

# ASKING QUESTIONS

Learning to ask questions is a skill, which many people haven't fully learnt. At work a good employer should welcome questions that no-one else is asking to find answers everyone is seeking. This Challenge will help you uncover the art of asking powerful questions.

## 1 EVERY DAY QUESTIONS



**What is the most common question you find yourself asking these days?**

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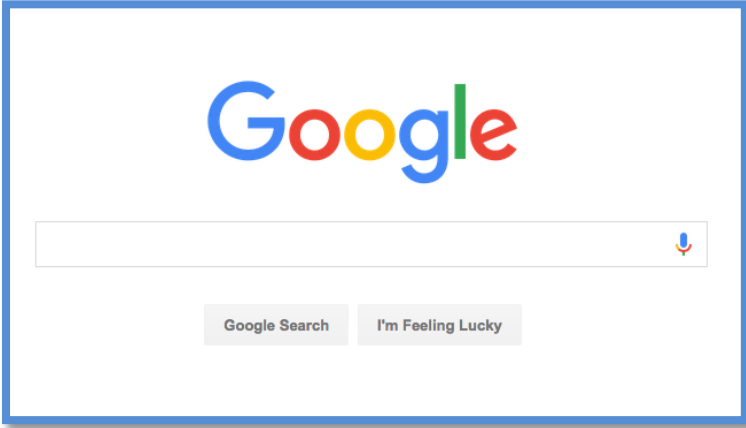
Most people are great at asking informal questions to get information; questions like:

- What's the weather forecast today?
- When does the match start?
- What time will you get home tonight?

Do you have to think prepare much to ask these questions? Yes/No  
You can now ask questions on your mobile using voice activation technology.

## 2 THE BENEFIT OF ASKING POWERFUL QUESTIONS

But asking good questions give us much more than just good answers, they can be powerful ‘tools’ to help us think, to challenge assumptions and to create connections.



Think of them as the type of questions you ask after you’ve used a search engine!

Instead of **What?** ask **What if?**



Instead of **Why?** ask **Why not?**

Instead of **How?** ask **How come?**

In pairs think of 3 positive outcomes from asking powerful questions like these in the work place?

- 1 .....
- 2 .....
- 3 .....



What does asking questions like this show an employer?  
 What does the person you are asking the questions to feel?  
 What can you do with this information gained from the questions?

### 3 CAN WE TRAIN OURSELVES TO BE MORE CURIOUS?

How do we get more confident at asking powerful questions and able to use the information we are given to help us in our work?

Here are 5 important tips

#### 1 Be intentional.

Try to think of someone who you can ask and have a few key questions already in your mind. Sometimes informal settings are best. Think of a personal question you could ask to start a conversation. *“How did you get into this job and what were the challenges you faced when you started?”*

#### 2 Ask if you can ask!

It is always great to start a question by asking permission. Many people will feel flattered that you’ve singled them out to ask questions and you give the conversation more focus by showing you are prepared and have a number of questions. (Though try not to make it an interview!)

*“Would you have a few minutes to answer a few questions I’ve got?”*

#### 3 Listen well and ask follow-up questions.

Listen well to the answers you are given, if it helps scribble a few notes down on a pad or on your phone. A good question might be, *“What one piece of advice would you give me?”* Which will give you lots of follow-up questions *“Why do you say that?”* for example.

#### 4 Don’t be afraid to ask simple questions

Sometimes the most powerful questions are the simplest ones. *“Why does the team always do this?”* Let go of the need to be the expert and the one with all the answers. Don’t worry about asking simple questions, you’ll be the one who ends up wise!

#### 5 Try to give some feedback on what you’ve learnt

it’s amazing the impact you have and the bond you can create if you give people some feedback at the end of the questions. *“I’ve learnt so much from you in these 10 minutes which will really help me.”*

**If you ask 5 people 10 questions during the next week It’s amazing how easy it is to gain more knowledge in a few questions. If you**

## 6 Asking questions is the starting point for new ideas



In fact if you are good at asking questions you're likely be your own boss one day, because entrepreneurs are people who ask the questions no one else is asking!

### 7 CHALLENGE

Use the sheet below to ask 10 people, 10 questions about their work in the next week.

We've suggested 5 of these 10 questions but if you do this you'll end up with 100 insights into work which is tailored to you!

**Who knows where your powerful questions will lead you!**



# Ask the worker exercise

Below are 5 questions which other students came up with to ask people in work. Use these questions and come up with 5 of your own so that between now and next week you find 10 people and ask these 10 questions.



QUESTION	SHORT ANSWER
1. Do you like your job?	
2. Does your boss like you?	
3. How much holiday do you get?	
4. How did you get into this job?	
5. Do you like the people you work with?	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

Don't worry about writing up all the answers the important thing is to get confident asking the questions.

What will you do with the 100 pieces of information you gather?