



We made a club, packed it with cool stuff, and you're on the VIP list.

Issue Six: THE **CONVERSATION** ISSUE

Nothing Increases Communication Like Conversations

Alright, look, let's just get this out of the way: I'm biased. I love conversations.

What I would give to have a journal of the meaningful conversations I've had. When I look back over the years, I see how they have shaped the course of my life and leadership—the encouraging ones, the perspective-shifting ones, even the hard ones I didn't enjoy at the time but desperately needed.

Conversations have shaped me, and I'm willing to bet they've shaped you, too.

Part of my obsession is simple: I love people, and I'm naturally curious. Stories fascinate me. Getting to know people is almost a hobby. I have always loved watching interviews, just listening to how people think, hearing about their experiences, and how they see the world. That hasn't changed. (Plug for David Letterman's Netflix show *My Next Guest Needs No Introduction*.) Listening to people share their perspectives, stories, heartaches, ideas, funny takes, and more reminds you that everyone has depth if you're willing to listen. I love it. But, another reason I love conversations is that I have seen the value and the power of what they can do.



**Because everyone
needs a go-to
stash of good
stuff...**

**Welcome to the
Stuff Club - your**

Conversations enhance relationships. They build influence. They spark better ideas. They surface blind spots. They increase understanding. They even make people happier.

In fact, psychologist Matthias Mehl conducted a study in which volunteers had snippets of their daily conversations recorded. After analyzing the data, a clear pattern emerged: the more meaningful conversations people had, the happier they were likely to be.

Let's bring this into your world, your team, your organization, your leadership.

Here's what amazes me - nearly every organization says, "Communication needs to get better!" Yet they refuse to make room for conversations.

That makes absolutely no logical sense.

If you want better communication, you don't start with tips, techniques, and more emails. Create conversations!

And I'm not just talking about task-driven conversations like, "Did you finish that?" or "When will the project be ready?" Those matter. Work has to get done, but those interactions alone won't build the kind of culture most leaders say they want.

I'm talking about the connecting kind of conversation, the kind that humanizes the people you work with, the kind that builds chemistry instead of just checking boxes, the kind that creates trust before you desperately need it. How can a team possibly work together effectively and build any kind of connection without having frequent conversations?

That's why I like to use the word (and yes, I think I made it up) **convernection**.

Conversation + connection. That's the beautiful combination. That's where effective culture is built.

There are all kinds of conversations, coaching conversations, connection conversations, feedback conversations, discovery conversations, but at the core of all of them is intentional engagement: slowing down long enough to listen, talk, and ask one more question. Choosing curiosity over assumption.

Over the next few weeks, I challenge you to be intentional. Create conversations. Not forced. Not awkward. Just intentional. Make space. Protect it. Watch what happens. If you feel like you're "not good at conversations," that's okay. This isn't a personality

fix for leadership stuff!

Consider it your all-access pass to tools and treasures that make leadership (and life) a little easier, smarter, and way more fun.

"Be brave enough to start a conversation that matters."

Margaret Wheatley

Click here for a cool looking graphic of this quote!

contest. Conversation is a skill, and like any skill, it can be developed. Read. Practice. Get some help and coaching.

The number one enemy of meaningful conversations is busy. Busy convinces us we don't have time. Busy tells us efficiency is more important than engagement. Busy keeps us transactional when what we really need is relational. Don't let busy win. Don't let busy rob you of something that is genuinely life-changing. BUSY IS MY ENEMY! (Perhaps a future issue.)

It is hard in an article to convey the passion I feel for this. Again, I am biased, but I also know the power of conversations. I have seen what conversations can do to a relationship, a team, a culture, and to leadership.

At the end, we have included some fun challenges for you to use with your team. Read the intro to each one and figure out a creative way to use them. They are all designed to help create conversations.

As always, if you have questions or need anything more to help make this happen, please let us know.

