



Magic Questions

There is no such thing as a good or bad question in coaching. It all depends on the personality of the coach and coachee, the timing of the question, the context or situation it is asked in, the tone of voice and body language of the coach and the relationship between the coach and coachee. A key coaching skill is for the coach to build sufficient rapport with the coachee to know what questions and techniques to use at any particular point.

All coaches, however, have challenging coachees or coaching situations where they are simply not sure where to go next or what question to ask. Coaching models such as the GROW model can help a coach structure a session in order to help avoid this. There are also a range of coaching tools and exercises that can help take the focus away from questions encouraging the coachee, for example, to role play or think outside the box.

With experience a coach develops a number of 'magic' questions they like to use a lot and which they find helps to move a situation forward. The key thing is not to become too obsessed with searching out the right question and just to be 'in the moment' asking what comes naturally rather than worrying about what comes next.

Below are questions that you might find useful if your mind goes blank:

'If you secretly knew the answer to this problem what would it be?'

'In a perfect world what would the solution be?'

'If there was one thing you could do right now that would make you more successful what would it be?'

'Think of a similar problem in the past – how did you approach that?'

'What would it look like ife.g. the problem were solved, you could write your own job description, your students behaved well....'

'Tell me more about that!'

'What would you advise yourself to do?'

'What would a friend advise you to do?'

'So let's summarise what has been said so far.....'

'What one thing could you change that would move this situation forward?'

'What fibs do you tell yourself about this situation?'

'Let's go in a completely different direction for a moment that's completely unrelated and see where it takes us'

'I'm struggling a bit – what question would you ask next if you were me?'