

A photograph of three women in a conference setting. The woman on the left has short brown hair and is wearing a dark jacket with a red lanyard that says 'TOP-CLASS INTERNATIONAL'. The woman in the middle has short grey hair and glasses, wearing a white shirt. The woman on the right has dark hair and is wearing a grey top with a red scarf, looking at a laptop. They are all looking towards the right side of the frame. In the background, other people are seated at tables, and the room has large windows.

An Introduction to Conversational Leadership

**HKKMS/KMIRC half day conference
Nov 2014**





Henry of Germany giving a lecture at the University of Bologna in the 14th century

**Have you ever questioned the lecture as
a means of learning?**



Show me a Professor of
Education ... who
lectures, and I'll show you
a hypocrite who doesn't
read the research

Donald Clarke, PlanB Learning





**Gurteen Knowledge Café
Strand Palace Hotel
Sept 2002**

Global Knowledge Cafés

- Run them all over the world
- Interesting cultural issues
- Format always works
- People naturally love to talk



Organizational Conversation



Conversation permeates our organizational lives

Organizational Conversation is the myriad of conversations, both formal and informal, that take place everyday, minute to minute, within an organization.

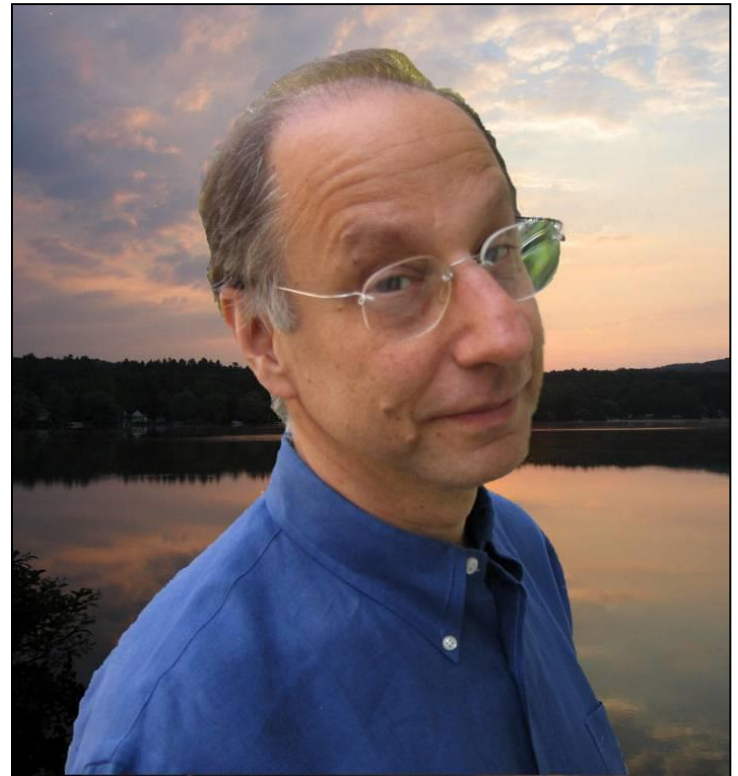


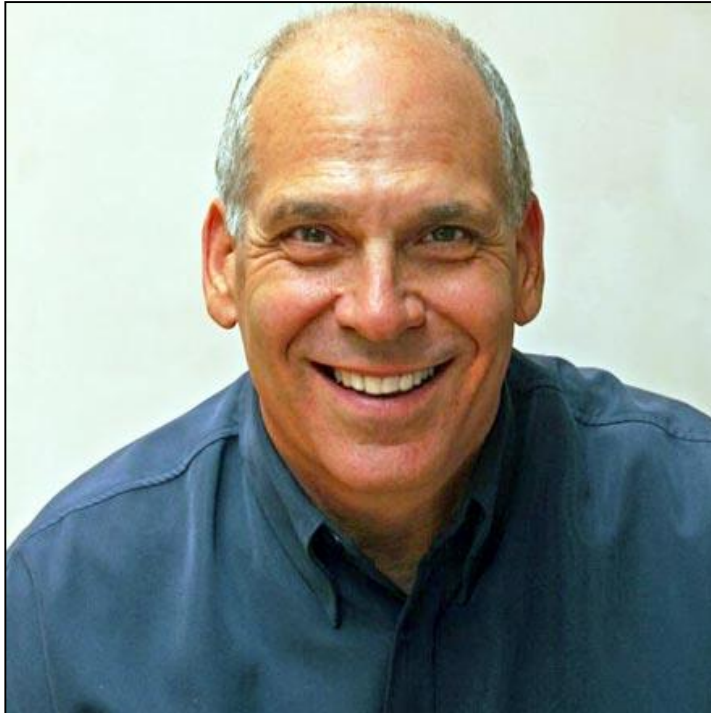
Conversation is the life-blood of an organization

