

What is a great QUESTION?



TRANSEARCH
EXECUTIVE SEARCH & LEADERSHIP CONSULTING

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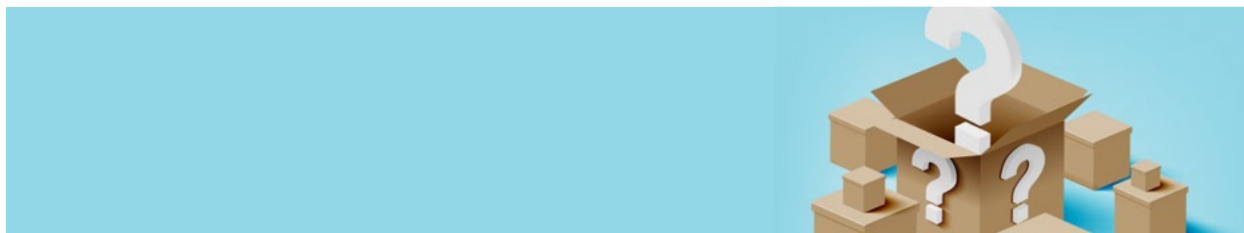
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“You know you have missed the mark when the candidate, like an interview gunslinger, looks you directly in the eye, smiles, makes a quick verbal draw and, in one smooth movement, fires their well-honed response back across the desk.”

Not too long ago, if you joined a meeting in progress, it was relatively easy to know “who was in charge.” Knowledge was the source of power. Throw in the accelerated speed of change, heightened ambiguity and the reality that in the second year of a technology-based degree much of the first is already out of date, and a new, make-or-break quality emerges – the ability to ask great questions. “Judge a man by his questions rather than by his answers.” – Voltaire





“What is a great question?” “Now, that is a great question!” Here are some of my personal favourites.

- “If we weren’t in this business, would we get into it?”¹
- “What’s the worst thing the competition can do, and what would it take for us to do it first?”
- “How and in what way do we need to retool the organization structure to take advantage of AI?”
- “Specifically, how does the business make money?”
- “What do we do better than anyone else?”²
- “How are we going to measure the culture we have and the culture we need?”
- “Specifically, why do our best people stay?”
- “What should we stop – and what do we need to start – measuring?”
- “Where is tomorrow’s competition coming from?”
- “Why does the customer buy, and three years from now how will that change?”
- “If I was working for me what would I want to change?”
- “In the decision we are about to make, what undesirable consequences are we likely to have to deal with?”
- “As a leader, what legacy will I leave?”
- Meanwhile, silence is invariably the best question of all.

What is a great question? “The questions we don’t ask become the puzzles we don’t solve.” – A.J. Darkholme³

What is a great question? A great question breaks the listener’s natural rapport and flow. Like an electric shock, it’s a jolt of reality. It penetrates the veil of “knowing the answer.” It moves the conversation closer to what really happened. It interrupts the conversation the candidate would otherwise be having with themselves.

A great question makes the silence louder.⁴ How loud? Consider the question that was

1 Peter Drucker, from a conversation with then GE CEO Jack Welch, in 1981.

2 Jim Collins, *Good to Great* (2001) at chapter 5, “The Hedgehog Concept.”

3 *Rise of the Morningstar* (2014).

4 Based loosely on a Zen proverb.



put to applicants seeking to join the newly formed Royal Marine Commandos in WWI. “What makes a young lad like you tired of living?”⁵ “He who asks a question remains a fool for five minutes. He who does not ask remains a fool forever.” – Chinese Proverb

What is a great question? One of the all-time classics is the question Steve Jobs asked when he wanted to persuade John Sculley – who was, at the time, CEO of PepsiCo – to join him at Apple. “John, do you want to make sugar water for the rest of your life or join me at Apple and change the world?” Sculley did, of course, join Apple. The emotional leverage Jobs exerted on Sculley is an object lesson in the power of persuasion. That Sculley was unsuccessful is a different story. “We thought that we had the answers, it was the questions we had wrong.” – Bono

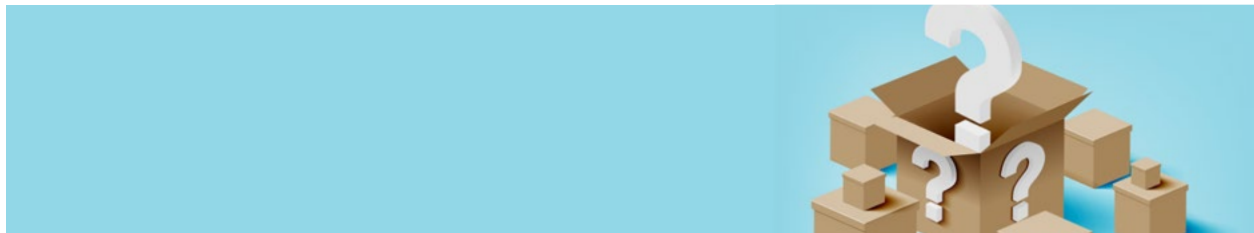
What is a great question? With his book *Start With Why* (2009), Simon Sinek reframed how many people thought about what it meant to be a leader. His Golden Circle – starting from the outside in – embraces three themes: (1) What do we do? (2) How do we do it? and (3) Why do we do it? Sinek’s work emphasised that successful companies start with “Why do we do what we do?” In doing so, he energised a whole generation of leaders to revisit and/or clarify their organization’s purpose. Today’s reality? To bring your strategy to life, start with “why.” To move beyond a transactional relationship with the customer (you will love our product), explain your “why.” To attract and retain

great talent, leverage your “why.” “An innovator is someone with unbounded curiosity spurred on by a compelling purpose.” – John O. Burdett



