



## BE INQUISITIVE

Learn How To Ask The Right  
Questions When Meeting People

## **You cannot know everything.**

In fact, too many people pretend to know information when they haven't a clue.

Then, there are those who are inquisitive. While some may believe these people are prying, they are usually just asking questions because they don't know the answers.

When you learn how to ask the right questions, you'll no longer be in the dark.

This helps you to not only learn, but it helps when connecting with people as well. When you show interest in others by asking them questions about themselves and what they do, they will appreciate the fact that you've taken an interest in them.

## **Show Them You Are Genuine**

Now. Some people ask questions just to pry. These people only listen for the answers that they want to hear. They use these answers to manipulate the situation to their benefit. Obviously, this isn't a way to show people you're genuine.

Conversely, when you are genuine, people will be more than willing to answer your questions. You can use their answers to help them in some way. This will further their appreciation, but you don't want to ask questions just for the sake of asking. Find reasons to ask and keep it genuine.

## **Know What You Want to Learn Before the Conversation**

If you're trying to learn about someone, see if you can determine what information you would like to obtain from them. Perhaps you learned that they are from a country you have always been interested in visiting. This can be a great way to start

a conversation with them. Ask them what their home country is like and ask about tips when visiting. They may even hook you up with better places to see through their own connections.

Another example is if you're looking to learn how to do something the other person knows how to do.

Don't just ask them to teach you everything they know about the subject or skill. Try to get some preliminary information and use that as your basis to create questions to ask. The more you are familiar with the subject, the more they will be willing to impart their knowledge. This is not to say they won't help an absolute beginner. It's just much easier when you already have some foundation.

## **Ask the Right Kinds of Questions**

Formulate questions that make sense for the situation. Don't just think up random questions that you'll ask to kill some time.

You need to respect the time of the other person. This is how it works in networking. Otherwise, you risk them getting annoyed with you if you blurt out a loads of general questions.

You have the advantage of using the internet to gain some knowledge about what you want to learn. You may even be able to find questions to ask from sites like Ask.com and Quora.com. While you should be able to come up with a good number of questions on your own, sometimes referring to these websites can give ideas about what others want to know about a particular subject.

To get high-level information about a topic, you could use Wikipedia as a source. However, It's not always 100% accurate and isn't meant to provide extensive coverage. Also, there is often more information within those articles than you might need. But, they can help you gather ideas on what to ask.

## **Take on a Stance of Learning About Others**

If you get into the habit of really wanting to learn about others, it will become natural as you do it. If you just casually take an interest in a person once-in-a-while, you won't get much from anyone. When people get used to the idea that you have an interest, they will volunteer more information. You have to expect them to do the same. It's a conversation.

## **Try to Fit What You Learn to the Situation at Hand**

If you learn about someone and their background, see if there is something that you can do to make their lives easier. This will set up a comfortable environment for both of you. The more helpful you can be, the more likely people will want to talk to you.

When they discover they have you as an ally, they will come to you more often for advice and tips. Be on the lookout for information or people who can help them. Again, this is how networking works. By helping, you develop a relationship where they will eventually want to help you. When you have this with many people, you will find getting others to accept what you are doing is much easier. They will go out of their way to help you.

## **Listen Well**

The whole premise of this blog is that you should listen. When you listen to others and really hear what they say, they will notice that you are showing that you care. Many people hear but don't listen. They are too busy thinking about what they are

going to say after the other person stops talking. The best way to learn about other people is to actively listen to what they are saying.

You need to let them answer the questions you ask. To process what they are saying, use their answers as the basis for further questions. Sometimes, repeating back what they said will allow you to process the information better. In doing so, they will sometimes give further insight as well. This insight is often hidden from others who don't listen well.

## **Be Available**

People always tend to flock to inquisitive people. This is because they know more than others over time and it is done in a subtle manner. Asking good questions and listening to all answers is the foundation of a knowledgeable person.

But, if you don't make yourself available, this will hurt the good reputation you developed by asking questions. There will be situations where you are too busy to attend to others' needs. Try to keep these situations to a minimum. Make yourself available for people as often as you can.

## **Don't Be Like the Child That Keeps Asking Why**

It's great to be inquisitive, but you don't want to be like the kid who asks 'why?' just to get attention. Children do like to learn, and they ask questions. But, when young children find it's a great way to get people to attend to them, it becomes annoying. You'll often hear parents say "just because" after repeated asking of why.

Adults can get into this habit as well. If you are constantly asking questions by just rattling off whatever comes to mind, you will start getting the same pushback as the three-year-old. Be strategic about the questions you ask but not be

manipulative. Keeping an interest in learning about others is a great way to avoid this situation.

## **Try Not to Get Too Personal**

Unless you are inquisitive with close family or friends, it's best not to let the questions get too personal. In many companies, you could even get into trouble for asking certain personal questions if the other person takes them the wrong way. This is why preparing what you want to learn about people ahead of time is a good approach to gauge topics that may not be appropriate.

## **Not Everyone Will Open Up**

You may find that being inquisitive doesn't sit well with some people. These people tend to be shy and takes a lot for them to open up. Asking questions puts up a wall for these people. If this does happen, don't get angry with the person. It's just the way they are, and you need to accept that.

You may need them to answer questions as it relates to their job if you are their manager. And that is a trickier situation to deal with. Still, after they get to know you better, they may open up over time.

Keep it natural.