Business is a conversation
because the defining work of
business is **conversation** -
literally.

And 'knowledge workers' are
simply those people whose job
consists of having interesting
conversations.

David Weinberger
The Cluetrain Manifesto





Conversations are the way workers discover what they know, share it with their colleagues, and in the process create new knowledge for the organisation.

In the new economy,
conversations are the most important form of work ... so much so that the conversation is the organisation.

Alan Weber
Harvard Business Review

**Our most effective KM tool is
conversation**

The words we choose, the
questions we ask, and the
metaphors we use to explain
ourselves

are what determine our success in
creating new knowledge

as well as sharing that knowledge
with each other.

Nancy Dixon
Common Knowledge



Conversation is Action



**How some organizations are tapping
into the power of conversation
(and you could too)**



Transform Meetings

- A meeting can get chaotic when you try to explore ideas and make decisions at the same time
- Breaking it into two separate meetings can greatly improve things
- Megan Morys, Harwell, Oxford





Interview with Megan Morys, Harwell, Oxford
at a Knowledge Café Workshop
Royal Society of Arts, London 2012

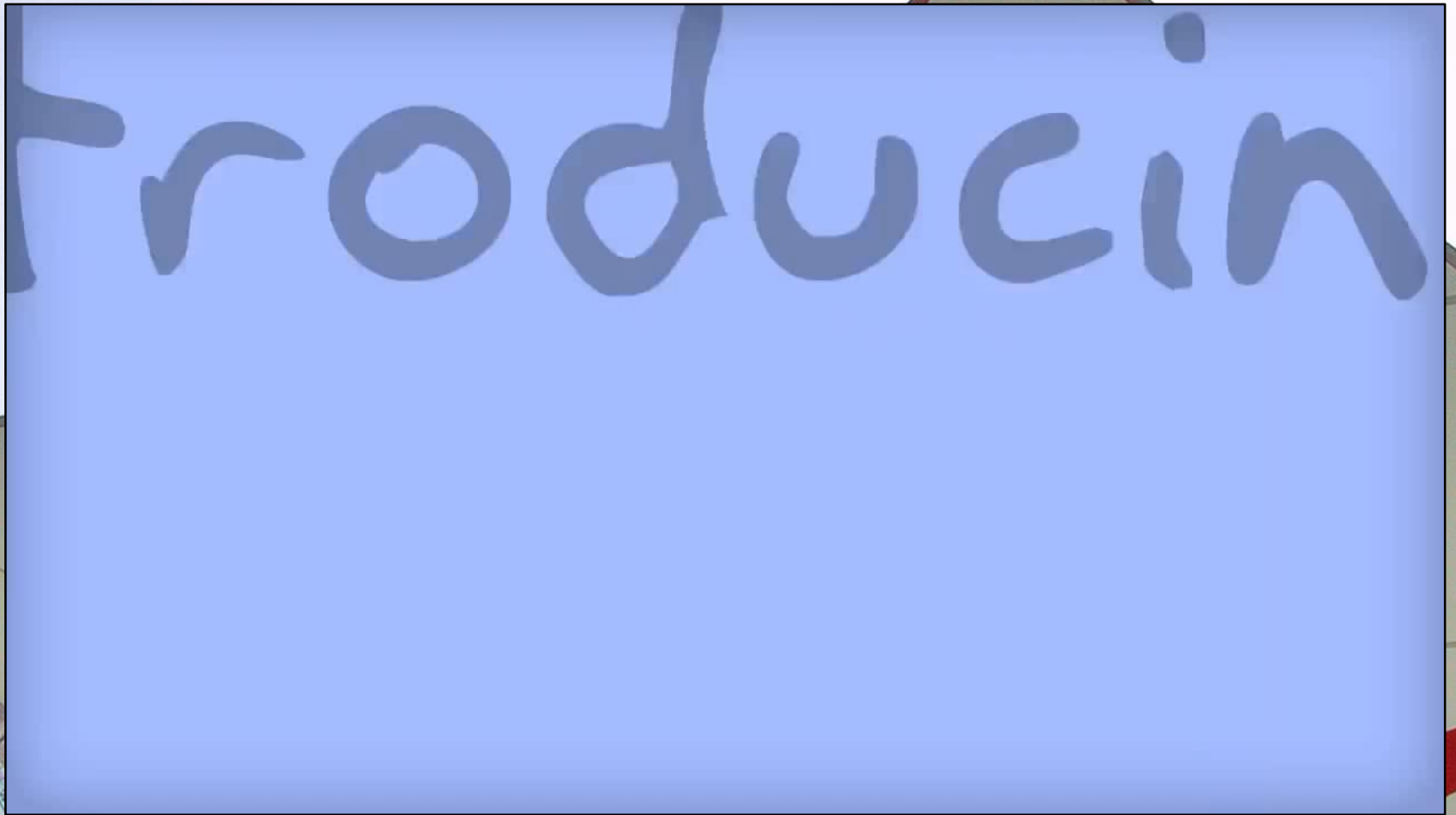


Randomised Coffee Trials (RCTs)

Randomised Coffee Trials

- A Randomised Coffee Trial is a simple way to bring people together in pairs at random from across an organization to have coffee once a month
