



The attached information introduces the Crucial Conversations Mastery Course. This award winning program is based on the NY Times bestselling book, Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When the Stakes are High, which is currently ranked number 32 in Amazon's list of the top 10,000 books being sold and read.

A Crucial Conversation is defined as one where high emotions, differing opinions, and high stakes are involved between one or more people. These lie at the root of most difficult human interactions. In fact, as the authors' attest, wherever we feel "stuck," there is probably a "crucial conversation" keeping us there: either one we are ignoring and not holding, or one that is being held poorly. When people are unskilled in these conversations, they feel unsafe, and tend to revert to either "silence or violence" as their Style Under Stress.

The authors of the book did over twenty years of research to find the skills that we need to master in order to become "dialogue-smart" and handle these stressful kinds of communications. They identified six key principles and about fifteen skills needed to hold such conversations effectively and get the results you want. These skills are thoroughly covered and practiced in the two day Mastery Course: you and your team will leave the course fully skilled in tackling virtually any difficult issues you are facing.

I have attached a brief description of this two-day seminar and would propose it as a possible offering for your team sometime soon. Much information on the program is available on the website www.crucialconversations.com.

Regards,

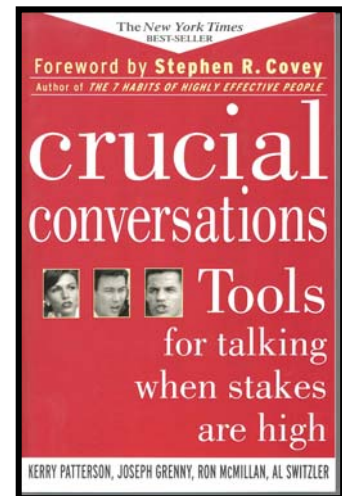
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin R. Miller".

Kevin R. Miller
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Crucial Conversations Communication Skills Mastery Course Program Proposal

By Kevin R. Miller www.visionbound.com getkevin@jrsmail.com

Basic Issue to Solve: Almost all organizations struggle with day to day communications, particularly when the issues are emotional in nature, or where strong personalities clash over conflicting ideas. Most of us, when we face these kinds of “crucial conversations” tend to migrate one of two ways: we either go toward “silence” or “violence.” The Crucial Conversations course is one of the most powerful tools available today for deeply changing the way individuals and teams communicate in these tough, crucial conversations. It is based on the NY Times best-selling book by the same title and is being used in hundreds of organizations world-wide with amazing results. In February 2004, the book was listed at number 32 in Amazon’s list of most-read books. Much good information about the program is found at www.crucialconversations.com, including the famous free “Style Under Stress” test.



The “**Law of Crucial Conversations**” states that, *“Anytime you find yourself stuck, there are crucial conversations keeping you there. Identify the crucial conversations that you’re not holding or not holding well, and get better at everything.”* Thus, this seminar and program is not just a communications course. It is a program for getting the results you want in life, whether personal, family or business related. Organizations that master these skills report tremendous jumps in productivity and the quality of life and relationships.

Individuals and teams dedicated to serving the public, such as police and fire departments, probably face some of the most critical crucial conversations of all, including ones that involve life-and-death outcomes. The six critical skills mastered in this course will enable them to do their jobs more safely and effectively.

Learning Objectives: Each participant in the seminar will learn:

- How to determine when a conversation turns “crucial” and how to hold the right level of conversation.
- How to assess your Style Under Stress. Identify what you are habitually doing that is not working (note that this SUS test can be taken free of charge on line at www.crucialconversations.com)
- How to tell when others are going to their style under stress and key skills for restoring emotional safety and return to effective dialogue.
- How to use the tools of effective arbitration and negotiation when called upon to mediate others gripped in crucial conversations.
- How to develop the skills necessary to listen effectively
- How to speak your mind in a way that is candid, and not abrasive. Get results **and** maintain strong working relationships

- How to handle a tough situation in a way that leads to what is best for everyone.
- How to influence others in the most positive way. Develop critical career enhancing influence skills
- How to interact effectively with all levels of the organization
- How to keep a meeting or group discussion from getting off-track during tough issues by using specific skills to restore safety and stay focused
- How to give sensitive feedback to a boss or direct report. Improve important business results without doing damage
- Improve collaboration and reduce conflict between teams and departments. Get the results that you need without the conflict
- How to overcome communication barriers

Training Methods: Crucial Conversations will consist of two days of training, and can be done in one two day block, four half day blocks, or two one day blocks held some time apart. I would recommend a two day block given our travel distances.

