

4. Tackle your toughest challenge today.

"We can have the conversations needed to create the results we say we want in our lives, or we can have all of our reasons why we can't have those conversations. But we can't have both. Reasons or results. We get to choose." (155)

5. Obey your instincts.

"In fierce conversations there is neither a struggle for approval nor an attempt to persuade. There is, instead, an interchange of ideas and sentiments, during which you pay attention to and disclose your inner thoughts while actively inviting others to do the same." (167)

6. Take responsibility for your emotional wake.

"An emotional wake is what you remember after I'm gone. What you feel. The aftermath, aftertaste, or afterglow." (187)

"In the end, the 'problem' belongs to both parties; however, since you and I have little control over how others will react, the most effective position to take is to focus on our own actions. We can say to ourselves: 'This is my problem. From this day forward, I will take responsibility for my emotional wake.'" (189)

7. Let silence do the heavy lifting.

"Did you know that eight out of ten sales proposals fail? And 50 percent of those eight fail because we spent too much time talking about ourselves or the features and benefits of our product, and not enough time talking about the customer and listening to the customer before we explained how wonderful doing business with us would be." (219)

"During company meetings, often the best responses, the most brilliant solutions, come from the person who has sat silently listening for a very long time while the rest of us filled the air with debate." (230)

Fierce Conversations

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Fierce: Robust, intense, strong, powerful, passionate, eager, unbridled

"While no single conversation is guaranteed to change the trajectory of a career, a company, a relationship or a life—any single conversation can." (xix)

The Seven Principles of Fierce Conversations

1. Master the courage to interrogate reality.

"When someone takes you up on your invitation to challenge your strongly held opinion, resist the temptation to defend your idea immediately." (25)

"A simple and effective shift you can make is to remove the word *but* from your vocabulary and substitute the word *and*." (30)

2. Come out from behind yourself into the conversation and make it real.

"Each of us must first answer the question 'Where am I going?' before we can address the question 'Who is going with me?' It is essential not to get those out of order." (83)

3. Be here, prepared to be nowhere else.

"We must learn to rebuild the links that connect people and that provide an effective antidote to cynicism and disaffection...By really asking and really listening. By being with someone, even if only for a brief moment, prepared to be nowhere else." (92)