What is a great question? The 2024 US presidential election pivoted on what turned out to be a killer question. When appearing on *The View*, host Sunny Hostin asked Vice President Kamala Harris, “Is there anything you would have done differently than President Biden over the past four years?” Her response, “There is not a thing that comes to mind and I have been part of the decisions,”

5 David O’Keefe, *One Day in August* (2014) at page 206.



totally undermined the whole premise of her campaign theme: CHANGE. President Biden’s approval rating at the time was only 38%. Harris’s response was replayed hundreds of times on Republican television ads. “You might not be able to describe how tomorrow will unfold, but a smart person, at a minimum, anticipates the questions that are likely to be asked.” – John O. Burdett

You know you have asked a great interview question when the candidate has to stop, think and move their eyes upward (to the right or left) before providing a considered response. You know you have missed the mark when the candidate, like an interview gunslinger, looks you directly in the eye, smiles, makes a quick verbal draw and, in one smooth movement, fires their well-honed response back across the desk. “Friends ask you questions; enemies question you.” – Criss Jami

The word “question” is derived from the Latin *quaerere* (to seek). There is no single “right question.” There is, however, a way to move the conversation forward, such that the right outcome is achieved. Running a meeting, coaching, mentoring, discussing performance, facilitating dialogue around strategy ... all rise or fall on the quality of the questions asked. Nowhere, however, is the ability to ask a great question more important than in the talent acquisition interview. Fortunately, great questions need

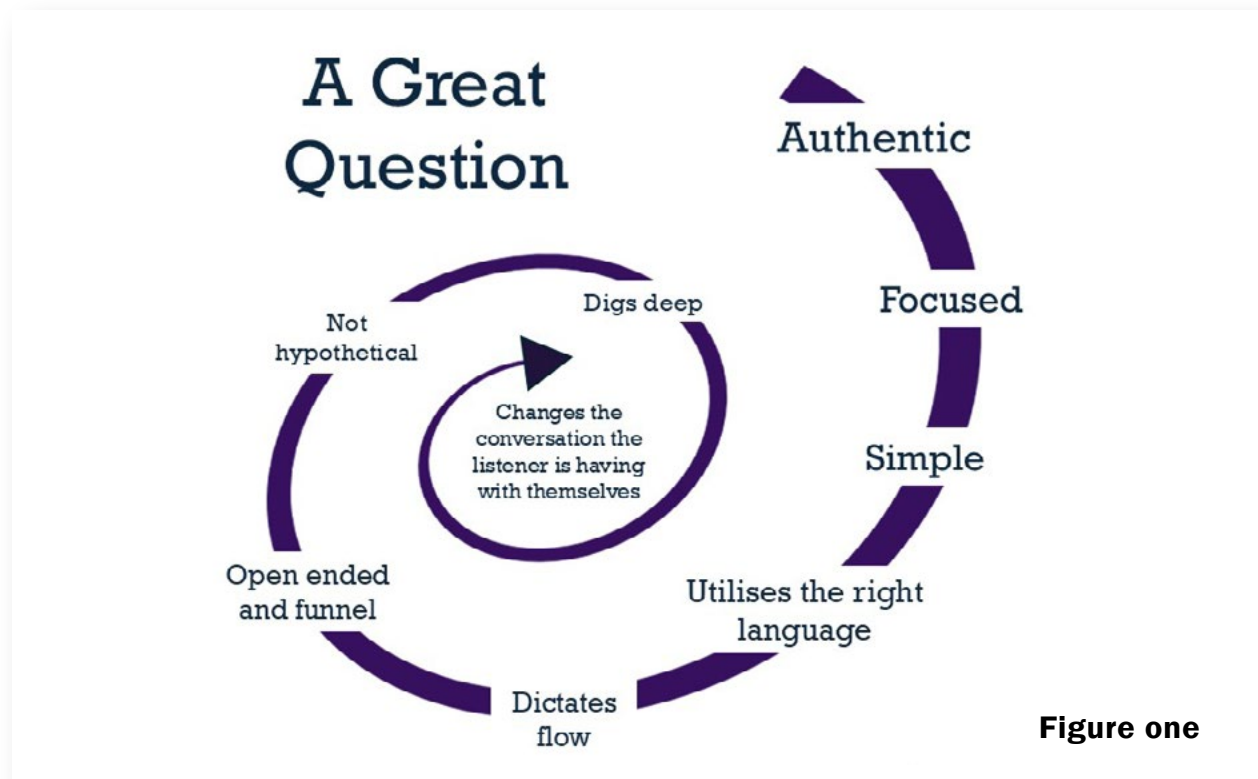
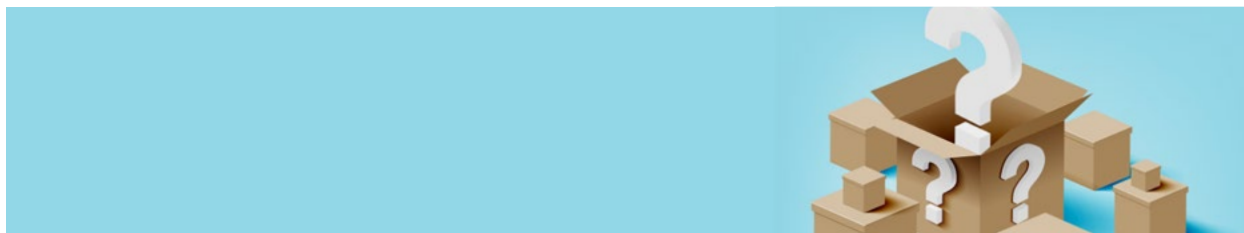


Figure one



not be the realm of the gifted few. We can all summon up great questions. “Strategy is the future seen through a cloudy glass. The right question, at the right time, brings focus and clarity.” – John O. Burdett

