

“ DISCOVER  
THE SECRET TO  
GETTING THROUGH  
TO ABSOLUTELY  
ANYONE

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# Just Listen

MARK GOULSTON

FOREWORD BY  
**Keith Ferrazzi**  
AUTHOR OF *NEVER EAT ALONE*  
AND *WHO'S GOT YOUR BACK*

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## ADVANCE PRAISE FOR *JUST LISTEN*

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“I read *Just Listen* on a weekend plane ride, started putting the lessons to work on Monday, and have been using them routinely ever since. I’ve already ordered copies for everyone in Mattel’s senior leadership team and for each of my grown kids.”

—Bob Eckert, CEO and Chairman, Mattel

“For far too many people, introspection is an elusive quality. But in his new book, *Just Listen*, Mark Goulston teaches us the power of introspection. He shows us how to look at ourselves and our relationships with others as a way to unlock powerful insights that can make us more effective at work and at play. You may think of yourself as confident and passionate, but could just as easily be seen by others as arrogant and impulsive. The gap between those perceptions is often the difference between success and failure. Goulston has written an important book to help us bridge that gap and to hone our introspective skills.”

—John Byrne, Executive Editor, *BusinessWeek*

“Communication is not just *saying* something, it’s being heard. Mark Goulston brings new meaning to ‘getting through’ to others. *Just Listen* is the indispensable guidebook for the journey to greater listening, caring, guiding, and fulfillment. We thank you, Mark.”

—Frances Hesselbein, Chairman and Founding President,  
Leader to Leader Institute

“Mark Goulston provides the blueprint for connecting with people and building meaningful relationships in your personal and professional life. This is clearly Mark’s most important work to date and a must-read for anyone focused on improving their personal effectiveness.”

—Wayne Gattinella, President & CEO, WebMD

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“Dr. Goulston brilliantly and practically shows us how to operationalize the ‘Golden Rule,’ treating others the way we would want to be treated.”

—Michael Critelli, retired CEO and Chairman, Pitney Bowes

“For most of my life, I thought I could talk my way out of any problem and into any party. *Just Listen* and Mark’s advice helped me ‘listen my way . . .’ to the next level. This book is an instant classic and a must-read for any business leader.”

—Jason Calacanis, Internet entrepreneur, CEO, Mahalo

“Want to master the one critical skill that’s essential for success in both business and life? Read *Just Listen*. Goulston’s simple, easy-to-apply techniques are powerful—and the results will amaze you.”

—Ivan R. Misner, Ph.D., Founder and Chairman, BNI;  
author of *The 29% Solution: 52 Networking Success Strategies*

“In this time of breathtaking developments in technology, it’s easy to lose sight of what really connects us to one another. Mark Goulston’s easy-to-absorb advice will help the reader build productive relationships at work, and grow closer to family and friends. This compelling mix of how the brain functions and how to break down barriers to effective communication will make you eager to apply Goulston’s practical suggestions. In other words, just read *Just Listen*.”

—Tom Nelson, COO, AARP

“*Just Listen* shows that it’s much less important what you tell others than what you enable them to tell you. Goulston listened very well because this is not only one of the best books, but the easiest and most enjoyable one you could read on the power of listening.”

—Cathy Greenberg, author of *What Happy Women Know*

“To anybody who wants to improve their relationships at home, at work, or in the world, *Just Listen* is a must. Mark Goulston has written a masterpiece of a book that will improve every reader’s life by making it much easier to communicate productively. Just read *Just Listen*.”

—David Feinberg, M.D., M.B.A.; CEO, UCLA Hospital System

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“Mark’s wisdom is not only knowledge-based, but useful. I have read hundreds of books, but few that I can actually apply to my business and relationships. Mark shares real issues and real usable solutions.”

—Stephanie Allen, President  
Food Development, Dream Dinners

“Goulston emanates deep caring like few I have known, and his ability to help us see ourselves without armor is both his gift and his gift to us. This book speaks straight from the heart, and it is now up to us to listen.”

