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## BOOK REVIEW

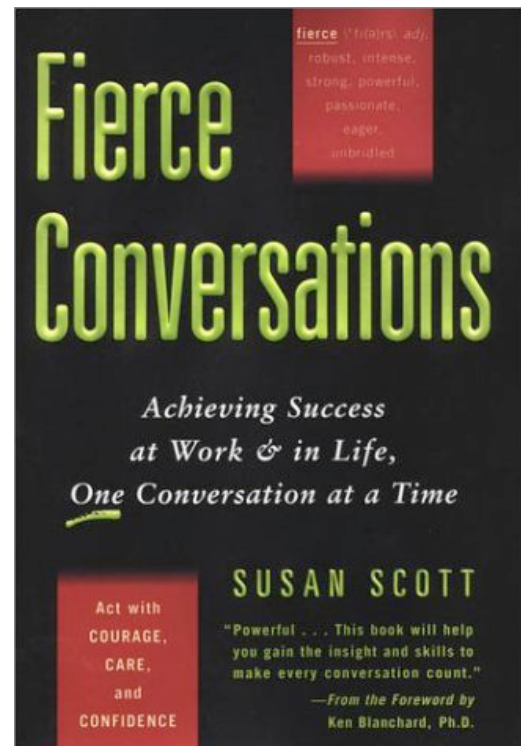
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### "Fierce Conversations: Achieving Success at Work & in Life, One Conversation at a Time" by Susan Scott

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[Paperback for around US\$12.03  
on [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) for a new copy;  
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When you see the title of this book and see the word 'Fierce', you probably think of something not particularly good. Things like menace, threats, cruelty or even barbarism might cross your mind when reading the title. Well, the author of this book, Susan Scott, has defined this word on the cover of the differently. Instead, fierce refers to robust, intense, strong, powerful, passionate, eager and unbridled. In short, the author depicts a fierce conversation as one that comes out from behind ourselves into the conversation itself and makes it real. If you are one of the many people who usually feel that there is a great need to have fierce or meaningful conversations, but didn't have the chance or courage to do so, you should take your time to check this book out. According to her, it is a book that will

help you gain enough insight as well as powerful skills that will make your every conversation count.

The author wants you to understand that, fierce conversations do not only apply when doing business alone, but also when dealing with colleagues, employees, family members and friends. As you have probably come to find out, lack of meaningful conversations is brought about by the fear of being rejected, of receiving retaliation, being informed of your own mistakes or even hurting the ones around you. In this book, you will find out the various ways in which you can have conversations that will not only change your own life, but the lives of those who are around you as well. This book will be very helpful to you, especially if you usually find it hard to express yourself to others. It will also make it easier for you to relate with other people who may find it hard to express themselves. That's not all! You will also gain insight on how you should deal with passive-aggressive people.

As a reader, you probably need to understand the purpose of this book. In short, the author wants you to achieve four outcomes: tackle through challenges, enrich through relationships, provoke learning, and interrogate reality. In order for you to achieve all these, the author has outlined 7 principles or outcomes that you should be aware of. They are as follows: -

1. Master the courage to interrogate reality.
2. Come out from behind yourself into the conversation and make it a reality.
3. Be here, prepared to be nowhere else.
4. Tackle your toughest challenge today.
5. Obey your instincts.
6. Take responsibility for your emotional wake.
7. Let silence do the heavy lifting.

The author goes ahead to inform her readers about the top ten lessons that every manager should learn from 'Fierce Conversations.' The first thing to learn from the book is that, fierce is an attitude, a manner of conducting business, a way of leading and definitely a way of life. The second lesson is

that you should avoid blame by modifying your language simply by replacing the word 'but' with 'and.' The third lesson implies that a conversation should not be about the relationship, but it should be the relationship.

The fourth lesson that managers should know from this book is that unreal conversations are incredibly expensive for both organizations and individuals, so whoever said that talk is cheap was very mistaken. Take note of the fifth lesson too that states that you should teach yourself to talk with people, not at them. At number six, utilize silence to slow down a heated conversation so that you can be able to comprehend what the conversation is really all about. You should let silence teach you how to feel.

The seventh lesson from the book is all about listening and acting on your instincts, rather than ignoring them for fear that you could either be wrong or that you could be offending someone. The eighth lesson teaches you to listen more for emotions and intent, rather for just content during the conversations that you may be involved in. The ninth lesson informs you of how burnouts occur. The author states that they usually occur when one tries to solve the same problem over and over again. Last but not least, you should keep in mind that a problem named, is as good as a problem solved. There you have them, the top ten important lessons that managers should learn.

This is a book that will captivate you from the first written page to the last. Susan Scott has given you the principles that will make a significance difference while at home, in the office, in your relationship and most of all, in understanding yourself better.

[Dr Darryl Cross is a clinical and organisational psychologist as well as a credentialed executive and personal coach. He is also an author, international speaker and university lecturer. Dr Darryl assists people to find their strengths and reach their goals. Further information on Dr Darryl can be seen at [www.DrDarryl.com](http://www.DrDarryl.com)]