



# Better Conversations: Coaching Ourselves and Each Other to Be More Credible, Caring, and Connected

By Jim Knight

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**Better Conversations: Coaching Ourselves and Each Other to Be More Credible, Caring, and Connected** By Jim Knight

**Check out The Better Conversations trailer:** <https://youtu.be/y3FrWTXC8Uw>

“I thought I knew how to have a conversation; I’ve had millions of them. Some were good, others not so much so. But I want to have GREAT conversations, and Jim Knight has taught me how. The proof is in: better conversations are possible and the results are worth the investment.”

--DOUGLAS FISHER

Coauthor of *Rigorous Reading* and *Unstoppable Learning*

***Because conversation is the lifeblood of any school***

You don’t want this book—you need this book. Why this confident claim? Think about how many times you’ve walked away from school conversations, sensing they could be more productive, but at a loss for how to improve them.

Enter instructional coaching expert Jim Knight, who in *Better Conversations* honors our capacity for improving our schools by improving our communication. Asserting that our schools are only as good as the conversations within them, Jim shows us how to adopt the habits essential to transforming the quality of our dialogues.

As coaches, as administrators, as teachers, it’s time to thrive. Learn how to:

- Coach ourselves and each other to become better communicators
- Listen with empathy
- Find common ground
- Build Trust

Our students’ academic, social, and emotional growth depends upon our doing this hard work. It’s time to roll up our sleeves, open our minds, and dare to change for the better of the students we serve. You can get started now

with *Better Conversations* and the accompanying *Reflection Guide to Better Conversations*.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

*"I thought I knew how to have a conversation; I've had millions of them. Some were good, others not so much so. But I want to have GREAT conversations, and Jim Knight has taught me how. The proof is in: better conversations are possible and the results are worth the investment."* (Douglas Fisher)

*"Better Conversations stimulates the mind, spirit, and soul of those who coach, regardless of their role or position, by unpacking and reshaping the mental models that drive how they think, speak, and act. . . I found myself frequently thinking about how helpful this book will be to nearly every human who interacts with others whether in school or beyond."* (Joellen Killion)

*"I read more education books than I care to admit. Some are good, some are bad, and very few are great. Jim Knight's book Better Conversations is BRILLIANT! Insightful, innovative, and practical are the three words that kept coming to me when I was reading and learning from his book. Jim treats the subject of communication as an art and gives all of us, regardless of position or years of experience, practical ways to use our voice to improve the teaching and learning environment, as well as ourselves!"* (Russell J. Quaglia)

*"Better Conversations is just what the title says. Jim Knight moves learning conversations ahead for educators to deepen trust, meaning, and actions. He summarizes current thinking from multiple authors that will make learning for adults and students better. Activities at the end of each chapter can be used for self-reflection, team learning, and schoolwide focus on learning. The vignettes are real issues in schools, which makes this book very important for our profession."* (William Sommers)

*"Doing the Better Conversation study, I think I have started to see a better version of myself, and who doesn't want that? . . . "*

(Ben Collins)

*"The Better Conversations process pushed me to video record myself in the same way that I ask others to engage in video protocols with the purpose of deeper understanding. Reflecting on my experiences felt like a gift I gave myself. I actually savored the time and experience of answering questions and considering my strengths as well as areas in which I can grow."*

(Michelle Murray)

*"I find that I am using the Better Conversations process in all walks of life, not just in professional coaching. I am seeing aspects of my personal life differently because I am focusing on what I can do to control my reactions to situations. It is forcing me to think more about practicing what I preach."*

(Ron Lalonde)

*"I've learned a lot by reading through the materials, practicing the activities, and changing entrenched*

*responses. I have slowed down, learned to listen, and become keenly aware of choices I have in communicating with those I come in contact. This has become a very empowering series of skills.”*

(Julie Coburn)

*“I have been able to carry these practices into conversations with my children, which is really making for some great dialogue. When I talk to them and not judge what they say and truly listen and treat them as equals in the conversation, I find that they share more with me.”*

(Nicole Patton)

*“Video forced me to take a hard look at my coaching skills and practices, as well as my relationships with the staff I work with. I have realized the true power of video through watching myself interact with others, and it has made me more willing and excited to continue using video to improve my communication skills.”*

(Shana Olson)

About the Author

**Jim Knight** has spent more than two decades studying professional learning, effective teaching, and instructional coaching. He is a Research Associate at the University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning and the President of the Instructional Coaching Group.

Jim wrote the first article on the topic of instructional coaching for *The Journal of Staff Development*, and his book *Instructional Coaching: A Partnership Approach to Improving Instruction* (Corwin, 2007) popularized the idea. Jim edited *Coaching: Approaches and Perspectives* (Corwin, 2009) and co-authored *Coaching Classroom Management* (Pacific Northwest Publishing, 2010). Jim’s other books include *Unmistakable Impact: A Partnership Approach to Dramatically Improving Instruction* (Corwin, 2011), *High-Impact Instruction: A Framework for Great Teaching* (Corwin, 2013), and *Focus on Teaching: Using Video for High-Impact Instruction* (Corwin, 2014).

Jim’s articles on professional learning, teaching, and instructional coaching have appeared in journals such as *The Journal of Staff Development*, *Principal Leadership*, *The School Administrator*, *Kappan*, and *Educational Leadership*.

Frequently asked to lead professional learning, Jim has presented to more than 30,000 educators from six continents. He has a Ph.D. in Education from the University of Kansas and has won several university teaching, innovation, and service awards. Jim also writes the Radical Learners blog.

## Users Review

**From reader reviews:**

**Edward Florez:**

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**Jodie Kahl:**

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