

ASK Q!

WHY QUESTIONS MATTER?

There are many benefits of asking questions including:

1. **Knowledge and Learning:** By asking questions, we seek answers and deepen our understanding.
2. **Engagement and Interaction:** Questions promote conversations, discussions, and the sharing of ideas, which leads to meaningful connections.
3. **Critical Thinking:** Asking questions challenges us to analyse information, understand others perspectives, and develop good judgment.
4. **Problem Solving:** Questions are crucial for problem-solving. They help us identify issues, explore possibilities, and find innovative solutions.
5. **Empathy and Understanding:** Asking questions demonstrates a genuine interest in others. It helps us understand different perspectives, lived experiences, and emotions.
6. **Personal Growth:** Questions encourage us to reflect, to examine our beliefs, values, and goals, leading to greater self-awareness

At Irrational Change we know that asking questions is a superpower, that making assumptions about what someone else knows or thinks is dangerous.

We say that 'there are two sides to every story' and humans like to be heard, it helps us feel valued. If we feel valued we are more likely to contribute to the outcome of a change.

In this **changeXchange** we set the task of collecting great questions, that we can all use, and make our own

Have you ever
been asked a
question that
made you think,
really think?

**"The greatest
gift we can give
ourselves, and
others, is the
ability to
ask the right
questions."**

Unknown

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HOW TO ASK GREAT QUESTIONS

Asking great questions is a skill we can all learn, and improve. Here are some tricks to asking great questions:

1. **Be Curious:** Approach questions with a genuine curiosity and open mind. Be interested, and let your curiosity guide your questions.
2. **Active Listening:** Pay attention to the answers and listen to what the other person is saying.
3. **Be Open:** Use open-ended questions that encourage descriptive responses rather than yes/no answers.
4. **Empathy and Respect:** Consider the other person's perspective and feelings. Ask questions in a non-confrontational and non-judgmental manner. Create a safe and open environment for meaningful dialogue.
5. **Follow the Flow:** Allow the conversation to flow naturally. Ask follow-up questions based on the person's responses, building upon their answers. This shows that you're actively engaged.
6. **Prioritize Listening Over Speaking:** Give ample space and time, avoid interrupting or dominating the conversation.
7. **Reflect and Synthesize:** Take a moment to reflect on what you've learned. How does the information connect with your own knowledge or experiences.



EXPLORING QUESTIONS

Asking open, exploring questions helps you delve deeper into the emotions, reflections, visions, and perspectives of others. They allow you to seek advice and insight that you would not otherwise have.

Vision and Desired Changes

- If you had a magic wand, what would you change, what would you keep?
- What change do you want to see?
- What is the value that we want to create?
- What opportunities can you see to deliver better/overcome obstacles?
- How does your work contribute to the business benefits or value of this transformation?
- What does the future look like for you?
- What problem are we trying to solve?
- Can you explain the problem / situation?
- Are there any groups who aren't supportive of the change?
- What would you like me to know?

Seeking Advice and Perspectives

- What do we want to learn?
- What is your experience with this?
- Who should I talk to about this?
- What's happening in your world?
- Is there something that we are missing here?
- Do you have a theory as to why that is?
- Why do you think that is?
- What is the question I should be asking here?
- Do you have any questions for me?

Deeper Exploration

- Tell me more?
- What else?
- Can you expand on that?
- Could you provide more context?
- What led you to that conclusion?
- Can you give me examples?
- How did you arrive at this perspective?
- What experiences or observations have influenced you?
- What other factors should I consider?
- Is there anything else you would like to share?
- Are there any particular emotions or values that underlie your perspective?
- Can you share the reasoning behind your thinking?
- Who's problem is this to solve?

Exploring Emotions and Feelings

- How did that make you feel?
- How does that sit with you?
- What's keeping you up at night?
- What's happening in your world?
- What is on your mind?
- How can I help you?
- Do you have any questions for me?

Reflection and Learning

- What did you learn?
- What would you do differently?
- What learnings from this project are you going to carry with you?
- What outcomes are you looking for?
- What do you really want to achieve?
- What change do you want to see as a result?
- What opportunities can you see to deliver better/overcome obstacles?
- What would happen if we did nothing?
- What is the value that we want to create?
- What does the future look like for you?
- What is the question I should be asking here?
- What problem are we trying to solve?
- Can you explain the problem/situation?
- What are we missing?
- Are there any options we should consider/haven't considered yet?
- What would you like me to know?

