

THE ART OF THE QUESTION

Low Quality	High Quality
Closed Questions (Yes/No) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Do others feel that way, too? <input type="checkbox"/> Does that make sense? <input type="checkbox"/> Did you talk to her? 	Open Ended <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> How do others feel? <input type="checkbox"/> What do you think about what I said? <input type="checkbox"/> What did she say?
Problem Focused <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Why can't we do this? <input type="checkbox"/> Where did your team go wrong? <input type="checkbox"/> Why isn't this working? 	Solutions Focused <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> What would it take? <input type="checkbox"/> What does your team need to win? <input type="checkbox"/> How can we make it work?
Forced Choice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Did you do that because of X, because of Y or because of Z? 	Exploratory <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> What led you to do that? What was your thinking/concern/interest?
Seek Compliance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Why don't you just try? <input type="checkbox"/> Do you agree? 	Encourage Challenge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> What about my idea raises doubt? <input type="checkbox"/> In what ways is your view different?
Leading or Rhetorical <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Don't you think that ...? 	Advocate, then Encourage Challenge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> My view is ..., how do you see it?
Imply Others are at Fault <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Why didn't you just tell me? 	Examine your Contribution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> What prevented you from telling me? I'm wondering if I said or did something that made it difficult.
Encourage Motivational Attributions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Why didn't she come to the meeting? 	Generate Observable Data <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> What did she say about coming to the meeting?
Encourage Blame <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Whose fault is this? 	Gain Understanding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> What happened that led to the problems?
Elicit Excuses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Why can't we do this? 	Promote Action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> What results do we want to achieve? <input type="checkbox"/> What would it take to make it work? <input type="checkbox"/> What choices would we have to make? <input type="checkbox"/> How might we do both/and rather than either/or?

POWERFUL QUESTIONS

Q's that focus attention on values and/or outcomes

- 1) *What opportunities can you see in this strategy?*
- 2) *What's important to you about this project?*
- 3) *What would this give you for the future?*
- 4) *How could we make this happen?*
- 5) *How could we do both/and rather than either/or?*

Q's that connect ideas

- 1) *What's emerging here for you?*
- 2) *What's been your major learning or insight so far?*
- 3) *What has not yet been said that would help us reach a deeper understanding about this issue?*
- 4) *How does this complement your plan?*
- 5) *How might we integrate these two positions?*

Q's that can create forward movement when "stuck"

- 1) *What would it take to create a change on this issue?*
- 2) *What would it take for you to talk about this issue with me?*
- 3) *How can I best support your needs going forward?*
- 4) *What do you think is possible?*
- 5) *How would you like to see this happen?*



WHAT or HOW questions are POWERFUL!!
Adapted from *Crucial Conversations*, VitalSmarts © 2002