



Dialogue: Rediscover the Transforming Power of Conversation

Linda Ellinor, Glenna Gerard

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The practice of Dialogue, though as old as mankind itself, is revolutionizing today's business world. Dialogue is a way of conversing and thinking together that dissolves barriers and creates organizational cultures energized by collaboration and partnership.

Peter Senge has called Dialogue an important tool for promoting team learning and fostering shared meaning and community within an organization. Now Dialogue: Rediscover the Transforming Power of Conversation shows leaders how talking about what matters can pave the way to new heights of creativity and productivity.

Linda Ellinor and Glenna Gerard, cofounders of their consulting firm, The Dialogue Group, draw upon their combined 50 years of experience in organizations to show how Dialogue can change the way we work by widening information arteries so that employees at every level begin to think along "leadership" lines and take responsibility for how their actions affect the whole organization. Diversity becomes a high-leverage resource; conflict becomes a creative opportunity. Leading companies including Levi Strauss, Shell, Hewlett-Packard, Motorola, and AT&T are unleashing the wellspring of power that flows naturally from the trust, mutual respect, and spirit of inquiry that are at Dialogue's core.

In an organizational world fragmented by competition, takeovers, downsizing, and reengineering, the inspiration and meaning that energize us and make work satisfying are often hard to come by. Linda Ellinor and Glenna Gerard offer clear strategies and guides for rekindling our spirits and renewing our ability to work creatively with the key dilemmas we face every day. They engage us in practical reflections and exercises to help bring the value of Dialogue into all our conversations.

The strategies they describe for integrating dialogic principles into any group can help leaders at every level:

- Create and sustain collaborative partnerships that foster shared responsibility and accountability
- Develop skills to build the trust needed to surface "undiscussable" issues that block creativity and learning and diminish effectiveness
- Open doors to new and creative ways of thinking and problem solving
- Get at the roots of recurring problems
- Reawaken the meaning, satisfaction, and inspiration in work

Dialogue will provoke your thinking about:


- What is involved in "being the change you wish to see" in organizations, and how can Dialogue help?
- What is the price/reward of having conversations that get to the root of things?
- How do we ask important questions so as to see the larger picture before crafting our responses?
- How can dialogue foster self-organization and systems thinking?

Dialogue shows how to tap into the collective wisdom essential to high functioning work environments.

"An extraordinarily important book, Dialogue challenges us to examine our basic assumptions about the fundamental purpose and method of conversation, and offers rich resources on how to find greater meaning

and joy in our everyday encounters. It's the best book yet on a subject of ever-increasing importance." —Jim Kouzes, coauthor of *The Leadership Challenge* and Chairman Tom Peters Group/Learning Systems.

"Many people are talking about dialogue these days. But there are few places to turn to learn the practices that might enable it to happen. This book is an excellent starting point for anyone interested in practicing dialogue and learning ways to introduce it in the settings in which they live and work.

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