

Conversational Wisdom[®]

Strengthening human connection through the power of conversation.

Why

Conversations have existed as long as humans have. They allow us to share stories, emotions, ideas.

They mean we can think together.

Think out loud.

This ancient art form connects us all. Allows us to feel seen, heard, valued and inspired. Has made it possible for us to create and innovate together, to understand our world. To grow.

Recent events and the Covid-19 pandemic has exposed deep fault lines in many of our social and work structures. Highlighting racial, economic and gender inequalities. The workforce is automating faster than expected, displacing a predicted 85 million jobs in the next five years.¹ Work-related stress, depression, or anxiety accounts for 44% of work-related ill health.

The culture in many workplaces is still command and control, often fuelled by power and ego. A culture where being an expert means having all the answers rather than collaborating to explore possibilities. A culture of conformity, where speaking up and voicing our views and opinions can often be risky.

For organisations, losing the art of great conversation means losing customers, clients, and sales. It weakens brands.

For leaders, it can create a lack of transparency and honesty in teams. It weakens performance.

For any one of us at work, it can lead to a lack of meaning, lack of excitement and lack of enjoyment at work. Our feelings of belonging often diminish and those of emptiness and loneliness grow. We become disconnected between what we value and what we do.

To enable leaders to face into solving some of our most intractable problems with courage and creativity, and to make work more meaningful, we need to radically change how we talk to each other.

How we connect in meetings. How we have conversations. How we help others think.

¹ The World Economic Forum

We need to become wiser in how we use our conversations. Every day.

Conversations set the tone and cultural norms for our everyday. They carry the greatest potential to impact culture, performance, brand, and engagement – both positively and negatively. Yet conversation is often one of the most under-rated and under-developed skills.

So, how do we save great conversations?

What

This book will provide inspiration and practical support to anyone who wants to reconsider how they communicate and connect with people through their conversations.

Drawing on:

- More than 40 years of collective experience
- Award-winning Roffey Park research paper “Mastering Conversation”
- Relevant psychological models
- Stories and case-studies.

We will show how to apply Conversational Wisdom® to everyday life to transform cultures, relationships and workplaces.

The content will be simple to understand and include a wealth of easy-to-use tools, examples and advice on how to get the best out of conversations.

Conversational Wisdom® is the ability to think and act in advance of, and within any conversation, to positive affect. It is having the insight to make sound judgements and good decisions based on our knowledge and experience, in the specific context of conversation.

We know from our research that there are three essential pillars to engaging in a meaningful conversation: being aware, being human and being skilled. Conversational Wisdom® is having the insight to recognise these pillars and use each one purposely to achieve a desired conversational outcome.

Growing our Conversational Wisdom® takes practice and time.

It enables deeper and more meaningful connections with our colleagues, our families, our friends - anyone we talk with.

It offers us the ability to deal with the difficult questions of life and work with empathy and skill.

Who

Authors

Emily Cosgrove and Sara Hope founded [The Conversation Space](#) in 2014 and are co-creators of Conversational Wisdom®.

Emily grew up having tough conversations.

Sara didn't.

Emily is an entrepreneur and has always run her own business.

Sara was an employee (until she changed her mind).

Emily lives in the city.

Sara lives in the country.

Emily loves to speak.

Sara loves to write.

Together, they have combined their different experiences and perspectives to bring texture and colour to the book. Their aim is to provide the reader with:

- inspiration through everyday stories
- a blend of business and non-business examples
- practical help and support on becoming conversationally wise

Audience

This book is for people who lead, manage, and develop others in organisations.

For example,

- Learning and Development experts, HR people leaders (buyers of our programmes)
- Change Agents (both within organisations and consultants)
- Coaches and Mentors
- Business Leaders and Managers (participants in our programmes and wider)

Someone who is,

- Busy and time poor – wants something practical and easily digestible
- Interested in a ‘new take’ on how to have better conversations
- Curious about how to be more human at work
- Looking to deepen their understanding of and skills in Conversational Wisdom®