"The quality of your life is determined by the quality of your questions."

Tony Robbins

PERMISSION

By seeking permission or consent, these questions demonstrate respect for the others boundaries, preferences, and confidentiality. They demonstrate a collaborative and considerate approach, ensuring that everyone feels comfortable and empowered to participate in the change process.

Communication and Follow-up

- Can I keep you in the loop on how we get on?
- If I have any other questions, can I come back to you?
- Would you be open to a conversation about our project?
- Let's set up a call for next time right now!
- Can we continue this conversation offline?
- Can we agree on next steps?
- Let's collaborate going forward. When can we meet next?
- How might we continue this conversation?
- I would like to schedule a follow-on to this discussion.
- I'll let you know how I get on.

Respect and Etiquette

- Is it okay if I take notes during our conversation?
- Do you mind if I bring up a potential alternative approach for consideration?
- Would you be comfortable sharing your thoughts on this matter in a group setting?

Relationship Building and Networking

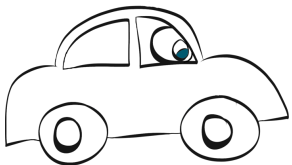
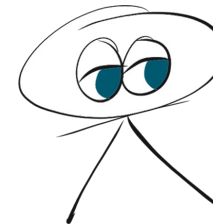
- Can I introduce you to X? I think you have a lot in common.
- Do you know X? They'd be really interested in this.
- You have a unique perspective on this. Would you be open to further conversations?
- Would love to get your perspective on (insert thing) some other time.
- I believe that you know X well. Would it be possible for you to introduce me?
- X suggested that I speak to you as you have an interesting viewpoint on this.
- X said they would love to meet you since you have expertise in Y. Are you okay with me setting this up for you?
- I would love to hear what others are telling you about this initiative.
- How could we work together on this?
- I'd love to keep you in the loop if that's okay?
- How can we continue to collaborate?

Permission and Consent

- May I share this information with the rest of the team?
- Can I include your name when discussing this topic with others?
- Is it OK if I ask you a few more questions about your experience?
- Is it OK for me to reach out to X for additional insights?
- Can I use your feedback as a testimonial for our project?
- Are you open to exploring new ideas and perspectives related to this topic?
- Is it OK if I share my observations and recommendations based on the information you've provided?

"The art and science of asking questions is the source of all knowledge."

Thomas Berger



CHALLENGE

These questions respectfully challenge the beliefs and assumptions held by others. They encourage critical thinking, exploration of alternative perspectives, and open-mindedness. They help evaluate beliefs, consider different possibilities, and create an environment of continuous learning and growth.

Self-Reflection and Personal Growth

- What are stories that you are telling yourself? What are the facts?
- Can you share your stories (and beliefs)?
- If you were me, what advice would you give yourself?
- If you were advising your younger self, what would you say?
- If you were to look back on this decision in 5 years time, how would you feel?
- How would you have thought about this earlier in your career?
- How have you contributed to this situation?
- What can you take ownership of?

Seeking External Perspectives

- Why do you think they think like that?
- What would happen if nothing happened?
- What would your customers think about this?
- How do your suppliers see this?
- Have you spoken with your customers to see what they think?
- If you were to put yourself in their shoes, what would you do/advise?

