



5 STEPS TO ASKING BETTER QUESTIONS

A longer list of questions doesn't mean you'll get better answers. Opened ended questions aren't always good. Yes/no questions aren't always bad. It's the strategy behind the questions that leads to more insightful answers and more accurate information so you can keep people engaged and direct more productive conversations. This process can help you upgrade your go-to questions and affect change at a greater rate all while asking a question that takes 15-seconds or less.

Here's an example from my personal experience during Mariners Spring Training. Since Seattle is associated with coffee I wanted to know how many players not only drank coffee, but had a story to share about drinking coffee, as a way to relate to the fanbase in the Pacific Northwest.

1 → IDENTIFY THE OBJECTIVE

Get very specific about what you want to get out of the question. I don't just want an answer. I want an answer that connects the athlete to the audience or provides greater insight. In this case, I want an athlete to relate to people living in Seattle and the connection Seattle has with coffee.

Initial question: "Do you drink coffee?"

2 → IDENTIFY THE CORRESPONDING EMOTION

What emotion comes to mind? Can you sum it up in one word? In this case, I want a strong reaction because people generally love coffee, or they hate it. I'm going to assume they love it and change the question a little.

First revision: "How many cups of coffee do you drink a day?"

3 → WHAT WOULD YOU SAY?

What can you personally relate to in this scenario? Would you give an interesting answer? For me personally, the answer to the revised question would be only marginally better than the original question. If I give it further thought and consider why I drink in the first place I get a second revision.

Second revision: "When did coffee become part of your daily routine?"

4 → ADD JUST ENOUGH CONTEXT.

This is not a long preamble or setup to the question. It is making sure the question doesn't come out of left field and that all parties are on the same page. If there's any confusion I won't get the answer I'm looking for because no one wants to look stupid when answering a question – especially on live TV. So I added the reason I'm asking the question.

Final question: "Seattle is known for coffee. When did coffee become part of your daily routine?"

5 → LET IT BREATHE

The final question is in line with the original question, but it's just different enough it might take a few seconds for the person to respond. Resist the urge to jump in and interrupt their thought process. It could take up to 10 seconds. Unless you see frustration or confusion let the question breathe.

STRATEGIZING AND ASKING BETTER QUESTIONS ALLOWS YOU TO SPEND MORE TIME LISTENING TO THE ANSWERS AND THE INFORMATION REVEALED IN THOSE CONVERSATIONS.

Interested in training that allows you to move forward faster, address issues earlier and build stronger relationships virtually? Email Jen@TalkSportytoMe.com