- Some RCTs are spent entirely on work-related matters, others are entirely personal in nature
- The coffee meeting can even be via Skype as with the Red Cross Red Crescent



The background of the slide is a photograph of a large sailboat, likely a Red Cross ship, with a prominent red cross on its white sail. The word "Producing" is written in a large, blue, cursive font across the top half of the image, partially obscured by a blue rectangular box.

Producing

Red Cross Red Crescent
Randomised Coffee Trials

Institutionalizing Serendipidity

RCTs give people an 'excuse' to meet & build connections with other people in the organization

People from different parts of the organization discover unexpected synergies between their work

Increase their level of comfort for later approaching each other to potentially collaborate

Nesta...



Institutionalising
serendipity

Nesta is an innovation charity with a mission to help people and organizations bring great ideas to life

Breaking down Silos

- Bank of England
 - One Bank
- British Library
 - One British Library

Organizations running RCTs

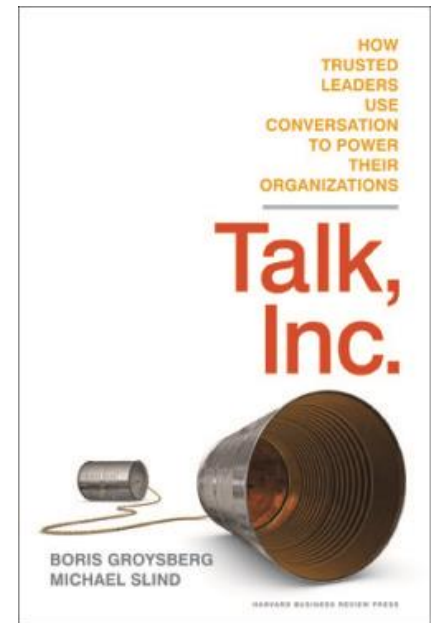
- UK Cabinet Office
- Dept. of Education
- Scottish Government
- Surrey County Council
- National Audit Office
- Bank of England
- British Library
- UK Trade & Investment (UKTI)
- Mars
- Royal Society of Arts
- Red Cross Red Crescent
- KHDA (Dubai)




Conversational Leadership



“What if, and I know this sounds kooky, we communicated with the employees.”