A great question isn’t formulaic. Manufactured questions echo manipulation. Context shapes content. **Figure one** describes the factors that prompt great interview questions. At times, the right question unfolds in the moment. Beyond that, reaching for the great question is a work in progress. Below are 10 empowering characteristics that support “the art of the interview question”:

1. **Be Authentic.** To find a better question, we have to first shed the mask many of us hide behind. Authenticity is truth. A great question springs from the depth of who we are. It surfaces when the real you is fully present. Princeton University psychologists Janine Willis and Alexander Todorov show in their research that, when meeting someone new, we rate qualities like trustworthiness, likability and aggressiveness within the first tenth of a second. It’s an in-the-moment opinion that, at least initially, doesn’t change with additional exposure. Writing in *Wired* magazine, social psychologist Amy Cuddy suggested that the first impression draws on two pivotal questions: “What are this person’s intentions towards me?” and “How strong and competent is this person?”⁶ Finding our authentic self lies in the following:
 - *Be there.* Make sure you are the one asking the question – that is, not the you sitting in the chair but the you whose attention is focused. Be in the moment. Smile – it signals you want to be there. Smiling also increases the amount of air inhaled. This in turn, literally, cools the brain. A slightly cooler brain puts you in a better mood.⁷ A reciprocal smile puts you both in a better mood.
 - *Clear the mind.* Take deep breaths. Have a clean desk. Be punctual. Where possible, schedule interviews early in the day. Take pride in your professionalism. Affirm that you want to be there. Make the candidate’s interactions before the interview (e.g., finding the interview venue) positive. Set adequate time aside.
 - *Focus.* To deliver excellence, work on one thing at a time. Research by Professor Clifford Nass of Stanford University shows that multi-taskers

6 “First Impressions: The Science of Meeting People,” *Wired*, November 28, 2012.

7 Richard Conniff, *The Ape in the Corner Office* (2005) at page 216.

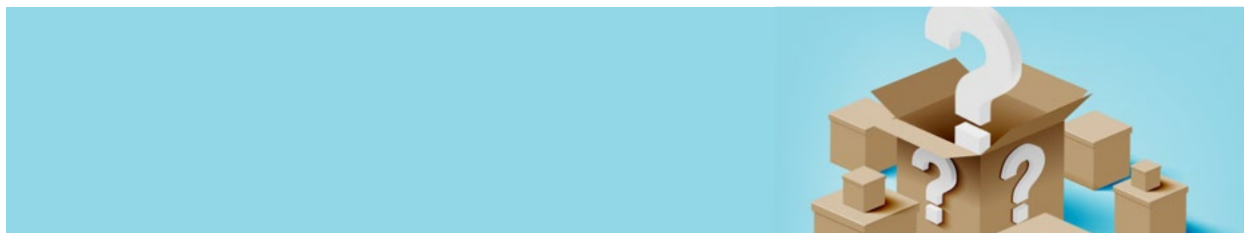


achieve significantly less overall than those who bring organization and focus to each task at hand. No interruptions. Focus is about preparation.

- *Make the candidate feel comfortable.* How the question is asked is at least as important as the question itself. If the candidate feels intimidated, even the most elegantly presented question won't land. Posture (leaning in), eye contact and being relaxed draw people in. Pace the discussion; that way the energy doesn't lag.
- *Connect.* Research by Albert Mehrabian (UCLA) in the 1960s and Michael Argyle (Oxford University) in the 1970s found that 7% of how we communicated emotion and attitude lay in the content; how the message was presented (e.g., tone) made up 38% of how emotion and attitude came across; and body language (e.g., facial expression) made up the remaining 55%. Connecting with the candidate lies far more in tone of voice and facial expression than it does in what is said.

Key Learning. *Be authentic, be present and be fully aware of the silent messaging that accompanies everything we say and do.*





- 2. Questions Asked from a Defensive Position Are Easily Deflected.** Don't interrogate the candidate. Then again, don't let them off the hook either. If you receive a poorly thought through response, ask the question again; the second time with a softer voice. This will respectfully let the candidate know that you are not going to let the question go.

Don't let the candidate provide long, rambling answers. It sucks the energy out of the room. Lack of focus also raises a concern regarding the candidate's ability to inspire others. The Gettysburg Address has only 272 words.⁸

Some very senior candidates can be intimidating. When their everyday challenge is to lead a top team, the "position power" inherent in the role doesn't get switched off when they leave the building. There is a kid's party game that we are all familiar with: musical chairs. When the music stops everyone has to find a chair. The problem, at each successive round of music, is that a chair is removed. Eventually there are two people and one chair. As the interviewer, that chair is yours. Don't let the candidate grab it.

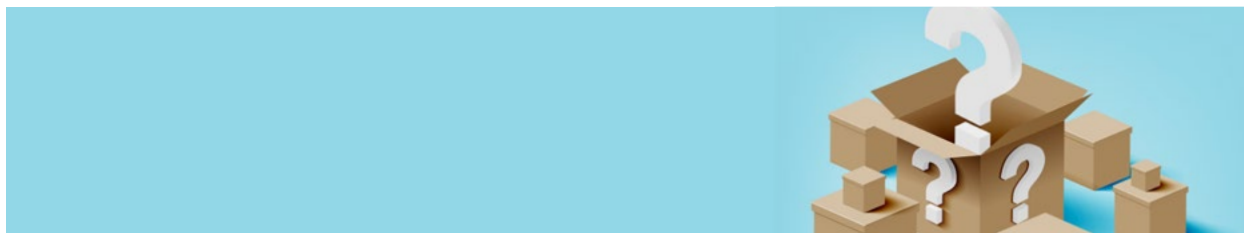
Key Learning. *Preparation is power.*

- 3. Keep It Simple.** A great question is easy to understand (unambiguous). Brief is better than bombastic. Clear trumps convoluted. Relevant beats rousing. Outcome outweighs obstruction.

