

# The Art of Real Conversation

Celeste Headlee



Award-winning journalist [Celeste Headlee](#) believes collaboration is essential and is done best through healthy, two-way conversation. Far too many discussions consist of people talking *at*, not *to*, one another, she said at [Leadercast Women](#) 2018.

**“Real conversation requires a mutual exchange where both people are changed by what’s happening,”** she explained. **“When you talk, you are repeating what you already know. But if you listen, you learn something new.”**

Celeste cautioned against relying too heavily on written communication. **“We think everything is solved by our smartphone,”** she said. Instead, we need to reclaim our humanity and our ability to talk and listen to one another. Communicating too much over text messages and email can lead to miscommunication, loneliness and disconnection, she said. Talking and listening to voice inflections allow people to detect new information and emotion, something that simply can’t be replaced by emojis.

## Top Takeaways

- Have **better** conversations, not necessarily **more**.
- We’re in a distraction epidemic. **Multitasking will reduce the quality of tasks by 25 percent.**
- Listen to the people who don’t agree with you. **Listening is not endorsement or support.**