This training will be based on the *New York Times* best-selling book *Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking when Stakes are High*. Kevin will customize the training to meet the needs of the participants. The training design includes:

- Award winning video vignettes to show the right way and wrong way to enact each behavior
- Exercises that are relevant to each participant's work challenges
- Structured rehearsals to enhance practice and create competency in each skill area and real-time feedback
- Contract cards for each participant to create agreements around skills they will practice, and to develop understanding for when they have mastered these skills
- Assessment to show each participant's progress and developmental opportunities
- Establishment of coaching relationships with other leaders or participants to provide ongoing learning applied to future situations

More Information: Extensive information about the course and program is available at www.crucialconversations.com.

Materials: Each participant will receive a participant Toolkit, practice cards, an audio CD, two group study guides, and the authors' book, *Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking when Stakes are High*, McGraw-Hill, June 2002. The price per participant for materials is \$225.00.

Facilitation: Facilitation costs are normally in the \$6,000.00 range for a two day event, including expenses. We can have as many participants as your training room can handle (I can handle as many as 75 or even more in this program).

Contact Information: Kevin R. Miller, President, VisionBound International
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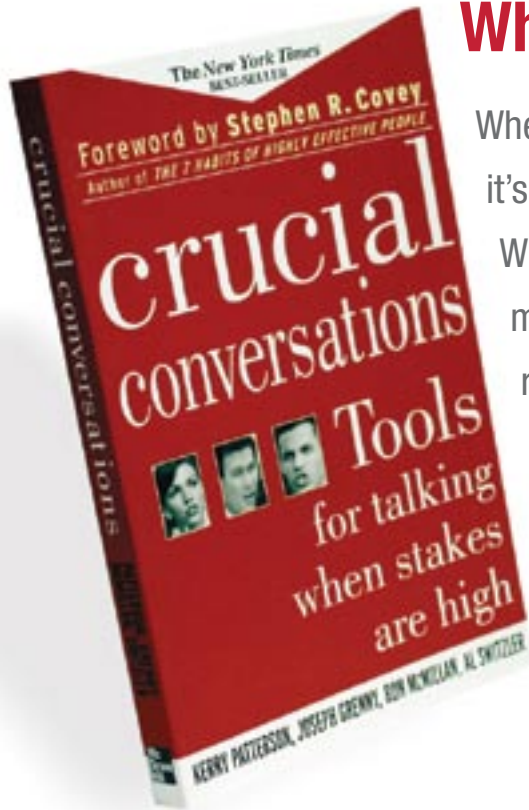


crucial
conversations®

T R A I N I N G

**Get Unstuck
and Achieve Synergy,
Alignment, and
Agreement**





What Makes the Best the Best?

Whenever you're not getting the results you're looking for, it's likely that a crucial conversation is keeping you stuck. Whether it's a problem with poor quality, slow time-to-market, declining customer satisfaction, or a strained relationship—whatever the issue—if you can't talk honestly with nearly anybody about almost anything, you can expect poor results.

On the other hand, make Crucial Conversations skills your best practices and everything gets better.

Accolades for *The New York Times* bestseller *Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes are High* (McGraw-Hill 2002) based on Crucial Conversations training include:

"This is a breakthrough book. I found myself being deeply influenced, motivated, and inspired."

— Stephen R. Covey, author of *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*

"Crucial Conversations is one of the most powerful and useful tools I have found."

— Mike Miller, Director of Business Billing, AT&T

"These skills . . . enabled us to win the largest contract in our industry's history."

— Dain Hancock
Former President, Lockheed Martin Aeronautics

It's a Skill Thing. Really.

If you're like most people—or teams or organizations—when stakes are high, emotions run strong, and opinions vary, you toggle from silence to violence—and then you pay the price.

Top-rated leaders and employees do no such thing. The best individuals, teams, and organizations choose neither fight nor flight. Instead, they have the skills to step up to controversial and heated issues, then professionally discuss them in a way that makes it safe for everyone to speak. As a result, people share their best ideas, make wise choices, and then act on their choices with conviction.

Easier said than done? No more. Put Crucial Conversations training to work and you'll drive rapid and sustainable change, get stalled change initiatives

back on track, and turn good individuals and teams into key contributors.

Are You Getting the Results You Want?

If your team or organization isn't exactly gifted at handling crucial conversations, you're likely getting less-than-desirable results. Do any of these sound familiar?