Questions that are obtuse and complex, that aim to establish how smart the interviewer is or that assert the interviewer's power, say far more about the interviewer's need for attention (and lack of skill) than they do about their ability to draw meaning out of the interview. Ego is the enemy of enquiry. When the interview is about the interviewer, take it as a given that the facts will remain hidden.

The simpler the question, the harder it is to fabricate the answer. A simple question gets to the very heart of the matter. It means grabbing what's essential and letting go of what's merely important. It's trusting ourselves – acumen, insight, sense of timing. If you think too much about what you want to ask, the ensuing internal debate you have with yourself will deflect you from your purpose. The right question will emerge if you simply draw on your experience, relax and let it flow.

⁸ Abraham Lincoln (November 19, 1863).



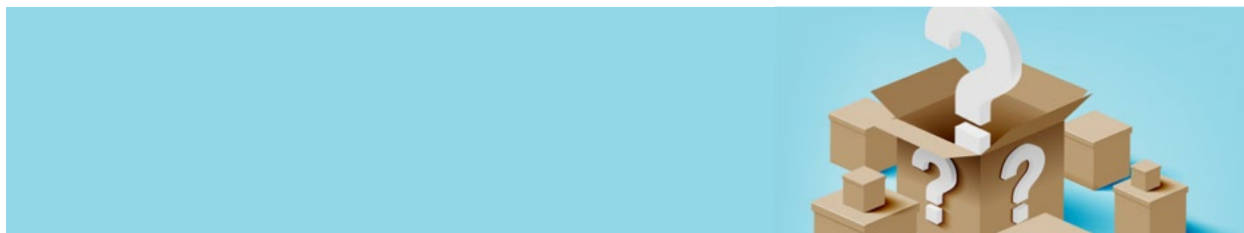
Keeping it simple means that the sightline between the questions asked and the role being discussed is clear. “Why did you leave company A?” is a simple question. “How many tennis balls would fit into an Olympic size swimming pool?” is both irrelevant and silly – unless, of course, the position actually involves filling a swimming pool with tennis balls.

The brain can’t negate. It filters out negatives such as “don’t.” “Don’t think about a blue door” immediately conjures up exactly that. An enquiry that prompts defensiveness results in a guarded response. When “who was to blame” enters the equation, what you are about to hear is a partial and/or filtered answer.

The interview reveals that key targets were missed 18 months earlier. Clearly, it’s an issue that has to be explored. The obvious question is, “What went wrong?” A simpler and more effective question asks, “What did you do to address the concerns that led to the shortfall in results?” Although they focus on the same issue, the first version gets snagged on the degree of self-justification. In the second, the candidate talks from strength. Like a master carpenter, work with, not against, the grain.

Key Learning. *Keep the question simple and relevant – ask one question at a time.*





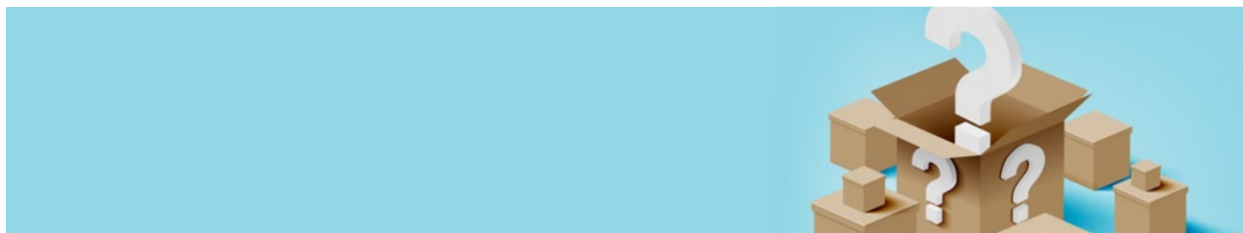
4. Follow the Behavioural Breadcrumbs. Don't be trapped by the organization's vocabulary. Abbreviations and variations of the alphabet soup often used inside the organization silently slam shut the door marked "courtesy."

Leadership often employs language that expresses ideas at a high level of abstraction: rich in metaphor and often full of imagery. Those who reach the oxygen-starved upper peaks of the organization develop, what often amounts to, leadership linguistic shorthand. The interview is a dance. Mastery is to listen attentively to the language being used, to understand when to lead ... and when to follow.

Language is cultural software.⁹ The right language identifies what you do know and builds a bridge to what you need to know. Language can liberate and it can restrict. It can also say a good deal about attitude and style. Does the candidate talk about attending a "meeting" or is the reference to a "team meeting"? Is the discussion around leadership peppered with "I" with little reference to "we"? When discussing results, who else is given credit? Does the tone and delivery speak to "flawless execution" or are the bumps along the way woven into the



9 Michael Schrage, "Good Leaders Don't Use Bad Words," *Harvard Business Review* (June 13, 2013).



narrative? Are the words used visual and compelling? Does the language reach out and make you want to listen? Are you hearing an engaging, interesting and convincing story or a list of self-congratulatory (supposed) facts? What the candidate says and how they say it throws down a trail of attitudinal/behavioural breadcrumbs. Following them prompts the right questions.

Language can mask meaning. Don't just listen; ask questions that "test" the subtext. Terms such as "service" can be misleading in English. It echoes a time when "to be in service" was to be a servant. The Finnish term *Hinku* describes a relationship where both the server and the person who benefits are enriched. The word "strategy" can mean almost anything. Even common terms such as "culture," "consensus" and "confidential" can mean very different things to not-so-different people. By comparison, language that truly conveys what is meant approaches that of an art form. To name the super cluster of stars that is home to the Milky Way (550 million light years across with the mass of a hundred quadrillion suns), astrophysicists have reverted to a Hawaiian word: *Laniakea*. It means "immeasurable heaven."

