

How to Find the Real Need with Socratic Questioning

I cannot teach anybody anything, I can only make them think – Socrates

What Is Socratic Questioning?

Socratic Questioning is a dialog structured by a series of questions intended to draw out answers.

Things to Consider:

- Listen – use the response to one question to guide your next question.
- Start the discussion with a list of questions but be willing to explore relevant ideas.
- Ask clear, specific, open ended questions.
- Wait – give your stakeholders a chance to answer.
- Follow up and ask for elaboration.
- Summarize periodically.

When Do You Use Socratic Questioning?

- Discover the real need
- Gain deeper understanding about assumptions
- Help someone learn something.

Types of Questions in Socratic Questioning

Clarification	What do you mean when you say...?
Probe Assumptions	What are your assumptions and how did you arrive at them?
Probe Reasons and Evidence	Why does that happen?
Viewpoints and perspectives	Is there a different way to look at this?
Implications and Consequences	What are the implications of...?
Questions about the question	Why do you think I asked that question?

For More Information

Session Materials Online: <https://www.kbp.media/real-need-with-socratic-questioning/>

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Socratic Questioning “Canvas”

What is the project?

When did you realize you needed to do this project?

What problem does this project solve?

What is the impact to your organization of that problem?

How much does that problem cost your organization?

How should tomorrow look after we've solved this problem?

What are the next steps?