

# Questioning and Listening Workbook 2

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# Key Points

- **Open-ended questions** start with Who, What, When, Where, Why, or How.
- Such questions **cannot** be answered with a simple “yes” or “no.”
- They invite **depth**, encourage elaboration, and reveal insights.
- **Closed questions** have their place (e.g., “Are you ready to proceed?”) but yield limited information.
- **Listening actively** and using responses to **form** your next question is the essence of effective probing.

# Exercises

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For each of the six question stems below, write one open-ended question you could use in a professional context (sales call, meeting, coaching session, etc.):

<b>Stem</b>	<b>Context</b>	<b>Open ended question</b>
Who	Understanding stakeholders	"Who else on your team would be affected by this change?" [Redacted]
What	Clarifying needs	"What outcomes are you hoping to achieve with this project?" [Redacted]
When	Timing Considerations	"When do you need this solution fully operational?" [Redacted]
Where	Context & environment	"Where in your workflow do you see the biggest bottleneck?" [Redacted]
Why	Underlying motivation	"Why is solving this challenge a top priority for you?" [Redacted]
How	Process & method	"How have you addressed similar issues in the past?" [Redacted]

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Below are closed questions. Rewrite each as an open-ended question:

1. **Closed:** "Did you like our last product?" **Open:**

**Open alternative**

2. **Closed:** "Is your team ready to roll out the update?"

**Open Alternative**

3. **Closed:** "Will this timeline work for you?"

**Open Alternative**

4. **Closed:** "Do you have the budget approved?"

**Open Alternative**

5. **Closed:** "Are you satisfied with our service?"

**Open Alternative**

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1. **Pick an open-ended question** from Exercise 1 and ask it to a colleague or friend.
2. **Listen** to their response and note **one key detail** they share.

3. **Follow up** with a more specific question (funnel) that dives deeper into that detail.

Ro un d	Question	Detail captured	Follow up funnel Question
1	“What outcomes are you hoping to achieve?”	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px;"></div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px;"></div>
2	(Your funnel based on detail)	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px;"></div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px;"></div>
3	(Your funnel based on detail)	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px;"></div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px;"></div>

# Reflections

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1. **Impact of Openers:** Which “honest serving man” opened the most revealing response for you?

2. **Listening vs. Hearing:** Recall a moment you distractedly “heard” but didn’t truly listen—what was missed?

3. **Next Steps:** How will you remind yourself to switch from closed to open questions in daily interactions?

# Action Plan

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- **Question Bank:** Create and display a list of 6 “What/Why/When/Where/Who/How” prompts at your desk.

**Question #1**

**Question #2**

**Question #3**

**Question #4**

**Question #5**

**Question #6**

- **Daily Practice:** Intentionally ask **two open-ended questions** per meeting or conversation.
- **Funnel Log:** Keep a brief funneling journal—record initial open question, key detail, and your follow-up.

## Final Summary

Mastering open-ended questions and pairing them with active listening is a transformative skill. By inviting others to share their perspectives through Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How, you gain richer understanding, build trust, and guide conversations toward meaningful outcomes. Practiced regularly, this questioning & listening approach becomes second nature—and elevates every interaction you have.

**Good luck, and keep practicing !**

Inspiring Quote “Judge a man by his questions rather than by his answers.”

— Voltaire