Clarification and Openness

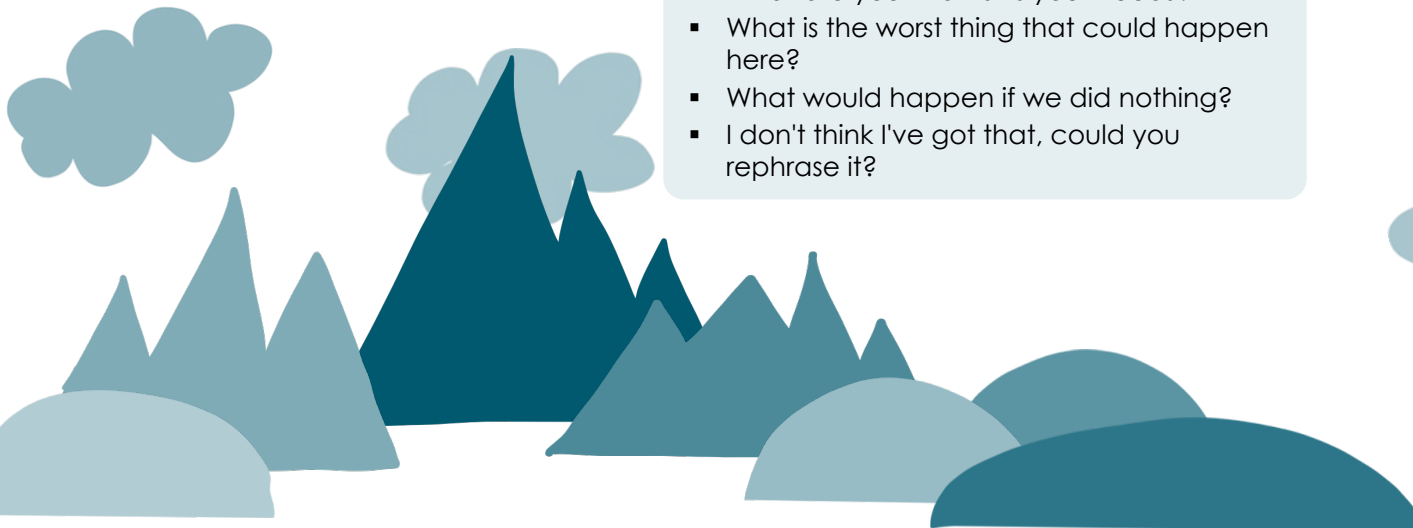
- What evidence is there to support that?
- Can you provide more context or examples?
- What are your wants vs your needs?
- What is the worst thing that could happen here?
- What would happen if we did nothing?
- I don't think I've got that, could you rephrase it?

Exploring Alternatives and Assumptions

- Is this true? Or is this an assumption?
- I would like to challenge that thought.
- Have you considered the alternatives?
- What if the opposite were true?
- What else might you be able to do?
- Have you spoken to the team to see what they think?
- Have you considered (provide an alternative view)
- What would your team feel about this?

"Judge a man by his questions rather than by his answers."

Voltaire



COMPASSION

Compassion questions demonstrate care and concern for the well-being of others. They create space for individuals to express their feelings, seek support, and prioritize self-care. By showing compassion and actively listening, we can create a supportive and empathetic environment.

Checking In and Offering Support

- How are you? Really?
- How are you finding things?
- How is the team doing?
- How's your day going?
- How can I support you going forward?
- When do you want to check in again?
- When did you last get a moment to yourself?
- Is there anyone in your support network that you can lean on?
- How are you feeling?
- How do you want me to show up for you?
- Can I offer some feedback?

Building Relationships and Connection

- Do you want to grab a coffee/lunch?
- How is your X (family / wife / partner / kids / pet)?
- Talk about something that interests them and just let the conversation flow

Offering Assistance and Collaboration

- How can I be a better colleague to you?
- What can I do to help you?
- Is there anything else you might need from me?
- What do you need in the moment?

Acknowledgment and Recognition

- I see you, I hear you, I value your contributions.
- Thank you for your time/valuable input.

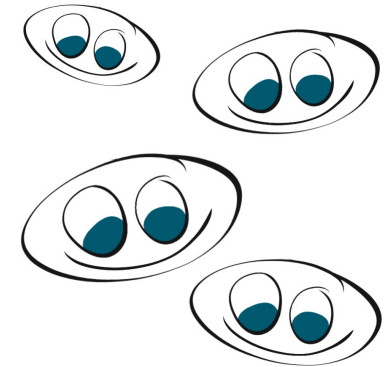
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Personal Well-being and Resilience

- When did you last leave on time (if leaving late)?
- What are you up to at the weekend (to get a sense of resilience)?
- What brings you joy? When did you last get to do that?

"Questions are the keys that unlock doors of understanding and discovery."

Unknown



IRRATIONAL CHANGE

This paper is brought to you by **changeXchange**, a thinktank sponsored by the team at [Irrational Change](#).

We solve behavioural change challenges for the benefit of all change agents. For more details visit our [website](#) for examples of our papers and details of how to join us.

THANK YOU

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If you would like advice on how to use the latest in behavioural science to solve your business challenges, then [contact us](#).