

Asking is Better Than Telling

A unique workshop on the science and practice of Asking the Better Question™

Rooted in science, focused on application

This workshop offers a unique mix of the neuroscience of decision-making and change, the psychological impact of question structures, and methods for application. It is based on the instructor's extensive work and research in the questions used in therapeutic and coaching sessions, negotiation, and the nuances of language.

Most importantly, participants hone their skills by applying the questioning techniques learned in a series of paired and larger group exercises based on real-life situations.

What's Your Question?

TELL LESS, ASK MORE

By studying strong leaders and examining their achievements, we learn there is more to the equation than the words they say. In fact, the answers they give are not what sets them apart. Rather, it is the art of asking questions—the better question. The ability to ask the question that fosters reflection, provides insight into a person's underlying value drivers, creates the authentic engagement with customers, or cultivates creative dialogue is what sets the better questions apart.

Given the many purposeful organizational missions, complex problems, and critical decisions that are part of today's workplace, skilled questioning techniques need to permeate every level of the organization. The purpose of this workshop is to introduce the key principles of questioning, the different question structures, and the four key phases of questioning.

QUESTIONS ASKED BY PAST PARTICIPANTS

- How do I determine the foundational/root question being asked by the customer?
- How do you foster becoming instrumental in your customer's planning stages?
- How can I hold better coaching or performance review sessions? Too often these become "check-the-box" sessions.
- How do I deal with the inevitable resistance?
- What are the questions that will help us understand our stakeholder's underlying drivers?
- How do I form and ask good questions that help a team figure out how to make progress on a problem where the solution is not clear?
- What is the most efficient way to clarify expectations for a given task?
- I'm getting nowhere trying to get leadership to buy into our new process. How do I reach a higher level of commitment?

WORKSHOP HIGHLIGHTS

Introduction

- The neuroscience of questioning: Why asking is better than telling
- Questioning structures: Which ones work and why they do

Phase I: ENGAGE

- Fostering engagement by building the conversational bridge
- Moving from hearing to listening: What is the talk trying to do?

Phase II: EXPLORE

- It's all about the "why": Question structures for uncovering the underlying objectives and values
- Identifying the problem to be solved

Phase III: ENVISION

- Why question-storming is better than brainstorming
- Questioning methods for developing alternatives in conflict resolution or coaching meetings

Phase IV: ENACT

- Dealing with resistance
- Question structures that increase the level of organizational uptake



OUTCOMES OF ASKING THE BETTER QUESTION

CREATES COMMITMENT	Telling creates compliance; asking fosters commitment.
STIMULATES DEEPER THINKING	You are not looking for the quick answer! The real problem to be solved requires reflective thinking.
ENCOURAGES PURPOSEFUL QUESTIONS	Different question structures do different things.
IMPROVES INTERVIEW DESIGN	What you want to know is not the question that you ask.

“There are many social and psychological pressures that feed a "yes" response. For the question-asker, we tend to like the "yes" since hearing it makes us feel good about the work we have been doing; we are looking for that validation! For the client, saying "yes" may be intended to protect your feelings or avoid a sticky situation. A "yes" can also be a polite way to close an undesirable conversation.

So what are the question structures that avoid the polite yes?

“Why do your customers (internal or external) want what they do? What does the solution do for them? What problem will be solved? Unfortunately, their responses to the question "What do you want?" is poorly correlated to a customer's eventual actions and uptake.

What's a better question to be asking?

ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR

Katherine Rosback has a B.S. in Chemical Engineering and a Masters in Organizational Communication, both from Purdue University. Her background includes working as a Supplier Quality Engineer with a manufacturing firm, a Director of Quality with a medical diagnostics firm, and a lead facilitator with a strategic planning consulting firm. She currently works as an independent consultant and has facilitated hundreds of must-succeed meetings and is known for her use of insightful questions to resolve complex issues, identify the problem to be solved, and provide coaching. Clients include the oil and gas, pharmaceutical, airline, and medical diagnostic industries. She is an avid researcher in the neurosciences of decision-making and human behavior, is the author of *Asking is Better Than Telling*, and is the host for the podcast, *What's Another Question*.

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