how to read and do proofs

chapter 2 : the forward-backward method

- the **key** to many proofs is **formulating a correct key question**

how to answer a key question

1. First, give an abstract answer that contains no symbols from the specific problem. (for example, to show that a triangle is isosceles, show that two of its sides have equal length.)

2. Next, apply this abstract answer to the specific problem, using appropriate notation. (For Proposition 1, to show that two of its sides have equal length means to show that $x = y$ (not that $x = z$ or $y = z$))

- one of the difficulties that can arise on the backward process is the possibility of more than one key questions.