- A colleague is constantly trying to win you over to his views through high-energy debate tactics. You merely want to discuss issues calmly and professionally. You don't want to be strong-armed or misled. What do you say?
- Your boss has a leadership style that is smothering you. You hesitate to speak up.

- People who report to you aren't sharing their differing opinions. You're being cut off from essential information and as a result your most important initiatives are eroding. Why don't people just speak up?
- Important issues are not brought up in a timely manner to those who can do something about them. Only those near the water cooler hear the problems.
- You find yourself disagreeing with your boss and yet your head bobs up and down like you are a fully supportive puppet. The last person who disagreed was "shot on sight."
- One of your employees sits quietly during key concept discussions, disagrees with many of the ideas, says nothing, and then complains to you off-line. When you brought it up with her, she said it wasn't safe to be honest.
- Your spouse is constantly toggling from silence to violence. He or she seems satisfied with your relationship until one day—bam! Insults and accusations fly.
- Infighting rules as people from different shifts, departments, specialties, and cultures turn diversity into hostility and debate rather than collaboration and synergy.



"Crucial Conversations skills ensure that customer issues and questions are handled in keeping with our goals as a company. Truly important conversations are the ones that matter the most for customers in our business. What could be more important as you think about your work and your life than to improve your ability to talk about what is truly important?"

— Sharon Sullivan
Chief Learning Officer, Eli Lilly Co.

Cultures of Synergy and Improved Results

During the past twenty-five years, we've studied thousands of influential individuals, hundreds of effective teams, and dozens of productive organizations. We've carefully examined top performers to identify what separates them from the rest. Here's what we've learned: The best routinely employ skills that turn diverse thought into synergy and synergy into results—by mastering crucial conversations. And so can you. Implement the principles and tools taught in the award-winning Crucial Conversations training, and you will see significant improvement in areas such as:

1. **Performance**—talking honestly and openly with people no matter how delicate the topic or powerful the individual.
2. **Productivity**—making decisions in a way that encourages people to act on them with conviction; eliminating resistance and infighting.
3. **Teamwork**—jointly reaching agreement as to how you'll work together and treat one another as teammates.
4. **Change Management**—creating a culture where people are able to come to agreement about difficult changes (Six Sigma, SAP, change initiatives, mergers, etc.) and then follow through.
5. **Quality**—developing processes and methods that are not only helpful, but are also eagerly implemented.
6. **Relationships**—working through differences with a loved one in a way that not only solves the problem, but that also strengthens the relationship.
7. **Safety**—brainstorming causes and solutions in a way that comes up with the best ideas without pointing fingers or creating resentment.
8. **Diversity**—willingly and ably discussing diversity problems face to face and in the moment, rather than blowing a gasket or requesting a transfer.
9. **Meetings**—speaking up when things get off track and suggesting how to improve them.

Put Crucial Conversations skills to work in nearly any area and measurably improve your individual, team, and organizational results.

What Others Say About Crucial Conversations Training

"I had three months to turn things around or I was gone! Now, a year later, I have mended all of the fences. My wife of thirty years says it is like being married to a different person! I am a different person—one even I like."

— Tom Ehrenberg

Participant, Johnsonville Sausage



"I immediately saw how elegant and accessible the Crucial Conversations tools are. The skills are practical and principle based and can benefit anyone. Life changing."

— Sandra McCarthy van Winkelhoff

Director and Trainer, Creative Resources & Education Services Pty. Ltd.

"I have never attended a development course that has completely changed my life and produced immediate results as much as Crucial Conversations has."

— Richard D. Jarvis

President, Extraordinary Development, INC

"If ideas can change the world, then the ideas in Crucial Conversations will change yours. Practice just one of the ideas Crucial Conversations teaches and you'll see what I mean."

— Jim Granger

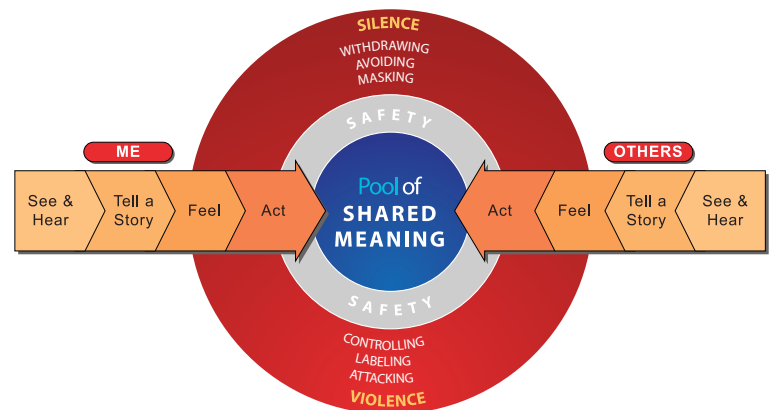
President, Worthlin Worldwide

SKILL OVERVIEW

What Makes the Best the Best?

