



Asking Effective Questions



Did you know...

- ...Asking effective questions has benefits. It helps a person:
 - Understand and connect with others in a more meaningful way.
 - Work with others more effectively.
 - Gather information.
 - Reduce mistakes.
 - Foster cooperation.
 - Explore what another person means.
- ...Asking effective questions is a skill that needs to be combined with nonjudgmental listening to work.
- ...Asking effective questions is a learned skill that improves with practice.
- ...Effective questions do not intend to lead a person to one answer.

Demonstrate these behaviors to master the skill of asking effective questions.

Nonverbal Behaviors

- Stand or sit in a relaxed way and look at the person. This will send a nonverbal message that you want to hear the answer to the question.

Verbal Behaviors

- Ask questions that are open-ended if you want to explore ideas and collaborate with others. Open-ended questions ask for an explanation or description.
 - Try this: “What do you think we could do to solve the problem?”
- Ask closed-ended questions if you are looking for simple information. These questions elicit a “yes” or “no” answer or a short response.
 - Try this: “Do I turn right or left to get to the mall?”
- Ask concise, clear questions.
- Ask one question at a time and wait for the person to answer before asking another question.
- Listen carefully to the response a person gives to a question you ask before asking more questions.
- Avoid asking “why” questions. They can put people on the defensive.

Tips

- Avoid asking questions to show off your knowledge. This type of questioning tends to intimidate others.
- Ask questions to clarify someone’s behavior or something someone has said.
 - Try these:
 - What are you referring to when you say...?
 - What do you mean by...?
 - How do you know that?
 - What is an example of...?

Your Assignment

- Create a teaching tool that explains and demonstrates your assigned skill.
- Your presentation will be evaluated on:
 - thorough and accurate explanation of the skill.
 - accurate and clear demonstration of the skill.
- You have up to five minutes to present your skill.
- Option: Research additional data on the skill and note the source.