



TIPS: ASKING OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Asking questions is unfortunately the least often used skill when communicating. We often avoid asking questions to prevent ourselves from appearing uninformed, too inquisitive or too challenging. Like listening, asking questions is an artful skill that requires daily practice. When questions are focused on understanding perspectives that are different than our own, questions can be used to help us create common understanding and dialogue.

Open-ended questions vs Closed questions:

- Open-ended questions allow for a wider variety of responses than their counterpart, the closed-ended question.
- Closed questions are useful for gaining specific facts, limiting the range of responses, or focusing on situations that have only one correct or acceptable answer.
- Open-ended questions are useful in gaining information when that information is based on an individual's own experience, reactions, feelings or thoughts. With an open-ended question there is typically no "correct" answer.

YOU WANT TO BE ASKING OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS!

An open-ended question is a question that begins with one of the following words:

What, Why, Where, When, and How.