Here are a few of the crucial conversations skills used by people whose bosses viewed them as their most valued employees. No matter how high the stakes or how strong the emotions, valued employees:

- **Stay focused on producing valued results and maintaining relationships.** Rather than getting sidetracked into saving face, keeping the peace, punishing, or winning, top performers do their best to stay in dialogue—they value the free flow of meaning. Knowing what a healthy crucial conversation looks like helps them move away from silence and violence and toward open communication.
- **Refuse the Sucker's Choice.** When others become abusive because they “need to be honest,” or back off because “it’s important to keep the peace,” the best refuse to believe that disrespect and honesty have to go hand in hand. They know that they can be completely candid and completely respectful.
- **Work on themselves.** Rather than continually pointing to others as the source of all that’s wrong, the best seek honest feedback and then find ways to improve their own skills.
- **Know what to watch for.** Rather than getting caught up in the content of an argument, the gifted watch what’s going on with people as the discussion runs its course. They note when the conversation becomes crucial and pay special attention to signs that others are feeling unsafe.
- **Get in touch with their own style.** By studying their own Style Under Stress™, the best become highly self-aware and continually work on decreasing their vulnerabilities while enhancing their strengths.



Crucial Conversations training teaches this model for achieving synergy, alignment, and agreement.

- **Know how to restore safety.** The mortal enemy of healthy dialogue is fear. When people feel unsafe, they turn to silence and violence—filling a normal conversation with unhealthy debate or awkward silence. Masters of crucial conversations know how to restore safety by fixing misunderstandings, maintaining mutual respect, and establishing mutual purpose.

- **Control their emotions.** Instead of jumping to harsh conclusions that cause them to immediately feel angry or hurt, the best cautiously seek the facts of the situation. Then, by assuming the best of others and looking for their own role in any problem, they enter every conversation in complete control of their feelings.
- **Know how to be persuasive without being abrasive.** Highly valued employees don't merely listen; they also willingly and capably express their views—even if they're controversial, not widely held, or unpopular. What makes these employees particularly valued is that they do so in a way that reduces defensiveness. They know how to candidly express their views and stick to the facts—and when they do share controversial conclusions, they share their opinions in a way that encourages others to share differing points of view. When they speak, others listen.
- **Help others stay in dialogue.** When others start to move to silence or violence, the best at crucial conversations help colleagues move away from their strong and emotional conclusions and back to their observations—where they can calmly discuss the facts and make the best choices.
- **Serve as a catalyst to synergy.** Under the deft influence of the conversationally gifted, everyone speaks more effectively, everyone is heard, and the resulting solutions are far better than any one individual might have conceived on his or her own. In the presence of the gifted, instead of differences leading to battles, silos, and low morale, differences lead to alignment and synergy.
- **Provide a solution to today's problems.** It's little wonder that people who possess crucial conversations skills are so valued. Not only are they themselves effective, but they're the catalysts to everyone freely speaking their minds. They turn differences into synergy and synergy into corporate effectiveness. That makes them a perfect solution to many of today's pressing problems.



Who Should Participate?

Crucial Conversations training is ideal for individuals who manage people or processes as well as those who have supervisory or cross-functional

management responsibilities. For true change to be achieved, involving teams and even entire organizations is essential. At a minimum, consider attending our public training events. Or bring our training faculty into your organization.

Train-the-Trainer

We advocate leader-led training as the most effective approach for acquiring and retaining new skills. Or use our train-the-trainer program and resource kits which enable your trainers to offer the highest quality in-house training program available today.



COURSE DESIGN

A Step-by-Step Approach

Crucial Conversations training infuses fourteen hours of classroom time with over one hundred and twenty original video clips and examples of situations managed both poorly and well. Expert descriptions of key concepts round out the theoretical aspects of the course. Course pacing is active and engaging, with frequent role plays, intense class participation, personal reflection, planning, and commitment.

From this course participants acquire the skills that help them step up to and handle high-stakes issues.

