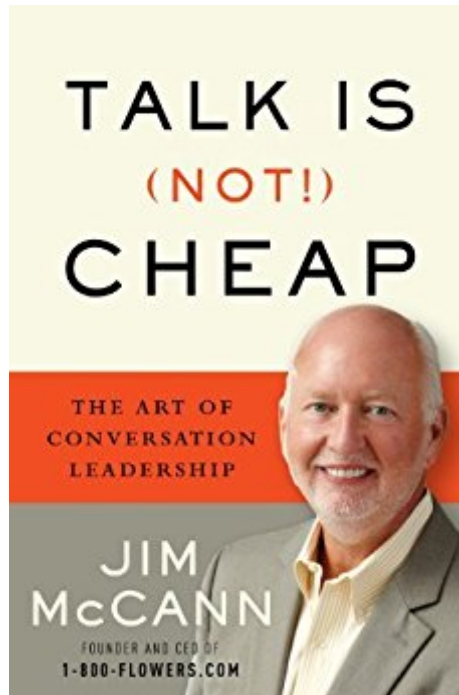


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# Talk Is (Not!) Cheap: The Art Of Conversation Leadership



## Synopsis

Jim McCann has spent his career talking. For McCann, the founder and CEO of the world's largest florist, 1-800-Flowers.com, being open and ready to speak to a variety of audiences is his most powerful leadership tool. In *Talk Is (Not!) Cheap*, McCann illustrates how the art of conversation leadership—the process he developed to engage others and create forward momentum in the workplace—can be used to inspire, innovate, and win. Using a blend of how-to and insightful personal stories, this book argues that the gift of gab may just be the most critical (and undervalued) skill set in today's workplace. Lessons include how to overcome hesitation when diving into conversation with strangers and knowing when to just shut up and listen.

McCann's practical advice comes from twenty years of experience as the voice of small business, and from meeting and exchanging ideas with other influential business leaders around the world. Whether you're interacting with customers, pitching new business to a client, or seeking to be heard within your own company, *Talk Is (Not!) Cheap* will strategically transform the way you communicate and listen. With McCann as your guide, this important book will teach you how the art of conversation leadership can improve and joyously change your life.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Talk is (Not!) Cheap: The Art of Conversation Leadership By Jim McCann I must admit the title caught my eye, and I wanted to read it to improve my own conversation leadership style. There is some good, and some not so good in the book. Firstly the good. It is a quick and easy read, with a few gems to find that will improve your conversation skills. It would be ideal for a sales manager to pass onto his sales team to read, as they would find some gems in relating to customers. It does provide a common sense guide of home truths to apply to any conversation. It has ten principles or tips, with the best being common sense "stop talking and start conversing. Start listening to each other. Start asking questions to get more information." The not so good, is that it not a leadership guide or manual to improve leadership conversation. It is more a testimony of Jim McCann's business success. It is a blatant promotion of his company. The book was disappointing in that it didn't deliver what the cover promised. As for the ten principles, noting you couldn't get from google, or talking with your grandfather.

I watch the conversation and find myself dying to get into it | Watching it without being a part of it is torture. • says Jim McCain CEO of 1-800-Flowers. Jim grew up in Queens and is a natural extrovert and conversationalist. He honed his conversation techniques and learned the value of conversation at the kitchen table in Queens from his relatives and in particular his Grandma. A quick easy read that was sometimes enjoyable and interesting. It was part memoir, part case study for 1-800-Flowers, part how-to, and part blueprint for Jim's Conversation Leadership beliefs. Some of the material is very basic, like listen more. Some of it is more insightful like, "The customer may not always be right, but he's always the customer." The stories are interesting and are there to back his principles. He witnessed the conversation in which Mark Zuckerberg donated \$100M to NJ education. He says, sometimes conversation is not the fastest way to communication, but in the long run can be most efficient. I appreciated what Jack Welch said to Jim, "Have you ever heard someone say, 'I wish we'd waited another six months to fire the bastard?'" There are logic spots and places I wanted to argue with, yet if you can accept this book as it is, Jim's success story and his way of seeing and being in the world, it's engaging. It's missing some steps if you are not naturally extroverted. There are ten "McCann Principles" and a chapter dedicated to each. I support most, Chapter 10 "Talk Your Way out of Trouble with the McCann Principle number ten being: Sometimes the best offense is a good conversation. This would be a good book for an extroverted new entrepreneur wanting to learn more about Jim and the Art of Conversation Leadership.

Written by Jim McCann, frequent spokesperson and founder of the 1-800-Flowers.Com brand, "Talk Is (Not!) Cheap" reads like an introductory textbook on business communication. The writing style is breezy and friendly and approachable, and I enjoyed some of the personal anecdotes; but most of the advice is obvious and pragmatic. The book is also a blatant promo for the 1-800-Flowers business, more of a PR vehicle than an advice book with widespread appeal. Conversation is the way we connect with each other, whether it be on a personal level or a business level. McCann gives the advice to young would-be entrepreneurs: "stop talking and start conversing. Start listening to each other. Start asking questions to get more information." Though it sounds easy, he does have a point; how many times have you been "talked at" rather than "communicated with"? A good conversation requires asking a few starter questions, then listening and prompting. McCann seems like someone you would like to meet; he would probably know how to instantly make you feel comfortable and get you talking about almost anything - surely a great trait to have in any realm - business or otherwise. The book contains useful commentary on the use of social media in conversation. Rather than decrying social media and the internet as the death of conversation and communication, McCann recognizes it as the tool of human connection - which is surely the foundation of all conversations. I highlighted and underlined many ideas and quotes in the book, including "Everyone needs interaction and connection." It is truly the universal need of all of us, and McCann recognizes and articulates it thoroughly in this nice little book.

Unless you have the same personality as the author, you won't get much out of this book. According to a study, about 25-40% of the population is introvert. Perhaps the book is intended for those fit into the 60-75% of the population. For many introverts, talk is definitely not cheap.

Talk is (not) Cheap is largely an egocentric infomercial for his company by Jim McCann, the CEO of a online flower delivery service. You can tell right away that McCann is mostly concerned about promoting himself by the fact that the cover of the book has a large photo of him. The advice the book gives is largely common sense about the importance of having conversations with people. McCann also boasts of his relationships with famous people including Jack (Neutron Jack) Welch whose most famous conversation are the words, "You're fired!" • He also mentions the right wing radio commentator, Rush Limbaugh, who never seems to stop talking and Bill Clinton whose most famous words were, "I did not have sex with that woman!" • and "It depends on what the meaning of is, is." • The only worthwhile part of the book is the appendix where some really

worthwhile books are listed. Save your money and buy Purple Cow by Seth Godin or the justly famous The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People by Stephen Covey.

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