



by
Asking the Right Questions

A practical guide to getting the information that will help your project succeed

Presented to:

PMI – CTT

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By


Julie A. Grabb P.M.P.

J.A.G.Associates

www.enhancingprojectperformance.com


Enhancing Project Performance by Asking the Right Questions

A practical guide to getting the information
that will help your project succeed



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PM = Mind Reader



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Discussion

- ◆ When you ask questions:
 - What barriers do you encounter?
 - What kind of resistance do you encounter?
 - Asking
 - Answering



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A Questioning Environment


- ♦ *“The ability to ask questions goes hand in hand with the ability to learn. A learning organization is only possible if it has a culture that encourages questions.”*
- ♦ *“Leaders, through questions, can build a culture in which questions are welcomed, assumptions are challenged, and new ways to solve problems are explored.”*

from **Leading with Questions** by Michael Marquardt.

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SMART


- ♦ S – specific
- ♦ M – measurable
- ♦ A – attainable
- ♦ R – relevant
- ♦ T – time bound



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Sender / Receiver Model

- ♦ **Sender:**
 - the person giving the information
 - the speaker/writer
 - *PM – when asking questions*
 - *Audience – when responding*
- ♦ **Receiver:**
 - the intended audience
 - the listener



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Goals of the Sender

- ◆ We ASK questions to gather information.
- ◆ We then USE/SEND that information for 4 main reasons:
 - to PERSUADE-convince
 - to INFORM-convey
 - to EXPRESS-share
 - to PLEASE-entertain

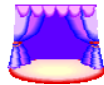


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Questioning Tips

- ◆ Be prepared for “I don’t know”
- ◆ Set the stage, frame the question
 - But: Don’t disguise your opinion in the question
 - But: Don’t give them an excuse not to answer.
 - But: Don’t give them an answer.
- ◆ Get the response in writing
- ◆ Listen and show interest in the response →→→



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Questioning Tips: Listening

- ◆ Listening is the ability to receive and interpret verbal messages and other cues, like body language, in order to respond in ways that are appropriate to the purpose.
- ◆ Listening is more than hearing.




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Questioning Tips: Listening Styles


- ◆ Discerning:
 - To get complete information
- ◆ Comprehensive:
 - To organize & make sense of information
- ◆ Evaluative:
 - To make a decision based on the information provided
- ◆ Empathic:
 - To support the sender as he or she talks through concerns
- ◆ Appreciative:
 - To relax & enjoy the experience of listening



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Questioning Cautions


- ◆ Making statements & expecting a response
- ◆ Interpreting an answer you don't like as non-responsive
- ◆ Filling the silent void after asking
- ◆ Compound questions
- ◆ Negative questions



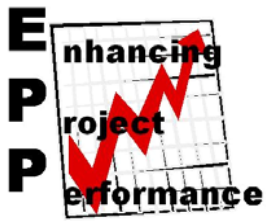
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What are the right questions?

- ◆ Those questions that:
 - Are asked at an appropriate time
 - Are asked to an appropriate person
 - Invoke a thought inspired and genuine response



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Listening Approaches

| | Appropriate Environment | Focus | Motivation | Behavioural Indicators |
|----------------------|---|---|---|---|
| Evaluative | Making a decision, voting, drawing conclusions | To make a decision based on the information provided. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to relate what is heard to their personal beliefs - to question the sender's motives - to support the message with facts - to accept or reject the message | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Actively agrees or disagrees - Responds selectively - Expresses skepticism - Give the sender advice - Quits listening |
| Comprehensive | Taking direction from someone, determining what to do. | To organize and make sense of information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to relate the message to personal experience - to understand the relationships among the ideas - to determine the rationale of the speaker's argument - to listen for the main idea and supporting ideas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - elaborates on what has been said - asks for clarification of the sender's intended message - brings up related issues - summarizes - explains the message to others in their own words |
| Discerning | Learning, gathering information. | To get complete information. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to determine the main message - to sort out the details - to decide what is important - to make sure nothing is missed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - takes notes - asks for clarification - concentrates - eliminates distractions - repeats to confirm accuracy |
| Empathic | Counseling a friend, providing an opportunity for someone to "let off steam" or express their feelings. | To support the sender as he or she talks through concerns | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to provide an opportunity for someone to express thoughts and feelings - to accept the message without judging - to learn from other people's experiences | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - lets the sender know they care - lets the sender do the talking - shows interest - asks open-ended questions - remains relatively silent, not offering solutions immediately |
| Appreciative | Enjoyment of a concert, conversation, or pleasurable event | To relax and enjoy the experience | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to be entertained - to be inspired - to enjoy - to find humour in the situation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - pays attention to the context and style of presentation - responds visibly to colour, sound, language and rhythm - finds the humour in the message - identifies with the pleasure of the sender - relaxes |

Where to find more information

- ◆ Books:
 - The Project Manager's Question Kit, Julie Grabb P.M.P.
 - Leading with Questions, Michael Marquardt
- ◆ Training Programs:
 - Enhancing Project Performance: by managing project communications
- ◆ Communications Profiles & Analysis
 - Personal Listening Profile® by Inscape Publishing

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The End!

Congratulations and thank you for your participation.



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