—Josh Waitzkin, author of *The Art of Learning*

“In a world where everyone wants to talk, the secret to success is the art of listening. Some great leaders are excellent speakers, and others are not—but *all* of them are great listeners. In this book, Mark Goulston deciphers the real secrets about listening. *Just Listen* will be one of the most influential books for the next ten years for the business world and beyond.”

—Dr. Andreas Salcher, author of *The Talented Kid and His Enemies*  
and *The Wounded Human*, and co-founder of the  
Sir Karl Popper School

“Full of lively, practical advice that will help you in every interpersonal interaction. Mark Goulston understands that communication is less about strategies and techniques than it is about making meaningful connections with people. His insights into human behavior are real gems.”

—Steven B. Sample, President, University of Southern California,  
author of the best-selling *The Contrarian’s Guide to Leadership*

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**JUST LISTEN**

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# JUST LISTEN

Discover the Secret to Getting  
Through to Absolutely Anyone

MARK GOULSTON

FOREWORD BY KEITH FERRAZZI

*Author of Never Eat Alone and Who's Got Your Back*

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Goulston, Mark.

Just listen : discover the secret to getting through to absolutely anyone / by Mark Goulston ; foreword by Keith Ferrazzi.

p. cm.

Includes index.

ISBN 978-0-8144-1403-3

1. Business communication. 2. Interpersonal communication. I. Title.

HF5718.G68 2010

650.1'3—dc22

2009014386

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Printing number

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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To Warren Bennis, mentor, friend, and inspiration,  
who taught me that when you “deeply listen” and get where people  
are really coming from, and then care about them when you’re there,  
they’re more likely to let you take them where you want them to go.

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In Memory

“If you listen for hurt, fear, and pain or for people’s hopes and dreams,  
it is nearly always there. And when the other person feels you listening  
and *feeling* them, they will let down their guard and open their minds  
and hearts to you.”

—Edwin Shneidman, pioneer in the field of suicide prevention,  
founder of the Los Angeles Suicide Prevention Center, and  
cherished mentor

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And to my readers, that I may pass on this important  
lesson to you.

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## FOREWORD

Managers, CEOs, and salespeople often tell me, “Talking to so-and-so is like hitting a brick wall.”

When I hear those words, I reply: “Stop hitting your head against the wall and look for the loose brick.” Find that loose brick—what the other person really needs from you—and you can pull down the strongest barriers and connect with people in ways you never thought possible.

And that brings me to my friend and colleague Mark Goulston. Mark has an almost magical ability to reach everyone—corporate CEOs, managers, clients, patients, warring family members, even hostage takers—because he always finds the loose brick. He’s a genius at reaching unreachable people and, in this book, you’ll find out just how he does it.

I originally met Mark through his books *Get Out of Your Own Way* and *Get Out of Your Own Way at Work*. His books, his work, and, most importantly, Mark himself so impressed me that I pursued him and now we’re business partners. He’s one of the thought leaders at Ferrazzi Greenlight and a trusted adviser to me. After watching him work, I can tell you why everyone from the FBI to Oprah pays attention when Mark talks about reaching people: his techniques, simple as they sound, *really work*.

Oh, and don’t be put off by the fact that Mark’s a psychiatrist. He’s also one of the best business communicators I’ve ever encountered. Put him in an office where everyone’s at war or the sales team can’t get buy-in from clients or morale and productivity are tanking, and he’ll solve the problem—fast—in a win-win way where everyone comes out ahead.

If you’d like to achieve that kind of success, you’ll find no better guide than Mark. He’s brilliant, funny, kind, and inspiring, and his stories about everyone from unwelcome holiday guests to F. Lee



Bailey make his words as entertaining as they are life changing. So enjoy—and then use your powerful new skillset to turn the “impossible” and “unreachable” people in your life into allies, devoted customers, loyal colleagues, and lifetime friends.

