

ASKING QUESTIONS



‘Asking for help is always a sign of strength’- Michelle Obama



WHAT IS THIS SKILL?

Have you ever been in a situation in which you feel awkward about asking for help with something, or that you shouldn't ask questions?

Asking questions is the skill of being able to acknowledge that there is something that you're not clear about, and that it is important to ask for help in order to gain confidence about something.

This challenge sheet will discuss how to work around the feelings of not being able to ask questions in order to learn how to ask questions and be more successful in the long run.

To begin, rate yourself on how strong your ability is on asking questions:

 PROBLEM SOLVING Rate yourself						
	1 Not great	2 Need help	3 OK	4 Improving	5 Mastering	
Asking questions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

ARE YOU UP FOR THE CHALLENGE TO BUILD SKILLS ON ASKING QUESTIONS?



**‘The man who
asks a question
is a fool for a
minute.**



**The man who
does not ask, is a
fool for life.’
-Confucius**



WHY THIS SKILL IS VITAL FOR WORK



Scenario 1: Your manager gives you an assignment to aim to finish by the end of the day. There are some things that you don't understand about the assignment, but you're worried that if you ask questions about it, you'll be judged.

Possible results if you don't ask questions about the assignment:

- You spend ages trying to think of possible answers, or you spend ages looking up answers up online, but you still don't find the answer. Then, you end up feeling like your time has been wasted.
- You try and do the assignment anyway and you feel like the work you produce isn't your best work because you didn't ask questions about what you were unsure about.

Results if you do ask questions about the assignment:

- Your manager doesn't judge you for asking questions. Instead, they answer your questions because they want you to do the best job possible.
- You end up finishing the work a lot quicker than you would have if you didn't ask questions because you feel like your questions have been clarified; therefore, you were able to plan your work quicker.



We can see from scenario 1 that asking questions doesn't involve any bad consequences. Even though our anxiety may trick us into thinking that asking questions to our bosses makes us look bad, that isn't the reality of what is going to happen. Asking questions will allow you to complete work more efficiently and quickly.

Scenario 2: It's the first day of your new job and several of your colleagues who are also new are getting to know each other. You feel like you want to join in the conversation and then ask questions about themselves but you are unsure.

Possible results if you don't ask your colleagues any questions whilst at work:

- You miss out on starting possible friendships with your work colleagues if you always decide against speaking to them.

Results if you do ask your colleagues the questions:

- Getting to know your colleagues through asking them questions opens up the possibility of making friendships that never would have happened without you asking questions.
- When you have to do projects at work involving working in teams, you feel much more at ease because you already have broken the ice on getting to know your colleagues.

We can see from scenario 2 that asking questions is important at work because it makes you feel more at ease with people in your work environment, especially with tasks involving teamwork.



HOW THIS SKILL IS RELEVANT TO MY PERSONAL LIFE

- ✓ Asking questions not only helps make friends in a work environment, but it also helps us to connect with people in our personal lives. Asking questions can help us to understand other people, understand different cultures and different opinions. It can also help us to understand ourselves better through understanding how we think differently to other people.
- ✓ Asking questions for the sake of gaining a better understanding of something is also important in our personal lives. In any situation in our personal lives, asking a question about something we've never asked about before can feel difficult. But something to remember is that usually, asking a question will not lead to bad consequences. If asking a question does have negative consequences, such as accidentally offending someone, then that mistake will turn into an important lesson.



How can I master this skill?

STEP 1	Think of a question that you've been wanting to ask for a while. It can be about anything or any situation in your life.
STEP 2	List the possible things that are stopping you from asking the question. Possible factors may be anxiety about asking the question, or worries about the outcome.
STEP 3	Look at all of the things stopping you from asking the question, and provide a counter thought for each one. For example, if the thing stopping you is anxiety about how you may look to other people if you ask a question, then think about anytime you've been asked a question by someone and if you thought negatively towards the person after they asked the question. The answer is probably no. This process of replacing negative thoughts with rational ones will help rationalise fears about asking the question.
STEP 4	List all of the positives of asking the question.
STEP 5	Now that you have lists of the counter thoughts to the things stopping you from asking the question, as well as the positives of asking the question, adopt the mindset that the positives are tangible, real reasons why you should ask the question.
STEP 6	Ask the question. Once you've asked the question, asking future questions will become more of a habit and you'll start to see the benefits of asking the questions. Over time, you won't even have to keep listing the positive results of asking the question because you'll see the positive results in reality.

