

GREAT QUESTIONS

8 QUESTIONS THAT UNLOCK BETTER THINKING INSTEAD OF BETTER COMPLIANCE.

Great questions do more work than great answers. They shift people from compliance — saying what's expected — into genuine thinking. This guide is eight qualities of the questions that actually get there, useful whether you're leading a team or a classroom.



**SHIFTS COMPLIANCE
INTO THINKING**



**BUILDS DEEPER
UNDERSTANDING**



**STRENGTHENS
TRUST**



**SURFACES REAL
ANSWERS**



**WORKS FOR TEAMS
AND CLASSROOMS**



QUESTIONS THAT OPEN, NOT CLOSE

1

"Why did you do that?" invites a defence. "What were you weighing up?" invites a real answer.

ASK YOURSELF:

Does my question sound like curiosity, or does it sound like a verdict already reached?



QUESTIONS THAT INVITE THINKING, NOT JUST ANSWERS

2

A question with an obvious "correct" reply doesn't build thinking, it tests memory.

ASK YOURSELF:

Could this question actually be answered several different, defensible ways?



QUESTIONS WITHOUT A HIDDEN RIGHT ANSWER

3

If you already know what you want them to say, it's not a question, it's a prompt in disguise.

ASK YOURSELF:

Am I actually open to an answer I didn't expect?



QUESTIONS ASKED FROM CURIOSITY, NOT A VERDICT ALREADY MADE

4

People can tell the difference between being asked and being interrogated.

ASK YOURSELF:

Have I already decided what happened before I asked about it?



QUESTIONS THAT CREATE SILENCE, NOT JUST RESPONSE

5

The best questions are followed by a pause — an instant answer probably means it wasn't a hard enough question.

ASK YOURSELF:

Am I comfortable letting a silence sit after I've asked something real?



QUESTIONS ASKED OF THE RIGHT PERSON, NOT THE ROOM

6

"Any thoughts?" to a group usually gets silence. A direct question to one person usually gets a real answer.

ASK YOURSELF:

Who is the one person I should be asking this to directly, instead of the whole room?



QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW UP, NOT JUST OPEN

7

The second question is often where the real thinking happens, not the first.

ASK YOURSELF:

What's my next question after their first answer, not just my opening one?



QUESTIONS THAT MODEL WHAT YOU WANT TO SEE

8

Asking better questions of others starts with asking harder questions of yourself, out loud, first.

ASK YOURSELF:

When did I last ask myself a genuinely uncomfortable question in front of my team?



REFLECT

- Which of these eight qualities do my questions usually have?
- What's a question I ask often that might actually be a statement in disguise?
- Whose thinking have I never really tested with a real question?



TRY TOMORROW

- Replace one "why" question with a "what were you weighing up" question
- Ask one direct question to one specific person, not the room
- Let a silence sit for five seconds longer than feels comfortable
- Ask yourself one hard question out loud, in front of your team

*Ask better.
Think deeper.
Lead further.*



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