Keith Ferrazzi

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Of all my books, I am proudest of and most enthusiastic about this one. Yet if it succeeds, it will only be because of the wise, caring, loving, critical, and generous input and support of many people.

First and foremost, I thank my readers, patients, clients, and customers, who entrusted me with their outer and inner hopes and fears and enabled me to pass on to you what I've learned from helping them.

I am also grateful to Bill Gladstone and Ming Russell, my supportive and steadfast agents at Waterside Productions, for their input and guidance and for hitting me upside the face when I gave in to a tendency to get in my own way. Many thanks are also due to Ellen Kadin, Executive Editor at my publisher, AMACOM Books, for having the love for this project and sound judgment to say when it was steering off path from delivering on its promise to my readers. The more useful and immediately usable tools you get from this book are largely due to Ellen's capacity as rudder and centerboard for this voyage. I am grateful as well to Alison Blake, whose input aided me in clarifying my message, and to my ever-supportive former editor John Duff at Penguin Putnam.

Thanks are due as well to my close friends and PR specialists extraordinaire—Tom Brennan, Pam Golum, Cherie Kerr, Annie Jennings, and Paxton Quigley. I am very grateful also to Lynne Johnson at *Fast Company*, which carries my "Leading Edge" column and blogs; Marco Buscaglia at Tribune Media Services, which syndicates my "Solve Anything with Dr. Mark" column; and Arianna Huffington (Huffington Post), Matt Edelman (peoplejam), Kelly Ja'don (Basil and Spice), and Marisa Porto (Divorce360) for featuring my blogs and content.

I am also greatly indebted to Keith Ferrazzi, John Kelly, Jeff Kaplan, Jim Hannon, Peter Winick, Kellee Johnson, Bo Manning,

Chris Tuffli, and others I have met and continue to work with at Los Angeles-based Ferrazzi Greenlight. Keith originally wanted to call his killer best-selling book, *Never Eat Alone*, by a different title, *You Can't Get There Alone*. Boy, ain't that the truth! And his most recent book, *Who's Got Your Back*, reinforces how important it is to find people who'll pick you up, tell you the truth, and kick your butt (when you need it).

Because of these individuals' influence, I've opened myself to a world of people who have offered me their help. Of special mention are Martin Addison (Video Arts); Tony Baxter (Disney); Lee Canter; Jason Calacanis (Mahalo); Chris Coffey, Stephen Denning, Marty Edelston and Marjory Abrams (Boardroom); Paul and Sarah Edwards and Bronwyn Fryer (Harvard Business Review); Dave Fuller (Costco Connection); Michael Gervais (Pinnacle Performer); Taavo Godtfredsen (Skillsoft); Katalina Groh (Groh Productions); Shawn Hunter (Skillsoft); Linda Kane (Bank of New York Mellon); Dave Logan (*Tribal Leadership*); Marty Nemko (NPR); Stacy Phillips (Phillips, Lerner, Lauzon and Jamra); Billy Pittard (Lynda.com); Tony Robbins; David Rock (*Neuroleadership*); Karen Salmansohn (*Bounce Back*); Heather Shea Schultz; Edwin Shneidman (UCLA); Leo Tilman (*Financial Darwinism*); Rebecca Torrey (Manatt); Josh ("Bobby Fisher") Waitzkin; and Peter Whybrow (UCLA).