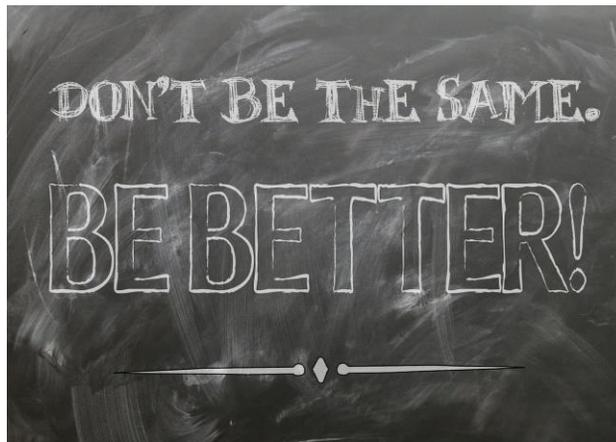
It's time to master the skill of asking questions and see the benefits of doing so....

Write down any 3 questions you've been wanting to ask for a while. Try to make them about different parts of your life, such as one question being about something you want to ask a friend, and another question involving something at work.

Start listing the reasons why you want to ask the questions. Then, start to write the positives of doing so, following the steps on the previous slide.

Ask the questions. It may seem like starting with 3 questions is a small thing to do. However, once you've started and keep repeating the process of asking questions, it will come naturally to you to do so.

After you've asked the questions, list what you have learnt below. This could be something about yourself, another person, a situation or a work skill:



How would you now rate your skills in Asking Questions?



PROBLEM SOLVING
Rate yourself



1
Not great



2
Need help



3
OK



4
Improving

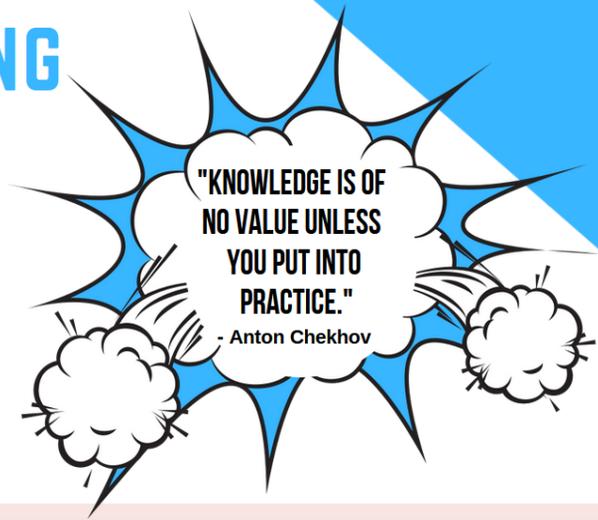


5
Mastering

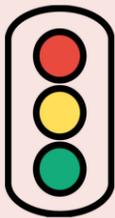


Asking questions

LEARNING BY DOING



1. To continue being better at Asking Questions what am I going to



stop doing?

continue doing?

start doing?

2. Who is going to help me keep on track?

.....

3. How will I see the difference?

one week

one month

one year.....



4. Who will I share my knowledge of this skill with?



.....



5. Which Character Strengths will I need? Highlight them below!

Appreciating Others	Bravery	Creativity	Curiosity	Fairness	Forgiveness	Gratitude	Honesty
Hope	Humility	Humour	Judgement	Kindness	Leadership	Love	Love of Learning
Perseverance	Perspective	Prudence	Self Regulation	Social Intelligence	Spirituality	Teamwork	Zest

Learn more about Character Strengths at www.facework.online

6. What would you change, add or remove to improve this worksheet ?

send suggestions to info@facework.online