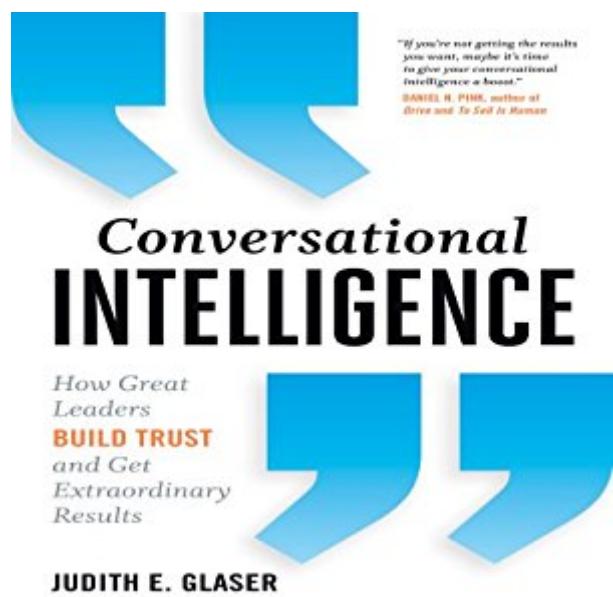


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# Conversational Intelligence: How Great Leaders Build Trust & Get Extraordinary Results



## **Synopsis**

The key to success in life and business is to become a master at Conversational Intelligence. It's not about how smart you are, but how open you are to learn new and effective powerful conversational rituals that prime the brain for trust, partnership, and mutual success. Conversational Intelligence translates the wealth of new insights coming out of neuroscience from across the globe, and brings the science down to earth so people can understand and apply it in their everyday lives. Author Judith Glaser presents a framework for knowing what kind of conversations trigger the lower, more primitive brain; and what activates higher-level intelligences such as trust, integrity, empathy, and good judgment. Conversational Intelligence makes complex scientific material simple to understand and apply through a wealth of easy to use tools, examples, conversational rituals, and practices for all levels of an organization. PLEASE NOTE: When you purchase this title, the accompanying reference material will be available in your My Library section along with the audio.

## **Book Information**

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 6 hours and 32 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Bibliomotion, Inc

Audible.com Release Date: January 24, 2014

Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

ASIN: B00I15B6NQ

Best Sellers Rank: #62 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Business & Investing > Careers #171 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Nonfiction > Reference #252 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Business & Investing > Leadership & Management

## **Customer Reviews**

To be fair, this book puts together excellent frameworks for setting up productive co-creating conversations in a structured way. The 3 levels of conversation, the dashboards, the 5 brains, the TRUST model, the FORCES model, etc., are all useful framing of some commonsensical but powerful body of knowledges that work towards building great conversations and trust. Judith provides some great examples and cases of conversations for each model that she has worked with actual clients that illustrates the concepts. But I give a three stars because the book is too lengthy,

with multiple repetition of the same points written over and over again, even within the same chapter. I certainly appreciate the power of reinforcement, but when it comes across as a "collection of separate lectures" rather than a unified production of coherent thoughts, I would expect a book written on "intelligence" to be produced with strong writing intelligence.