Interviewing across borders adds to the potential confusion. "Teamwork" doesn't mean the same thing in South Korea as it does in North Dakota. Subtle differences are an even bigger trap. "Collaboration" from a Swedish perspective implies consensus. "Collaborating" with a team in Sydney, Australia, simply means two or more people working together to meet a common goal. Same language, different meaning. Don't assume. This interrupts the action verbs to ask, check, validate.

Key Learning. *Use questions that resonate with the candidate. Follow the behavioural breadcrumbs. Don't assume that because you share the same language you have a common understanding of what many common terms mean.*

- 5. Complexity Complicates Things.** It's a mistake to assume that success at one organization level can be interpreted to mean that the individual will be able to deal with the increased complexity that comes with a more senior or different role. To wit, when and as appropriate, ask questions that stretch/validate the candidate's ability to manage complexity.

Complexity emerges in a number of ways. A role that involves line-of-sight, hands-on, day-to-day management becomes an entirely different challenge

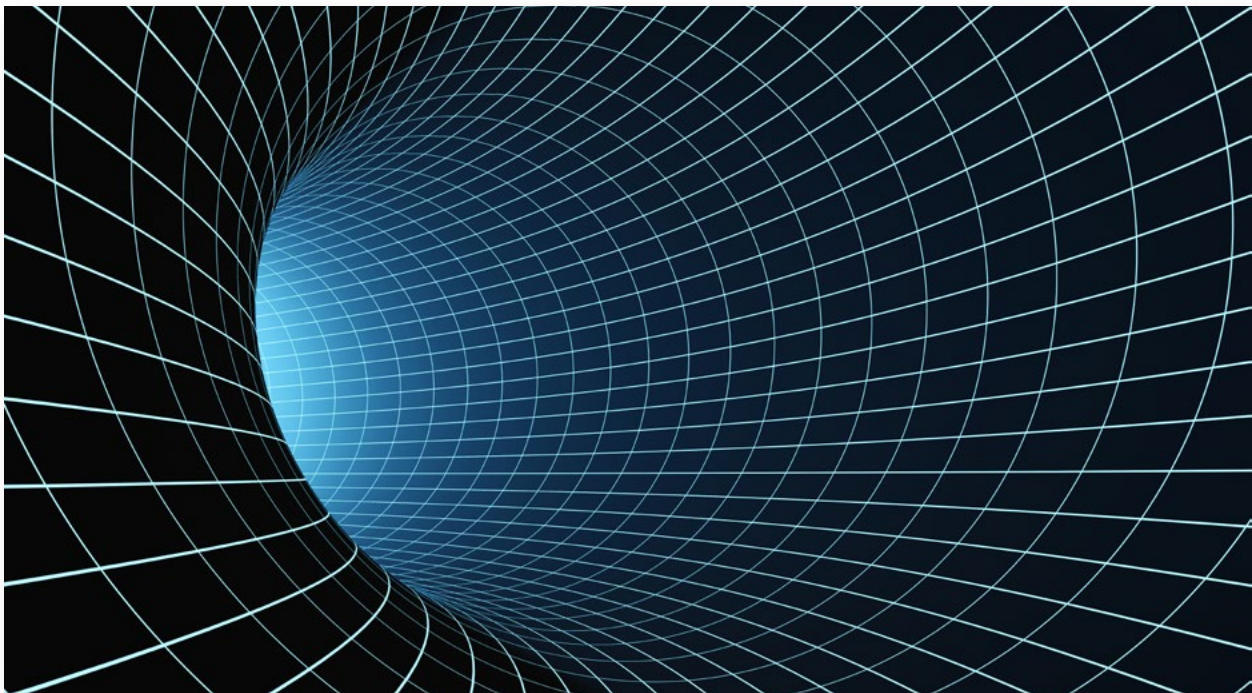


when the span of control encompasses remote locations. The capacity to create appropriate language speaks to mental agility. The rich use of metaphor indicates an ability to operate at a high level of abstraction. The ability to reframe those same metaphors underscores comfort with ambiguity.

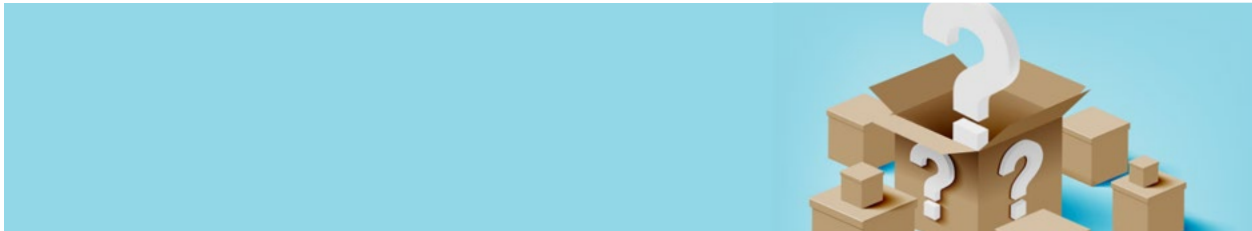
Is the candidate comfortable playing, what amounts to, linguistic chess (concepts, theories, ideas) or are they more at home sticking to facts and events? Is the language succinct? Does it follow an easy-to-follow and logical flow? Sloppy or poorly thought through language raises a red flag around an individual's capacity to manage complexity. Michael Schrage puts it beautifully, "Commodity words yield commodity outcomes."¹⁰

Key Learning. *Lazy use of language raises a red flag regarding the capacity to manage complexity.*

- 6. Use Different Kinds of Questions.** A meaningful question is one that can't be answered with a simple "yes" or "no." First-phase questions invariably ask "who," "what," "when," "where" and/or "how." "Whose support did you need to win the contract?" "Why" questions provoke a defensive response. They also break rapport.



