

# Questions are the Answer

## **TOP FIVE TIPS TO ASKING BETTER QUESTIONS**

### **1. Ask the question and shut up.**

Sometimes we have a habit of asking the question and then keeping talking, sometimes leading people to an answer. Or we try to qualify the question and confuse the person when the question was clear in the first place. If you are comfortable with giving them space to think, then the person will be comfortable too.

### **2. If the person says that they don't know...**

...this is NOT an invitation for you to start telling. Be creative! Ask the person "if you did know, what would you do?" In 95% of cases they come up with an answer. If they still say they don't know, allow them time, invite them to stop and think and see what happens. People get lazy in their thinking and your role is to make them think!

### **3. Remember the POWER of silence.**

If you keep quiet in the majority of cases the person will start talking again and usually this is where "the good stuff" happens. They are accessing thoughts they haven't got to before and by being silent you allow this to happen. As we know most of the time people know the answer they just need time to get there and silence is one of the most powerful ways to make this happen.

### **4. Getting ideas outside of the person's normal thinking.**

A fabulous technique that helps the person to develop even more ideas is to ask them "if X person was advising you what to do, what would they say?" Be creative with who the person is. You can use the person's boss, a person that they admire, someone like Richard Branson etc etc. This technique gets them out of their own thinking and they then usually become more resourceful with ideas.

### **5. Challenging beliefs/reframing**

This technique is useful for when people say they can't do things – it invites them to reframe. So a question like "if you believed it was possible, what would you do?" is very useful as it gets them into solution focused thinking.

Another question you can use here is "how do you know that to be true? Are there any other possible explanations about this situation?" Here you are challenging assumptions that people make to help them reframe situations. It can also be useful to explore where the belief has come from. Is it even their own belief or somebody else's?