



## Asking great questions reveals great answers

Asking great questions can be easy.

Asking the right question at the right time in the right way can also be easy.

Asking thought-provoking questions takes practice.

### Top tip:

- questions using **what** and **how** are excellent for getting information as they are open
- **where** is also useful as in 'Where do you think we could improve this process?' for example.
- **why** is a good one to ask oneself to discover purpose and values. Simon Sinek's Start with why 5.01 minutes TED talk on YouTube is gold dust <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPYeClXpxw>



### As a leader remember these super 7:

- always be the last to speak
- if you lob in your opinion first you will never know what anyone else thinks
- your job is to ask great questions to discover what everyone else thinks
- then you will know the landscape before you steam in with your opinion
- to ask the questions that will reveal what no one is wanting to say
- you have a team for a reason – to bring a wide range of ideas, ability, experience
- check out the ones who are routinely reticent to speak – they might need reflecting time

Getting those 'great questions muscles' toned needs attention and intention.

If you were only allowed to ask questions of 5 words or less could you do it? Just one word?

How can you make one word a question? Simple ... use an upward inflection – flip the end of the word up.

The trick to thought-provoking questions is to use your listening skills. Genuinely listen. Especially without using that penny dreadful technique of 'already speaking'.

Pretending it isn't important to you to ask your questions won't help them get answers to questions they're not asking. *Anon*



always ask as there is never a dumb question.

## Exercise 1: The question

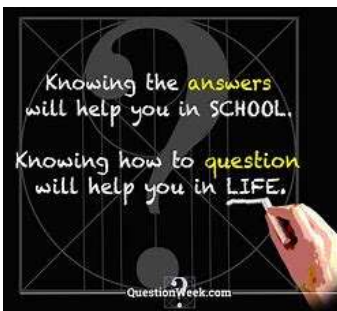
**The 'most value' question** – what will give most value to you, to the team, the project, the client?

**The 'why important' question** – what makes XYZ important? How crucial is it? How robust is the why element?

**The 'what difference' question** – always be curious as to what is the difference that will make the difference?

**The 'who else' question** – who isn't in the 'room'? who didn't realise they could / should / needed to be in the 'room'? who was invited and chose not to be in the 'room'? who didn't even know there was a 'room' to be in? who selected the list of those who were invited to be in the 'room'?

**The 'how exactly' question** – a great precision question to get the exact detail.



## Exercise 2: An inquiry in 6 parts

For any experience these 6 questions are excellent to use as an inquiry. Excellent for getting you to do deep dives into what happened and what are the learnings going forward.

1. What in this experience confused or challenged or created chaos or revealed complexity in you?
2. What in this experience satisfied or pleased or expanded or delighted or lifted you?
3. What does that feel like now?
4. What does it feel like to explore this situation as being a reflection of something in you?
5. What could this tell you about your role or behaviour or development as leader?
6. How can you now use this in your role as a leader?