¹⁰ Schrage, "Good Leaders Don't Use Bad Words."



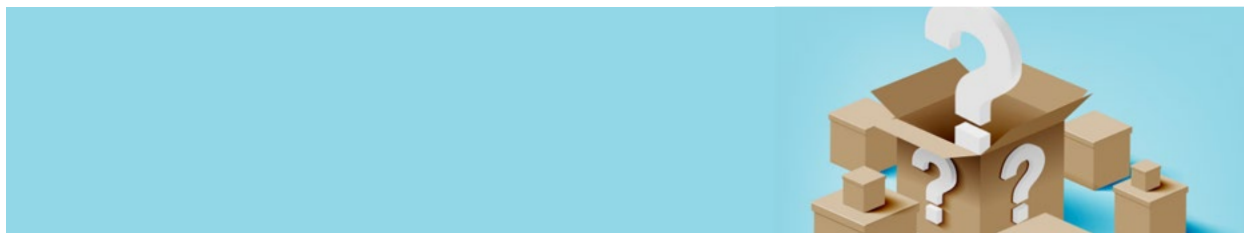
Second-phase questions invite the candidate to dig deeper: “Tell me more.” “Please, go on.” “Expand on that.” Silence prompts the candidate to go even deeper (third phase). At each phase the candidate finds it ever more difficult to come up with the answer they think the interviewer is looking for. Silence is, of course, often the best question of all.¹¹

There is invariably an exception to any and all rules. There are times (used sparingly) when a well-crafted general question – a question not directly related to a **specific**, predefined quality or expectation – can be invaluable. “Tell me about the competitive landscape at that time?” The objective is to put the candidate at ease and/or funnel the conversation towards a specific aspect of behaviour.

Detectives, skilled questioners in their own right, use funnel questions – a series of questions that prepare the ground for a pivotal, objective, fact-finding question – when interviewing someone who witnessed a crime. “What did you



11 Anyone interested in knowing what mastery in the use of silence looks like should go to YouTube and watch an extract from any episode of The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson.

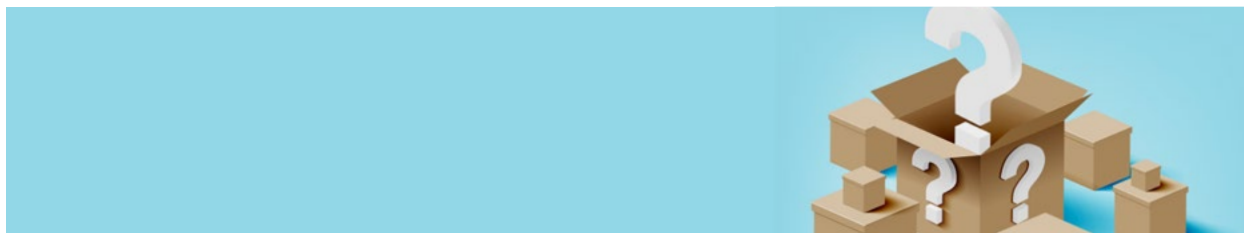


do on the day in question?” “What time did you arrive at the bank?” “Did you see anyone who looked out of place?” “What made them stand out?” “What was that person wearing?” Etc., etc., etc. It is important to follow up a funnel question with one that focuses on the pivotal issue.

The best questions arise in the moment. “In what ways will your successor need to be different than you?” “What would it take for the team to move to the next level?” Asking different kinds of questions add balance and make the rhythm of the conversation more engaging.

There are benefits in asking candidates the same questions. Example: “Tell me a time your behaviour had a positive impact on your team?” Asking the candidates the same questions gives you a consistent, reliable basis for sifting the superb candidates from the merely better than average. It also enhances validity. A blended approach might well embrace: (1) a library of generic questions that the hiring manager can choose from; (2) funnel questions; (3) questions that specifically dig into past performance; (4) in-the-moment questions; and (5) follow-up questions prompted by a previously conducted psychometric assessment.





Context related questions can open the door to character and personality. “Tell me how you spend a typical day?” Or perhaps even better, “In as much detail as possible, share exactly how you spent your time **yesterday**?” The response says a good deal about how the candidate organizes their time. By underscoring what is prioritised, it also provides insight into something best described as “leadership balance.” There is a caution here, however. An interview dominated by non-specific, context related, or funnel questions may well result in hiring a highly articulate candidate who, as they say in Texas is, “All hat and no cattle.”

In ancient Rome, the retiarius was the gladiator who fought with the net and the trident. The net was used to capture his opponent. The trident had a far more serious intent. A great question – one focused on information and/or facts – also has serious intent.

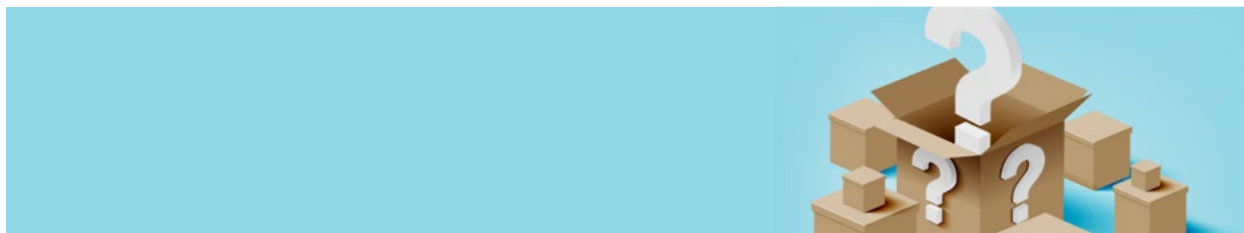
Key Learning. *Ask context related and general questions. On occasion, change the patterns of play by employing funnel question to open the door to a deeper conversation. A great question, however, always has serious intent.*

- 7. Avoid the Hypothetical.** The argument for hypothetical questions is that “they give a more rounded view of the candidate.” To be honest, “well-rounded” doesn’t mean very much. The notion that complex, hypothetical questions provide evidence of how the candidate “deals with stress” is equally dubious.