A man with glasses and a checkered shirt is speaking into a microphone. He is standing in front of a large projection screen. The screen displays text about conversational leadership. The man is holding a microphone in his right hand and gesturing with his left hand. The screen behind him has a white background with black text. The text is centered and reads: **Conversational Leadership** is a style of working where everyone in an organization understands the transformative power of conversation. They take a conversational approach to the way that they connect, relate and work with each other. David Gurteen.

Conversational Leadership is a style of working where everyone in an organization understands the transformative power of conversation.

They take a conversational approach to the way that they connect, relate and work with each other.

David Gurteen

Conversational Leaders

- Modify their **behavior** to take a conversational approach to the way that they work and interact with each other.
- Are **conversational catalysts** and purposefully nurture and stimulate the natural conversations that take place in the organization.
- Help build a **strong social fabric** and a sense of community by connecting people and helping them build relationships with each other.
- Practice daily **conversational methods** such as peer assists, after action reviews and knowledge cafés.
- Are **conversational architects** - they identify the strategic conversations that need to take place in the organization; the questions to trigger them and design the processes to convene and host them.



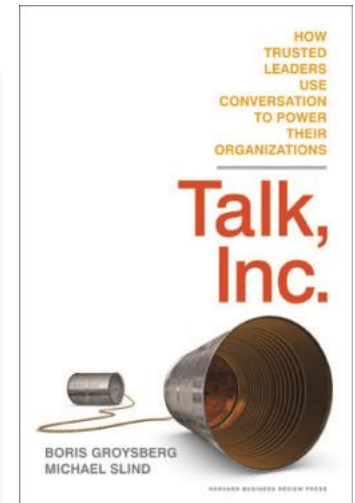
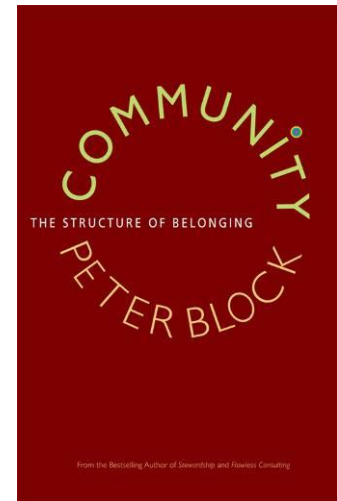
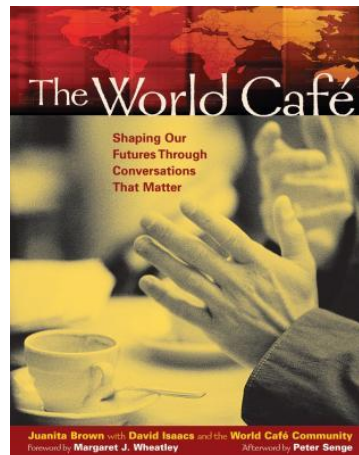
I view anyone with a sphere of influence as a “leader,” whether or not she has that explicit job description

Daniel Goleman

Who is talking about Conversational Leadership?

- World Café: Juanita Brown & David Isaacs
- Talk Inc. by Boris Groysberg & Michael Slind
- Nancy Dixon
- Henry Mintzberg
- Gervase Bushe
- Peter Block

If you would like
to learn more
drop me an email
david.gurteen@gurteen.com



**COACHING
OURSELVES**



Question



What are the possibilities for transforming our organizations through taking a more conversational approach to the way we work?

www.gurteen.com



**David GURTEEN
Gurteen Knowledge
Fleet, United Kingdom**

**Tel: +44 7774 178 650
Email: david.gurteen@gurteen.com**