Nothing builds communication like conversations. Now go start a conversation. It might just change everything.

Steve

TAKE THE CHALLENGE!

+ Conversation Bingo

+ 30/30 Conversation Challenge

+ Conversation Schedule

“Ultimately, the bond of all companionship, whether in marriage or friendship, is conversation.”

Oscar Wilde

Click here for a cool looking graphic of this quote!

STUFF TO READ

short stuff

Read these articles and think about the questions. Then, send the article links to the leaders around you. Once they have read it, create some discussion around the included questions.

The Psychology Behind Good Conversations in the Workplace

Open Blend

1. Think about the last meaningful conversation you had at work. What made it feel safe, or not safe, to speak honestly? What is one small thing we could do as a team to make conversations feel more open and less risky?
2. How can I create a conversational environment where my team feels genuinely safe to share concerns, ideas, and feedback without fear of judgment?
3. Am I guiding conversations effectively so that they stay constructive rather than reactive? Could I use a framework like GROW (Goal, Reality, Obstacles, Way Forward) more consciously?
4. When challenging topics come up, do I notice myself reacting emotionally? What strategies can I use to stay calm and thoughtful (and encourage others to do the same)?
5. How often do our conversations end with clarity—and how often with “good talk” but no follow-through? What’s one simple habit we could adopt to make sure conversations lead to action?

[Click here to read](#)

Use This Harvard Professor's TALK Method to go from Boring Small Talk to Deep, Meaningful Conversations Inc.

T — Topics

Before a conversation, do I intentionally choose topics that invite meaning or connection, rather than defaulting to safe but shallow small talk?

A — Asking

Am I asking open, thoughtful questions that help the other person share more about their thinking, experience, or priorities?

L – Levity

How do I use warmth, lightness, or appropriate humor to make conversations feel more human and less transactional?

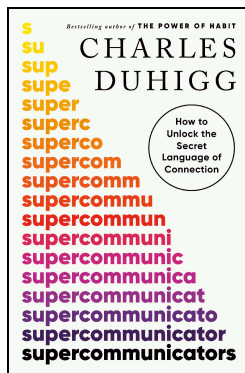
K – Kindness

In this conversation, what would it look like to lead with kindness so the other person feels heard, respected, and valued?

[Click here to read](#)

long stuff

Book Recommendations



Supercommunicators
Charles Duhigg



Fierce Conversations
Susan Scott

"One good conversation can shift the direction of a life forever."

[Click here](#) for a cool looking graphic of this quote!

STUFF TO WATCH

Watch these by yourself or with your team. Take time to time to journal thoughts or create conversations.



The Science Behind Drastically Better Conversations

Charles Duhigg - TedXTalk (Watch time: 12:57)



The 3 Mistakes People Make in Hard Conversations (and How to Avoid Them)

EntreLeadership (Watch time: 12:55)



10 Ways to Have a Better Conversation

Celeste Headlee - Ted (Watch time: 11:45)

"Conversation is catalyst for innovation."

John Seely Brown

[Click here](#) for a cool looking graphic of this quote!

STUFF TO LISTEN TO

Budge

Episode 41 - The NO Danger Zone: Creating a culture in which people can come to work and be the best version of themselves

Budge is **The Scooch Project's** very own podcast — get ready to hear plain talk and everyday thoughts about leadership!

BUDGE PODCAST

STUFF TO GO TO

Check out these **Scooch Leadership Labs**: a two-day power-up for your leadership *and* personal development! Think of it as a creative workshop meets team huddle — where bold ideas, real talk, and hands-on challenges collide. You'll leave energized and ready to lead with purpose (and maybe have a little fun, too)."

Upcoming Events:

March 24-25 | Seattle, WA

April 27-28 | Irvine, CA

May 14-15 | Washington, DC

October 6-7 | Wichita, KS

MORE INFO

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We would love to hear your questions or comments. Please let us know [here](#).

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