Consultant and author, Judith Glaser, has been studying how people converse with each other for most of her adult life. This book "Conversational Intelligence" is the culmination of her thinking on the subject and provides a practical and insightful perspective. "Conversational Intelligence is what separates those who are successful from those who are not" in business, in relationships, and even in marriages. By the time you have worked through this accessible book, you will understand why she is not exaggerating. We think of a conversation as simply talking, sharing information, telling colleagues and staff what we expect them to do, or what is bothering us. Conversations are not simple, and how they work or do not work, does deserve our attention. Unhealthy conversations are the cause of distrust, deceit, betrayal, and avoidance. Any one of these will lead to lower productivity, and less thoughtful action, and, ultimately, to lower business success. Few leaders, Glaser asserts, understand how critical conversations are to the health of their companies. Consider how many hours you spent mulling over a thoughtless, offensive comment from a colleague or superior. Consider how much nerve energy is expended thinking about an upcoming meeting with someone who demeans you, or with whom you are merely uncomfortable. To understand this at a deeper level Glaser relates Conversations to neuro-biology. There has been significant breakthroughs in our understanding of how the brain works since the development of the FMRI. The prefrontal cortex is the executive centre of the brain. It is where higher order brain activity is processed. It is activated when we feel we can trust others, and is deactivated when we feel high levels of fear and distrust. The prefrontal cortex can be considered the centre of trust. The amygdala and limbic areas of the brain, in contrast, are where distrust is centred. When the amygdala is activated, by fear or distrust, our brains effectively close down and our ability to think is severely impaired. Supportive conversations make us feel safe because the oxytocins are released and "they enhance our feelings of bonding, and dopamine and serotonin contribute to feelings of well-being." In these contexts, we are able to have productive conversations and think well with others. Conversing has three levels in Glaser's method. Level 1 is where we share information with one another. Level 2 is where we engage in "positional" conversations. Level 3 is where we create new meaning together.

when we have a point of view and express our point of view. At this level, we work to get others to understand or accept our view. Level 3 is where we communicate with others to transform and shape our common reality. At this level, we complement, build, and can have

“extraordinary, transformational conversations with others.” Researchers in neuroscience are demonstrating that the capacity to operate at Level 3 is hardwired into all human beings, Glaser reports. Everyone is capable of conversing at this level. Glaser describes an instructive consulting assignment she had with Boehringer Ingelheim, the multinational pharmaceutical company. Their representatives were rated 39th out of 40 companies by the doctors they called on to talk about the company’s products. The representatives had been trained to use a traditional features-and-benefits model of selling. In this model when a physician raises a concern, the representative tries to persuade her that the issue is not terribly important. The representatives had, in effect, been trained to argue well and persuasively. No matter how politely this is done, it made the relationship adversarial. When this became evident, Glaser trained them in a five-step method that was designed to get the prefrontal cortex engaged, and not the amygdala. The method involved building rapport; listening without judgment; asking discovery questions; reinforcing success; and dramatizing the message. The result was that the representatives rose to the most trusted and liked representatives in the same 40-company survey of doctors. This is a case of Conversational Intelligence in practice. The second half of the book is a practical guide to creating conversations that lead to deeper understanding and engagement, rather than fear and avoidance. Over thousands of years of evolution, we learned to distinguish in nano-seconds who or what is dangerous and who or what is friendly. Those among our ancient ancestors got this wrong never survived. We have the same responses in the workplace today as we did in the wilds finding our food centuries ago. This triggers either the amygdala or the prefrontal cortex. Leaders who do not take care with how they come across to staff pay a high penalty. The cost is non-compliance, wasted nerve energy, anger or fear, and poor output. Glaser exhorts the reader to “Be mindful of your conversations and the emotional content you bring.” either pain or pleasure. Are you sending friend or foe messages? Reading this book from cover to cover is a small price to pay for a large reward. Readability Light -+--- Serious Insights High -+--- Low Practical High -+--- Low. Mann of Gateways consults internationally on leadership and strategy.

The principles espoused are terrific mind sets for leaders and groups, yet are simply common sense for relationship building. The primary message is to put the relationship first, and through enhanced

trust all obstacles (essentially fear) melt away. However, I was looking for more practical supports for linguistic change, and I didn't find it. Leaders most in need of trust building exercises are those who have never experienced what these conversations sound like, and unfortunately they will not learn it here. They will be reminded of the principle of sharing and discovering, (relationship building), but only one small paragraph actually provides linguistic samples of actual conversations. This book has very little in the way of example conversations, but more in the way of example meeting strategies. Leaders can't utilize language skills they don't have, and regrettably I found no assistance here.

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