



Colour Coded for Success

HOW YOUR QUESTIONS AFFECT ANSWERS YOU GET | *Part Two of Two*

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Do you know the #1 way to be heard, understood or to get your message across? It is to listen well.

To really hear and appreciate your conversation partner will help you understand the person and topic better. It will also prepare you to respond well when it is your turn to talk, or to ask good questions.

In part one we took note of the attitude and technique to apply in our quest for information. Today we look at the specific question types and how to use them strategically to achieve results you want.

Listening was the #1 tip of the first '5 Steps to Get Started' in part one of this set on getting good answers – by asking better questions. The other suggested steps were:

- 2 Give reasons why you are asking questions to inform and encourage the people you are talking to.
- 3 Stay open, and wait for the answer to really participate in the exchange of information.
- 4 Mix n' match simple questions that require a yes or no answers, or more detailed answers.
- 5 Confirm what you heard because words, tone, body language and gestures can be interpreted in many ways so double checking or restating what you think you heard, can only eliminate incorrect interpretations.

How you pose or form the questions can make a difference in the quality of the answers others will share with you. Here are 5 types of questions:

- 1 **Do you vote?** This is a closed question. There is only a No or a Yes answer to this simple question.
- 2 **Which issues are important to you in the election?** This is an open question that asks the person you are speaking with to volunteer information.
- 3 **You say your top issue is the economy. Is this because of government policy or your own investments?** Follow up questions dig deeper using information from a previous question.
- 4 **What if you were in charge? What would you do first?** "What if" questions encourage speakers to explain their topic in a larger way.
- 5 **Do you think the Green Party has a place at the national debates since they have no officially elected actual Member of Parliament?** This leading question leads to a certain answer.

VIP – Consider your question and prepare your respondent. If it is complex – say that. "I know this is difficult. Take your time." This acknowledges and encourages the

consideration of the respondent. A small introduction before plunging into big questions is always a good idea.

Look at the stories of successful people and you will see – they asked lots of questions. Higher quality questions yield higher quality success. Have you got questions for me?

Send them to www.theafronews.com. Or, sign up for one minute communication tips delivered to your email box 3x a month – visit the soon to be relaunched www.helenakaufman.com

There is no passion to be found playing small, in settling for a life that is less than the one you are capable of living

—Nelson Mandela,

11th President of South Africa