The Flow

Here's what we do to move training participants from mere familiarity with the subject to eventual mastery of each and every skill. Each training session starts with a

Rich with Real-Life Video Clips



Crucial Conversations training delivers over one hundred and twenty video clips and examples of situations managed both poorly and well.



Participants are sure to leave training with the ability to spot bad behaviors and enact good behaviors—in personal and professional situations alike.



A proven approach, video-based training moves training participants from mere familiarity with the subject to eventual mastery of each and every skill.

principle, teaches one or more skills, and then provides participants with a chance to actually practice the skills in a controlled environment. Next, participants apply the skills to real issues they deal with every day—identifying what it means to them and how they're going to behave differently. Then they commit to implementing the skills back at work. Finally, participants implement the skills and report back on what happened.

The goal, of course, is not only to provide training, but to help people master the same high-leverage tools routinely used by top performers. Once again, the focus is on teaching the skills that lead to individual, team, and organizational effectiveness.

The Delivery

Crucial Conversations training is not only powerful, relevant, and engaging, it's also easy to deliver. Your options include:

- Send individual contributors, leaders, or your in-house trainers to one of our regularly scheduled public courses. In this two-day course, learn from Master Certified Trainers while mixing with peers from other organizations.
- Certify your in-house trainers in our train-the-trainer program—which continues on days three and four of each of our public courses.
- Bring this training in-house with our certified trainers, your own trainers, or your internal leaders and managers. Our train-the-trainer program and resource kits enable your trainers to offer the highest quality in-house training program available today.
- In-house courses may be spaced over multiple training sessions or delivered back-to-back over two days.



The Crucial Conversations Leader's Resource Kit provides certified trainers with all they need to install the integrated presentation on a laptop computer, prepare to conduct a training course, brush up on Crucial Conversations skills, and successfully conduct a facilitated classroom training.

Our training design makes this course flexible and easy to deliver. Integrating the best of high-tech digital technology with high-touch group dynamics, course activities vary from watching and discussing video examples to developing personal plans, to participating in fast-paced group exercises, to actually practicing the skills. At the end of every session, participants walk away with important skills that they'll master. And once again, keeping our original goal in mind, they learn skills that make them more valuable to your organization.

Award-Winning Technology

Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of Crucial Conversations training lies in a CD-ROM-based Instructional Layering™ technology that allows for maximum flexibility. Concepts, summaries, setups, and video examples are projected to a screen. How much is revealed, which exercises are used, even which video examples are displayed are within the control of the trainer. Newer trainers, for instance, often choose to reveal detailed instructions. Seasoned professionals, in contrast, will draw from their memories. Instructional layering includes:

- Video scenario branching that allows you to customize your presentation from the boardroom to the shop floor.
- Instructional drill downs that reveal multiple additional levels of detail.
- Video clips of author explanations to further illustrate important concepts.
- Branches that allow for both continuous and spaced learning.



Crucial Conversations won “Training Product of the Year” in 2004 from Human Resource Executive magazine.

RESEARCH OVERVIEW

Teaching Best Practices

Crucial Conversations training began as a journey into organizational change with one goal in mind: to make companies more successful. Conducting three parallel research efforts (over the past twenty-five years), spending more than ten thousand hours examining influence masters, and carefully studying twenty-five thousand top influencers, we have confirmed our hypothesis: Enhance individual skills around crucial conversations, then spread these skills across organizations, and everything gets better.

Did this nontraditional strategy work? Did focusing on crucial skills rather than strategies or systems actually make a difference? Absolutely. To date, more than 300,000 people have benefited from our training. Contact your Crucial Conversations representative to learn for yourself.



Frequent conference speakers, subject-matter experts, consultants to the Fortune 500, and the bestselling authors of Crucial Conversations training are Kerry Patterson, Joseph Grenny, Al Switzler, and Ron McMillan (L to R).

Participant Materials

Course participants receive the following materials during the course to provide the best possible classroom experience and to ensure transference and retention of the skills being taught.

- *Crucial Conversations Participant Toolkit* (224-page training workbook)
- *Crucial Conversations Action Planner*
- Contract cards
- Model cards
- A copy of *Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes are High*
- Crucial Conversations Audio CD Companion (6-CD audio workout for strengthening Crucial Conversations skills)
- A subscription to the Crucial Skills Reminder, a weekly e-mail service
- A follow-up process that includes multiple Web resources (a self-scoring *Style Under Stress* self-assessment, video examples, downloadable samples, and more)
- Access to our complete line of books, audio companion CDs, and Web Seminars at www.crucialskills.com



T R A I N I N G

More Crucial™ Skills

Interested in making a difference in your team or organization around accountability, performance, and execution? Then check out our most recent training course and book, *Crucial Confrontations: Tools for Resolving Broken Promises, Violated Expectations, and Bad Behavior* (McGraw-Hill 2004), another *New York Times* bestseller and companion to *Crucial Conversations*.



