



Court Leadership and Asking Questions



Why Ask Questions?

Questions allow access to more information and answer the “why.” Questions promote communication, facilitate navigating uncomfortable situations, may de-escalate disagreements, provide clarification and greater understanding, and often stimulate thinking. Questions aid in evaluating the challenge, increase perspectives and understanding, support critical assessment, and stimulate creativity. Questions allow leaders to learn and grow.

Why and How Should Court Professionals Use Inquiry?

One of the marks of a leader is the ability to ask questions and use inquiry. If you don't ask, you may not know. The National Association for Court Management (NACM) CORE® Competency on Leadership notes that key responsibilities and roles of a court leader include being a strategist, a diagnostician, an innovator, and a leader of change. Those roles involve seeking evidence and gaining new insights, both of which may be initiated by asking questions. Below is a select list of different reasons for questions from several sources.

A Sampler of Question Purposes

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Checking• Hypothetical• Justifying• Probing• Reflective	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clarifying• Closed• Contingency• Funnel• Leading• Open• Probing• Process• Recall• Rhetorical	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Anticipative• Assessment• Clarification• Elaborative• Evaluation• Example• Explorative• For-instance• History• Implementation• Integration• Learning• Options• Outcomes• Perspective• Planning• Prediction• Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interpretive• Investigative• Productive• Speculative• Subjective
Source: LinkedIn	Source: Indeed	Source: Coaching	Source: Harvard Business Rev.

This Series

In this series, different questions will be provided. Approaches will fall within these specific areas:

- Questions to ask of employees - to obtain feedback on the workplace
- “Smarter” questions - to have information for strategic decision making
- Questions to seek alignment - to understand the boss's priorities and needs
- Questions for success - to unlock your own success
- Team questions - to inspire and support team effectiveness
- “Power” questions - to guide actions and problem solving
- Coaching questions - to provide insights, ignite ideas, and provide inspiration
- Questions for court leaders - to be a proactive leader

As these inquiry tools are shared, readers are encouraged to consider which ones might be useful, which techniques to practice with, or which question techniques to add to their skill set.

Resources: NACM CORE® Competency on Leadership, 1/19/2022, [Leadership – National Association for Court Management](#); LinkedIn, Five Types of Questions; Indeed.com, 15 Types of Questions; Professional Coaching Institute, Scottsdale, AZ. (defunct), Powerful Questions; Harvard Business Review, Smarter Questions.

