Questions are the Answer
A Breakthrough Approach to Your Most Vexing Problems at Work and in Life

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In the word *question*,
there is a beautiful word—*quest*.

I love that word.

Elie Wiesel
Why do questions matter – more than answers?
Cybersecurity is the number one problem.

Warren Buffett
founder, chairman, and CEO Berkshire Hathaway
Lior Div
founder and CEO
200+ Catalytic Questioners
INVESTORS PAY PREMIUMS for exceptional innovation performance

INNOVATION PREMIUM

Expect FUTURE innovations to generate NEW income streams

Innovation stream (NPV) from EXISTING businesses

* Source: Innovator’s DNA LLC & Credit Suisse, based on Innovation Premium data from 2010-2017
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Market Cap</th>
<th>R&amp;D %</th>
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OBJECTIVE CONSCIOUSNESS

RELENTLESSLY QUESTION THE STATUS QUO

“EVERY DAY WE ASK – WHY ARE WE EVEN DOING THIS?”
Why don’t we ask more questions?
ISOLATION

the enemy of

collaboration • innovation
Travis Kalanick
co-founder UBER
former CEO
KNOW you KNOW

YES

NO

YES

NO

KNOW

KNOW
“Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely.”

LORD ACTON

Letter to Archbishop Mandell Creighton, April 5, 1887
CHECK MULTIPLE VANTAGE POINTS

If you were in my job, what would you be focusing on?
RECRUIT OTHERS IN YOUR QUEST

My biggest personal challenge is isolation, can you help me?
REQUIRE BRUTAL HONESTY

Brutally Honest Reports

Five areas – including “What’s broken?”
Examining
THE POWER
of QUESTIONS

Health

Relationships

Kids & Curiosity

Careers & Innovation

Finance
the catalyst for

collaboration • innovation

INQUIRY
Mary Barra
CEO
“I didn't know what I didn't know.”
mobility
mobility
“The important and difficult job is never to find the right answer, it is to find the right question.”

Peter Drucker

The Practice of Management, 1954
“Ask the right questions, and the answers will always reveal themselves.”

Oprah Winfrey • founder Oprah Winfrey Network and Harpo Productions
HOW?
Compose and Wait
What are the key conditions for composing catalytic questions?
COMPOSE Conditions
unexpectedly WRONG
UNCOMFORTABLE unusually
reflectively QUIET
COMPOSE Conditions

unexpectedly WRONG

UNCOMFORTABLE unusually

reflectively QUIET

and WAIT for CATALYTIC QUESTIONS
“Getting the right question is key to getting the right answer.”

Jeff Bezos
Working Backwards Process

1. Press release (one page)
2. FAQ list (six pages)
3. A portrayal of the customer experience
This morning Amazon customers in New York City were greeted with an amazon homepage announcing ‘Amazon Magic’ – a new standalone mobile app that gives customers free and fast scheduled same-day delivery on a huge selection of products. For $X.99, you can also select ‘Presto!’ an ultra-fast 1-hour delivery services . . . if you’re one of the few people who have not signed up for Prime yet, you should try this out now. – TECH CRUNCH, 2014
Storyboards
Quickly visualize possible end-to-end experiences
Low Fidelity Prototypes
Building fast to think – Getting feedback
Low Fidelity Prototypes
Building fast to think – Rapidly evaluating lots of ideas
Usability Testing
Working Backwards Process

1111 DAYS
Working Backwards Process

100+
Working Backwards Process

amazon smile
You shop. Amazon gives.

prime now

aws
ELECTRIC ADVENTURE VEHICLES
COMPOSE Conditions
unexpectedly WRONG
UNCOMFORTABLE unusually
reflectively QUIET
and WAIT for CATALYTIC QUESTIONS
Jennifer Lee
Director, Chief Creative Officer
Disney Animation Studios

Chris Buck
Director
Disney Animation Studios
How might we create and fuel the habit of asking questions?
#1 audit your question patterns
#2 jumpstart with starter questions
The 7 Powerful Questions
Michael Bungay Stanier, The Coaching Habit

1. What's on your mind?
2. And what else?
3. What's the real challenge here for you?
4. What do you want?
5. How can I help?
6. If you're saying yes to this, what are you saying no to?
7. What was most useful for you?
#3 brainstorm for questions
CREATIVITY

Better Brainstorming

by Hal Gregersen
Question Burst

• Brainstorm questions ONLY
Question Burst

• Brainstorm questions ONLY

• No answers
Question Burst

• Brainstorm questions ONLY
  • No answers
  • No preambles or explanations
Question Burst

• Brainstorm questions ONLY
  • No answers
  • No preambles or explanations
  • Write down questions word for word
Question Burst

What is your challenge?
Question Burst

Write down one or two words that best capture how you feel emotionally about your challenge right now.
Question Burst

pairs
QUESTION BURST (2 person pair)

• 1 min: Person #1 – Share Your Challenge
• 4 min: Person #1 – Both ask questions!