Purge “What do you think?” questions from your repertoire. They make for a stimulating conversation at the pub, but add little to the interview. “What would you do if you were made the CEO in your business tomorrow?” is an interesting intellectual question. Unfortunately, because the response lies entirely within the realm of speculation, its only contribution (negative) is that it takes up valuable airtime.

Opinion may be useful input into an upcoming election, but has little to do with assessing fit with the role in question. Even more misleading is opinion presented as fact. “The real reason the product failed was that the youth market had moved on.” “If I had stayed in that position longer, results would have improved.” “How do you know?” “What evidence supported that assumption?”

A variant of the hypothetical theme is where the interviewer plays amateur psychologist. This falls on two counts: (1) it’s never a good idea for the interviewer to think that they are smarter than the candidate; and (2) questions based on an unproven assumption have little worth. One question I bumped into



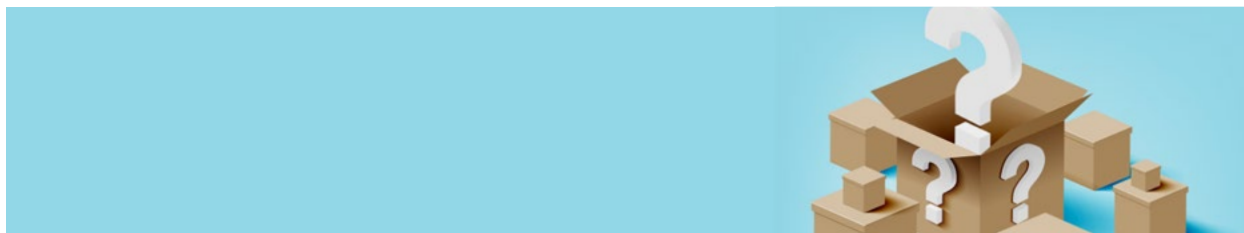
asks, “What is the biggest misconception about you?” The assumption? The “misconceptions” the interviewee brings up represent weaknesses that would, otherwise, have been difficult to uncover.

The dilemma with hypothetical questions is that they cannot be validated. When exploring past performance, a rule of thumb is that a good question yields an answer that can be corroborated during the reference stage. If you can’t validate it, don’t ask it! Make sure the candidate knows that their responses will be **fact checked**.

Key Learning. *For sake of clarity, avoid hypothetical questions.*

- 8. Become a Competency Counterpuncher.** Candidates come prepared. Often far better than the interviewer. Signal what you are looking for ... and that is exactly what the candidate will deliver. You don’t want a potted, rehearsed and/or scripted answer. It’s not helpful to you and it’s certainly not helpful to the candidate. Don’t turn the interview into a beauty contest.





Don't make the question part of the answer. A wasted question "telegraphs" the behaviour (competency) being sought. "Tell me about someone on the team you are coaching." Expect to hear everything you ever wanted to know about coaching! Similarly, if you ask a candidate to "describe a time when you worked under pressure and how you dealt with it," then you are going to hear a highly polished version of what it means to be resilient!

Become a competency counterpuncher. Rather than asking about coaching directly, inquire about the criteria used to identify a successor and the subsequent development steps. If coaching doesn't come up in the answer ... what you don't hear tells you more than what you do hear.

When discussing how results were achieved, look for strands of conversation that point to the competencies involved. When an appropriate string appears, pull on it until each knot, twist and turn is unravelled. "Share exactly how you achieved that?" "Tell me more?" Use silence to solicit secondary feedback. What you hear after the candidate has broken the silence will be unrehearsed.

Identifying leadership competencies is like panning for gold. You dig into results, find out more about the critical incidents, determine who else was involved, establish the role of the team. Swirl the answers around slowly, and when you look carefully, you will see the nuggets you need.

Key Learning. *Make it clear what you are looking for and the candidate will deliver.*

9. The Candidate's Questions. Adequate time must be set aside during the interview (towards the end) for the candidate to explore aspects of the role/business that remain unclear.

The questions the candidate asks say a good deal about the **candidate**. They also let the interviewer know how good their **AIM** has been: the candidate's **A**ttitude, **I**nterest and **M**otivation towards the role. "Is the candidate reconsidering their options?"

In listening to the candidate, it's important to let go of the belief that perception is based exclusively on logic. In 2012, Cadbury, now owned by Mondelez International, a division of Kraft Foods, rounded off the corners of its Dairy Milk bars. Hundreds of chocolate lovers contacted the firm saying, "It tastes too sweet." Others called the change "cultural vandalism." The formula didn't change. Changing the shape changed the perception of taste.



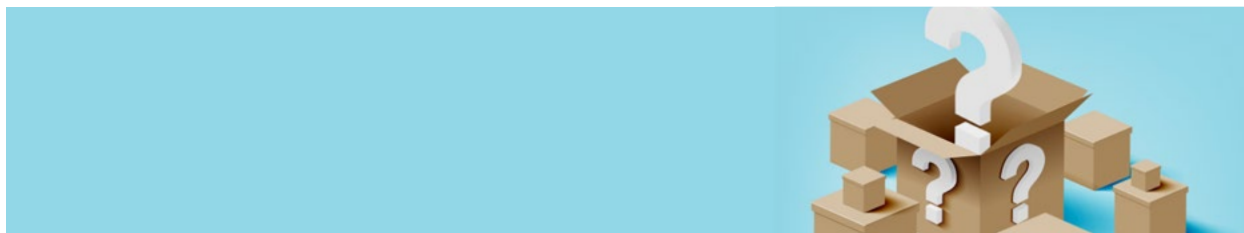
A successful interview rests on an unspoken contract. The interviewer is expected to be open about the organization, the role and the challenge. The interviewee is assumed to be truthful about past positions, experience and results.