"Hey, if you read only one 'management' book this decade, I'd insist that it be *Crucial Confrontations*."

— Tom Peters, author of *Re-Imagine! Business Excellence in a Disruptive Age*

"Revolutionary ideas . . . opportunities for breakthrough . . ."

— Stephen R. Covey, author of *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*

"Unleash the true potential of a relationship or organization and move it to the next level."

—Ken Blanchard, coauthor of *The One Minute Manager*

"The most recommended and most effective resource in my library."

— Stacey Allerton Firth, Vice President Human Resources, Ford of Canada



COMPANY OVERVIEW

About VitalSmarts

An innovator in best practice training and consulting research, VitalSmarts delivers significant improvements to the results companies care about most. For more than twenty-five years, the founders of VitalSmarts have researched methods for bringing about systematic and lasting change. Based on this ongoing research, VitalSmarts has helped thousands of organizations, including more than three hundred of the Fortune 500, realize quick, hard-hitting results through its award-winning training programs in a way that no other training company yet offers.

VitalSmarts currently offers two Crucial Skills training initiatives: Crucial Conversations® and Crucial Confrontations™. Each delivers a powerful set of influence tools that builds teams, enriches relationships, and improves end results.

The founders of VitalSmarts have two *New York Times* bestselling books based on this research of the same titles, *Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes are High* and *Crucial Confrontations: Tools for Resolving Broken Promises, Violated Expectations, and Bad Behavior*.

VitalSmarts also offers keynote speaking, on-site consulting, customized development, and executive mastery retreats.

VitalSmarts™

www.vitalsmarts.com 800.449.5989

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Crucial Conversations Testimonials

Kevin R. Miller's Programs

Corporate Participants

“This course is helping tremendously in the most difficult area of our company today, which is communicating clearly and improving participation of all involved in the issues. I think it will make people more accountable and less frustrated because of misunderstandings and assumptions that people make about what others are or are not thinking. It will improve our relationships and our lives. Kevin is a powerful, skilled facilitator who kept the course moving and tied it in to relevant issues in our company and industry.” -- Ray Fuchs President – Serv Corp International

I have never before attended a development course that has completely changed my life and produced immediate results as Crucial Conversations. Since the training, I have been able to communicate effectively through difficult conversations resulting in a deeper level of understanding, appreciation, and commitment than I have ever before experienced consistently as a direct result of applying the tools and principles of Crucial Conversations. Additionally, Kevin R. Miller is one of the most talented and inspirational trainers I have ever met, with the natural ability to generate excitement and the courage required to change. I have attended several workshops and seminars in admiration of how he has unfolded to my understanding the concepts he was teaching while at the same time created an incredible desire to succeed at them. --Richard D. Jarvis, President, Extraordinary Development, INC

Kevin Miller has presented to our organization and community brief overviews of Crucial Conversations, hour long telephonic multimedia overviews of Crucial Conversations, and the three day long Crucial Conversations Mastery Course. His ability to present, no matter which way he was asked to present, and with or without advance notice, says a lot about his ability and versatility. Kevin is skilled and likable. He knows how to reach an audience and how to keep their attention. He is quick to recognize when someone in the audience is not engaged and soon has them involved. His humor makes his classes fun and keeps people interested. He has in memory a multitude of applicable sayings and adages that he adds to the class at just the right time and place - as if he were a chef adding just the right spice or flavoring to make the meal that much more pleasurable. Kevin believes that the material he shares will make a significant difference in the lives and affairs of the people he teaches and those who attend his classes become very aware of that. I strongly recommend Kevin as someone you can count on to represent you well. --Paul Verhagen, Magistrate, Nenana Alaska and Chair, Nenana Wellness Coalition

It was a great experience to be able to participate on the “Crucial Conversations Seminar”. The opportunity to learn tools to improve communications will benefit not just me, my family and my results but the results of my company. I am already applying parts of the content of the seminar and what I like the most is the fact that is not just something I learned, but it is now part of my thinking as a manager. As solving problems is my main responsibility, Crucial Conversations will lead me to effective solutions quicker. I also appreciate all the material, and the way Kevin presented it, because it makes the application easier and I can refer to as needed.