Person #1 writes them down
QUESTION BURST (2 person pair)

- 1 min: Person #1 – Share Your Challenge
- 4 min: Person #1 – Both ask questions!
  Person #1 writes them down

- 1 min: Person #2 – Share Your Challenge
- 4 min: Person #2 – Both ask questions!
  Person #2 writes them down
ask short questions
ask tough questions
ask compelling questions
Question Burst

• Brainstorm questions ONLY
  • No answers
  • No preambles or explanations
  • Write down questions word for word
QUESTION BURST (2 person pair)

• 1 min: Person #1 – Share Your Challenge
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Person #1 writes them down
QUESTION BURST (2 person pair)

• 1 min: Person #1 – Share Your Challenge
• 4 min: Person #1 – Both ask questions!
    Person #1 writes them down

• 1 min: Person #2 – Share Your Challenge
• 4 min: Person #2 – Both ask questions!
    Person #2 writes them down
Write down one or two words that best capture how you “now” feel emotionally about your challenge.
After doing the Question Burst, have you reframed your innovation challenge, seeing it differently now?
After doing the Question Burst, did you discover at least one new idea to help you solve your challenge?
Before doing the QuestionBurst...
After doing the QuestionBurst...
After doing the QuestionBurst, how do you “now” feel about your challenge?

- A lot better: 8%
- Better: 36%
- A little better: 41%
- The same: 12%
- A little worse: 2%
- Worse: 0%
- A lot worse: 1%
After doing the QuestionBurst, have you reframed your innovation challenge, seeing it differently now?

- See it the same: 20%
- See it a little differently: 52%
- See it differently: 22%
- See it a lot differently: 6%
After doing the QuestionBurst, did you discover at least one new idea to help you solve your challenge?

- Yes: 85%
- No: 15%
Loretta Hidalgo Whitesides
Founder Astronaut, Virgin Galactic
Kevin Brown
Chief Supply Chain Officer
Kristen Anderson
Admin Guru at Zappos Insights
Part of the Zappos family

Honorary Zapponian

1. Deliver Wow Through Service
2. Embrace and Drive Change
3. Create Fun and a Little Weirdness
4. Be Adventurous, Creative and Open-Minded
5. Pursue Growth and Learning with Communication
6. Build Open and Honest Relationships
7. Be Passionate and Determined
8. Do More with Less
9. Be Humble
10. Be Humble
How do we create and channel the energy of inquiry into impact for organizations?
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Marc Benioff
founder and co-CEO Salesforce
“Why isn’t all enterprise software as easy to buy as a book on Amazon?”

Marc Benioff
founder and co-CEO Salesforce
“Why isn’t all enterprise software like a Facebook app?”

Marc Benioff
founder and co-CEO Salesforce
“How can we make enterprise level software more intelligent – and apply it in new ways?”

Marc Benioff
founder and co-CEO Salesforce
listen
My favorite internal salesforce group is Airing of Grievances! #salesforceisselfie

A therapeutic group where you can use the power of Chatter to vent, pose a problem and ask for a solution, and suggest ways to improve anything at Salesforce.com.

This group was created in the R&D Gure and after the conversation at HMB and thought we should bring a similar group to
make it psychologically safe for people to speak up and ask fearless questions
V2MOM
VISION. VALUES. METHODS. OBSTACLES. MEASURES.
VISION  What is it that we really want?
VALUES  What’s really important to us?
METHODS How are we going to get it?
OBSTACLES What is preventing us from having it?
MEASURES How will we know that we have it?
• become an instrument of inquiry
To do is to be.

Jean-Paul Sartre
To be is to do.

Socrates
do be do be do

Frank Sinatra
• make a difference •
QUESTIONS ARE THE ANSWER

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HAL GREGERSEN
Executive Director, MIT Leadership Center

Foreword by Ed Catmull, Co-author of the New York Times Bestseller Creativity, Inc.

Thank you!

Engage
@HalGregersen

Explore
www.halgregersen.com