In responding to the candidate's questions, three simple rules apply: (1) be honest; (2) when you don't know, say you don't know; and (3) provide needed information within 24 hours – even if that means sending it by courier to the candidate's home. An experienced interviewer is fully conversant with the rule of reciprocity – generosity and respect builds social capital and with it a sense of obligation.

The market for top talent is tough. Informing, involving and, where possible, inspiring the candidate is of paramount importance. Above all, the candidate must feel that the organization has done everything – **everything** – possible to ensure they are a fit for the role. That includes listening, really listening, and responding to the candidate's questions.

Key Learning. *Fit is a two-way street.*





10. If You Don't Listen – the Question Is Irrelevant. Listening is the chemistry of connection. It's the essence of engagement. It's the rigour that reinforces respect. It's a commitment that communicates courtesy. It's an act of caring that confirms character. If you don't listen, you are short-changing your own potential.

A great question is only part one of a two-act play. If you don't listen, the interview amounts to little more than an expensive charade.

Listening and learning are the same things expressed in a different way. No matter how great the question, if you don't listen, you can't learn. Evaluate listening success. Ask for feedback. The complex, technical term for those who don't learn is – “being stuck!”

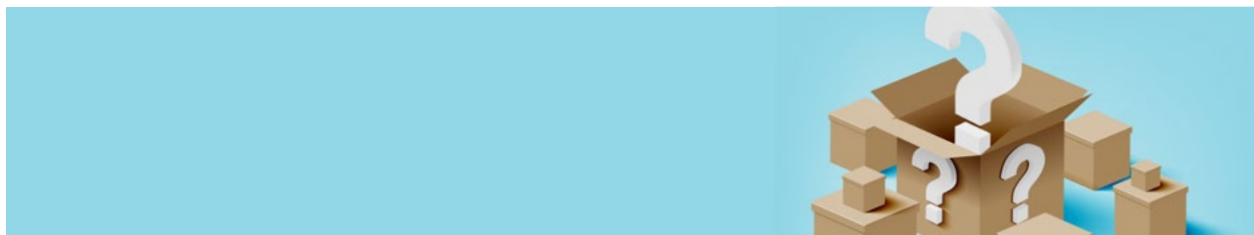
Here, if I may, I would like to quote from my TEAM book:¹¹ “A masterful listener conducts with a hidden baton. Through rapport, posture, eye contact, facial expression and the power of concentration, a great listener silently and effortlessly directs the other actors. Like a benevolent burglar, it's the listener who steals the show.” Go ahead, steal the show!

Key Learning. *Listen in the way you want others to listen to you.*

*“Listening is being open
to be changed by another person.”*

– Alan Alda

¹¹ TEAM: Align, Build, Develop & Connect (2015).



Conclusion

A great interview question isn't formulaic. There is no magic elixir. It's an outcome of practice, practice and more practice. Be authentic. Own the chair. Keep the question simple. Factor in the interviewee's background. Mix results-related and funnel questions. Don't telegraph the answer within the question. Avoid the hypothetical. Be a competency counterpuncher. Be attentive to the interviewee's question. And keep in mind that if you don't listen ... every question is a dumb question. Do all that and you won't have to reach for a great question – it will emerge naturally.

Like its alter ego “listening,” asking questions is often given a secondary order of importance. In today's workplace people don't need someone to take charge; they need someone who will lead the charge.

Not too long ago a leader was judged by what they knew. Today, success is defined by the quality of the questions. If you don't ask great questions, you can't win. If you don't listen to the answer, you won't win!

Three Key Questions

1. If asked, how would those you work with describe your ability to ask great questions? Identify specifically what you need to do to improve the quality of the questions you ask.
2. Do you work to ensure that the questions you ask contain only one idea? What are you going to do to ensure that simple questions dominate your communication approach?
3. On a scale of 1-10 how would you rate your own listening skills? What three things, were you to put the steps in place immediately, would take your listening to the next level?

*“Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow.
The important thing is not to stop questioning.”*

– Albert Einstein



John O. Burdett

*"A great question
asks for what
you want;
not what you
don't want."*

JOHN O. BURDETT has worked in over 40 countries as an executive and as a consultant for businesses that are household names. He continues to work on leadership development and organization culture for some of the world's largest corporations.

In 2019, his work with ABB's top 240 executives received a major international award for the most innovative leadership development initiative of that year. His ongoing partnership with TRANSEARCH International means that his proprietary work on talent acquisition, in any one year, successfully supports many hundreds of top leadership appointments on six continents.

He has written extensively on executive coaching and was awarded international coach of the year by the Finnish Institute of International Trade. Business graduates at the University of Texas indicated that his material on coaching was the single most valuable learning source they took away from their undergraduate degree. He has also coached numerous executive teams

around the world in how to coach. He currently coaches a select group of CEOs.

Apart from a range of corporate leadership workshops, he has taught at business schools on both sides of the Atlantic. His work on the MBA program at the University of Toronto received a teaching excellence award. John holds a doctorate in management development and is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.

In addition to numerous business articles and twice being awarded article of the year by MCB publications, John has published 16 books on leadership, talent management, coaching and organization culture. A number of them bestsellers. His most recent book is a fully revised version of his international bestselling book on executive integration: *Without Breaking Stride*. To download his current business articles go to www.transearch.com/orxestra/downloads