-- Elizabeth Leite Serv Corp International District Manager, Colorado

I truly enjoyed this course. This community has started to hold crucial conversations, but we stumbled through them. Now I believe we will have the confidence to know that conversations can be not only crucial, but life-altering. We will not be afraid to carry forth the truth, and through are experiences we will grow and excel.

--Ron Madison, Director, Cedar Shore Resort, South Dakota

Education Participants

This has been the most powerful learning experience I've been through in a long time. I will be looking at ways to implement this process in my school district this coming year. All schools should experience this training.

--Mitch Chapel, CEO/Superintendent Lead-Deadwood School District, South Dakota.

Early in the seminar, I came to realize that most of my conversations on the job are crucial. Having a model along with knowledge and skills will help me be a more effective communicator, to carry out crucial conversations and get desired results. Kevin does a tremendous job and tied the material closely to our needs in education. I want to bring this training to my entire staff, including all our faculty!
--James Heinert, Superintendent Meade School District, Sturgis, South Dakota.

As a school superintendent, I find myself in crucial conversations on a regular basis. After this workshop I now feel I have the skills to handle them more effectively. This workshop cuts right to the core of a set of skills that everyone needs to have successful relationships in both our personal and professional lives. The course materials are wonderful and will help to make the experience ongoing and sustaining in your life. We sponsored this seminar and invited the mayor and key business people in our community to attend. It was an outstanding, uniting experience and Kevin is a superb instructor! You are an active participant in role plays and see the skills in action through video clips. I strongly encourage this workshop because I feel the use of these skills can be very rewarding. I feel this experience will be extremely beneficial for all the entities that were able to participate and we will continue a dialogue to try to follow-up and keep the community moving forward.
--Tim Mitchell, Superintendent Chamberlain School District, South Dakota

This program has really stimulated my mind to re-process many past conversations. I can see that this process would be very valuable for every member of my department. We all have crucial conversations on a daily basis and most of the time they don't realize it is happening. Thank you.
--James Harris, Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds, Meade School District, South Dakota.

This was a very valuable tool for any school district. The education industry has close ties to students, parents and community. What better place to learn how to have crucial conversations than within the confines of a school setting? This workshop belongs in every school district. --Mike Paris, Activities Director Meade School District

Crucial Conversations helped me reflect on communication skills and ways to keep a dialogue alive. Totally valuable! --Tim Drone, Sturgis High School Principal (840 students)

Excellent course—Kevin did a great job presenting the material. I will continue to study and use the information. Would be great for our entire staff. --Mike Neubert, Assistant Principal, Sturgis Elementary School and Sturgis Middle School

Crucial conversations build and foster positive relationships to clarify important issues so skills and purpose can be furthered for success and greatness for all students, staff, parents and community. This crucial conversations training is a necessity for all regardless of avocation and system. --Claudette Reichert, Curriculum Director, Meade School District 46-1, Sturgis South Dakota

I feel this course will be valuable both in my personal life as well as my professional life. My work has been mostly with troubled and delinquent youth. The crucial conversations concepts are similar to some of the treatment approaches we use. While this seems to be geared toward adults and businesses, I also feel this could be easily adapted for young people. With some adjustments in technology it would be a valuable tool for schools, treatment facilities, and other youth organizations. Thank you.
--Mike Schreiber, Town of Oacoma and Chamberlain academy

I think the skills and cards and strategies presented are excellent in order to improve and hold meaningful conversations. My hope is to master these strategies in my own life and start to use them in staff relationships. --Pat Tittler, St Joseph Indian School

HealthCare Participants

Crucial Conversations is a powerful program that teaches and reinforces critical communication skills that can be utilized in any professional or personal conversation. I truly believe that if healthcare professionals were educated on the skills taught in Crucial Conversations, the healthcare of all people would be transformed. Healthcare is a high-stake business. Improving communication between care-giver and patient and among healthcare providers will not only improve care but may also save lives. The outcome of so many conversations that take place at our hospital would be different if everyone was trained in the skills taught by Kevin Miller at the Crucial Conversations

Seminar. Kevin has a lot of energy and presents with humor and genuine spirit. I found the seminar to be very motivating as well as inspirational and educational.