Thanks are due as well to leaders whose most valuable resource is their time, but who nevertheless make time to talk with me: Scott Adelson (Houlihan Lokey); Sharon Allen (Deloitte); Angela Braley (Wellpoint); Jeffrey Berg (ICM); Mike Critelli (Pitney Bowes); Bob Eckert (Mattel); Werner Erhard; Jonathan Fielding (L.A. County Public Health); Jim Freedman (Barrington Associates); Bill George (former CEO, Medtronic and Harvard Business School); Marshall Goldsmith; Jim Goodnight (SAS); Peter Guber (Mandalay); Mark Victor Hansen (Chicken Soup); Frances Hesselbein (Leader to Leader Institute); Leonard Kleinrock (UCLA); Mike Leven (Georgia Aquarium); Jim Mazzo (Advanced Medical Optics); Ivan Misner (BNI); Omar Noorzad (Tri-Cities Regional Center); Tom O'Toole (Hyatt); Bill Quicksilver (Manatt); Carla Sanger (LA's Best); Scott Scherr (Ultimate Software); Jim Sinegal (Costco); Sir Martin Sorrell (WPP); Bob Sutton (Stanford); Larry Thomas (Guitar Center);

Raymond Tye (United Liquors); William Ury (Harvard); David Wan (Harvard Business Publications); and Duane Wall (White & Case).

My deepest thanks and appreciation go to my loving and supporting family, including my wife Lisa and children Lauren, Emily, and Billy, who serve as a never-ending insurance to prevent me from taking myself too seriously, and to my mother Ruth and brothers Noel and Robert and their families for their ongoing love and confidence.

And finally, a Power Thank You to the following people, living and deceased, whose ongoing support for the past decades has been instrumental to my learning and success: David Ackert, Sandy Archer, Rosanne Badowski, Joel Bagelman, Monica Ballard, Stan Barkey, Loretta Barrett, Jordon Bender, Hal Bergman, Davis Blaine, David Booth, Larry Braun, Eric Bruck, Shel Brucker, Jon Campbell, Stan Deakin, Susan Diamond, Kathy Doheny, Jim Dorsey, Albert Dorskind, Steven Drimmer, John Duff, Geoffrey Dunbar, Neil Elmouchi, David and Gail Fogelson, John Fox, Sandy Fox, Ken and Verena Florence, Lynn Franklin, Peter Frost, Gary Garbowitz, Larry Gerber, Selwyn Gerber, Harry Glazer, Roger Goff, Philip Goldberg, Cathy Greenberg, Gordon Gregory, Kevin Gregson, Arlen Gunner, Holly Gustlin, Cyrus Hekmat, Bruce Heller, Brian Hems-worth, Patrick Henry, Cheryl Hodgson, Paul Hynes, Grace Jamra, Annie Jennings, Marty Josephson, Preston Johnson, Joel Kabaker, Brian Katz, Jim Kennedy, Nancy Kent, Jeff Kichaven, John King, Brian Kurtz, Tracy Kwiker, Peter Lauzon, Mark Lefko, David Lerman, Mark Lerner, David LeVrier, Lisa Ling, Mark Lipis, Andy Ludlum, James Ludwick, Chris Malberg, Stephen Malley, Vicki Martin, Ken McLeod, William McNary, Frank Melton, Steve Mindel, Rebecca Nassi, Michael Parker, Kimberly Pease, Stacy Phillips, Martin Pichin-son, Karen Pointer, Ken Potalivo, Scott Regberg, Tim Reuben, Mark Risley, Terri Robinson, Deborah Rodney, Patricia Romaine, Ivan Rosenberg, Lee Ryan, Millicent Sanchez, Myer Sankary, Suzana Santos, Gail Schaper-Gordon, Morrie Schectman, Greg Seal, Deborah Shames, Bill Sherman, Mark and Mia Silverman, Stan Stahl, Robert Strauss, Ron Supancic, Eric Taub, Tony Trupiano, Tom Tyrrell, Monica Urquidi, Marcia Wasserman, Bob Weinberg, Patricia Wheeler, Ward Wieman, Joel Weinstein, and Halee Fischer-Wright.

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**JUST LISTEN**

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# THE SECRET TO REACHING ANYONE

Some lucky people seem to have a magic touch when it comes to getting people to buy into their plans, goals, and desires. But, in reality, reaching people isn't magic. It's an art . . . and a science. And it's easier than you think.



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