

Examples of helpful questions

Additional resource

- Questions that begin with 'how', 'what' and 'why'
- Precision questions:
 - What exactly...?
 - How exactly...?
 - Bigger than/more than...?
 - Everyone?
 - Always?
- Powerful questions (when a presenter says 'I can't.'):
 - What's stopping you...?
 - What would happen if you...?
- Reflective questions (mirror back what presenter seems to be saying):
 - So you're saying...?
 - You seem...?
 - What's at the back of your mind?
- 'Idea' questions (without spelling out the details!):
 - Would ... be of any use?
 - Have you thought of...?
- Project-focused questions:
 - What problems does that cause?
 - In what way is that a problem?
 - What isn't happening now?
 - What do you want to be different?
 - How would you like X to respond?
 - How do think that Y needs to be changed/altered?
 - What would you like to do - ideally?
 - How do you feel about that?
 - Who have you consulted/talked to?
 - Who else might you talk to?

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- How does the other person/department see the issue?
 - How will you go about it?
 - In what way will that help?
 - Who else can you involve/get to back you?
- Feelings-focused questions:
 - How are you feeling about this?
- Do you feel confident?
 - What worries you most?
 - What excites you most?
 - Are you being honest with yourself?
- Questions about the process:
 - What else would you find helpful?
 - How can we help you?
 - Are we getting away from your question?
 - Are we being helpful?
 - What are we doing here, now?
 - What are we doing at the moment?
 - Why haven't we tackled...?
 - What have we learnt?

(Questions adapted from Action Learning, K. Weinstein, 1995)