-- Beth Jensen, Director of Nursing, Mobridge Regional Hospital, Mobridge South Dakota

Government Participants

What I learned this weekend will not only help me in my job but also in my family life. It opened my eyes to what I need to do to improve my life. I can see it helping many people in their careers and life goals. --Doug Nelson, Mayor, City of Chamberlain, South Dakota

Great course! I was very pleased with the course work, videos and especially Kevin, the instructor. Having our spouses included would be significant and serve to reinforce the concepts... I wish I had been encouraged to invite her. I hope the next time you are here we are moving the community forward. The controlling emotion thing is critical for me...I look forward to using it.

--Gary Powell, City Engineer, City of Chamberlain

I'm the Water Superintendent for the city of Sturgis, South Dakota. After attending Kevin's course on Crucial Conversations, I see how this course will be very valuable in dealing with my staff, co-workers and council board members. --Eldon Christensen

I am the Finance Officer for the city of Sturgis. I think this Crucial Conversations seminar would be very beneficial to all cities. The practices taught can be used in the workplace with co-workers but more importantly with the citizens. I also like the fact that I can use this skill at home. Kevin's techniques are wonderful—a very good “coach” with this program. --Pauline Sumption.

Kevin presented a very enlightening class into dealing with Crucial Conversations. The material provides a very straight forward method to handling critical day-to-day situations. --Bob Kaufman, City Engineer Sturgis, SD.

I found Crucial Conversations to be very powerful. As a husband, I clearly see how my wonderful marriage can become much more. As a father, the time I spend with my children will grow into a deeper relationships for both them and myself. As a lay church leader there will be fewer missed opportunities and clearer understanding. As a school board member I can see the benefits among the board, among staff, and especially between teachers and children. Get this program out everywhere! What a wonderful class! My thanks to Kevin for a great presentation! --Jeff Manley, Public Relations

This has been a very beneficial workshop. Kevin does a terrific job presenting the material and making it fun and easily understandable. I also work for a private agency that provides services for the developmentally challenged population. I feel this agency would really benefit from the Crucial Conversations program. Our agency serves people from the age of children to adults and what better way is there to serve them than providing and enhancing communication skills? I am anxious to use crucial conversations skills in my classroom and also with conversations with co-workers and supervisors. Thanks for a great workshop! --Anji Bergman

Other Key Testimonials from Programs I did not Deliver

Most books make promises. This one delivers. These skills...enabled us to win the largest contract in our industry's history.” Dain M. Hancock, President, Lockheed Martin Aeronautics

“Crucial Conversations is one of the most powerful and useful tools I have found. Chronic communication errors are at the root of so many problems in daily life. I have seen breakthroughs with people with whom all other efforts have failed.” Michael Miller, Director, AT&T

“This is a breakthrough book. I found myself being deeply influenced, motivated, and inspired by this material . . .” Stephen R. Covey, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*

“The skills learned in Crucial Conversations have produced immediate and impactful results in the overall working relationships at all levels in our organization.” Russ Ford, Vice President Operations, Lockheed Martin

About VitalSmarts

The authors of *Crucial Conversations* are cofounders and partners in VitalSmarts, a full-service organizational development and consulting firm. During the past twenty-five years of consulting, they have had a singular mission:

**To help individuals, teams, and organizations
become and remain measurably more vital.**

During this time, our research, consulting, and product development have been focused on the specific and critical behaviors and influences that the most successful people and organizations use to achieve sustainable results. We've worked hard to identify the critical differences between the *good* and the *best*. We call these differences VitalSmarts.™

All of the products and services we provide are designed to help people become more vital. VitalSmarts offers solutions in the areas of:

Communication	Supervision
Teamwork	Personal Effectiveness
Strategic Culture Change	Customer Service
Performance Management	Leadership

Past Clients include over 300 of the Fortune 500 companies, as well as many other corporations, government, and non-profit organizations.

Partial Vital Smarts Client List:

Ford Motor Company	Intermountain Health Care	Lockheed Martin
AT&T	Intel	Hughes Network Systems
Huntsman Packaging	JP Morgan	VA Medical Centers
Louisiana Pacific	Kootenai Medical	Lutheran Medical Center
Celebration Health	XCEL Energy	Cox Communications
US West	Hewlett-Packard	Reliant Energy
Hallmark Cards	Columbian Newspaper	BF Goodrich
Mid American Energy	Lennox Industries	Lexmark International
Texaco	Northrop Grumman	Sprint
Accenture	American Express	EPA
San Diego Zoo	Department of Defense	Oak Ridge National Labs
American Honda	Discover Card	Brigham Young University
Oklahoma Gas and Electric	The US Coast Guard	Key Bank
State Farm Insurance	TRW	INPO