

Powerful Questions to Use in Meetings and Challenging Conversations



Use this list of powerful questions to prepare for challenging conversations or meetings that may be high visibility, tense, or become stalled. Consider these thought starters to build your own set of relevant questions in advance. Remember that you can influence the energy from any seat in the room.

Powerful Questions Defined

- **Open-Ended** – foster engagement rather than a yes/no response.
- **WHAT not WHY** – open up possibilities and minimize defensiveness.
- **Intentional** – either 1) forward the action or 2) deepen the learning.
- **Brief** – usually the first seven words out of your mouth will do.

Examples of Powerful Questions

- What about that is important?
- What are the possible connections here?
- What will we do differently because of that?
- What about that makes a difference for our team?
- What's the real challenge we face?
- What are we optimizing for?
- To be successful in six months, what decisions must we make today?
- In what ways could Team ABC lean in to help?
- What will you do? By when? How will I/we know?
- What will we do to course correct when needed?