

International Conference

Questions and Answers

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I. Warm up-- Group Discussion

1. **Why** is Q & A session so important?
2. **How** to prepare for this session?
3. **What** should you do once the questions start coming?
4. **What type** of questions should you **ask**?
5. How do you stay in control when unexpected questions occur?
6. What if there are no questions?





II. How to handle a Q&A Session

- Short but crucial*
- clarify*
- expand*
- Could be disappointing or even embarrassing*





III. Samples

- Inviting Questions
- Asking Questions
- Answering or Declining Questions





Samples for Inviting Questions

- That's all for the presentation. Are there any questions?
- Thank you for your attention to my talk. Now, let's come to the Q & A session. I hope to hear various questions from different disciplines.
- I see that we have 15 minutes for questions and answers. During that time, I'll be happy to answer as many of your questions as I can.



Samples for Asking Questions

Sample 1 (Remarks Before Raising Questions and Directing Questions)

Mr. chairman, I'd like to ask Mr. Clark a question, can I ...?

Mr. Clark what do you mean by saying...?

I would like to ask Mr. Smith two questions. First, ...
Second, ...



Sample 2(Questions for Clarifying Problems)

I would be very glad if you could give definitions to the essential concept of A used in your presentation, for I am curious why you use them in this way in your report.

Sample 3 (Questions Showing Special Interests)

I am very keen on your mentioning about the ... How is it being carried out in your laboratory? Why do you mean by ..., and how do you think it can be tackled?



Sample 4 (Raising Different Opinions)

I agree with you about the approaches to solving this problem. But so far as the application aspect is concerned, I'm afraid I can't say that I go along with you on that. According to the result of the experiment we made last year, I think ... I would like to hear YOUR opinion on this matter.

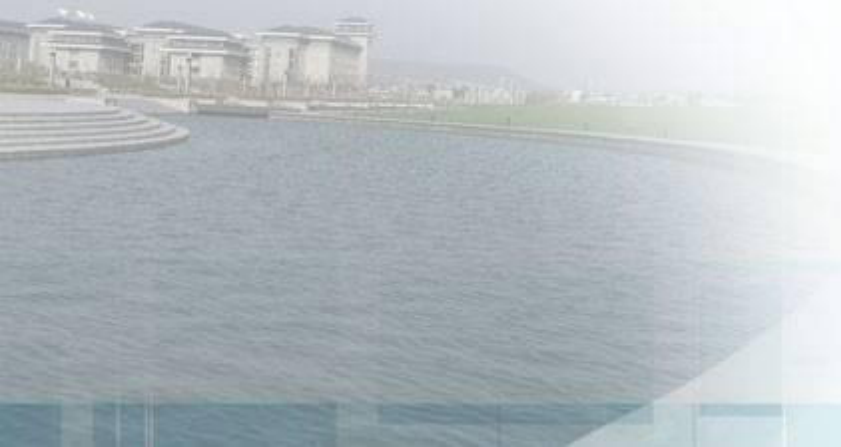
Sample 5(Following up Others' Questions)

Just now Professor Wang asked you ... I'm also very interested in this subject. Would you please give us more examples to illustrate your ideas?



• Answering or Declining Questions

- 1) I'm sorry. I didn't hear you clearly. Would you please repeat?
- 2) I am not quite sure what your question is?
- 3) I'm sorry. I didn't quite get your first question. Could you clarify your first point, please?





2. Answering Ordinary Questions

- 1) It's a good question. To answer your question, I would ...
- 2) Thank you for **your** question. If I understand your question correctly, I **can** say that ...
- 3) I'm very glad you asked this question. This is just the point I want to explain again.



4. Answering Questions Partially

- 1) Since time is limited, I would like to answer the last point of your question.
- 2) As far as I know, no one has paid special attention to this subject. At the present time, I can only give you one possible explanation that ...
- 3) I can only provide some examples to partially answer your question.



5. Answering Difficult Questions

- 1) It's a difficult question. I'm afraid my answer cannot give you a **satisfactory** explanation.
- 2) I am not familiar with the subject, but I suppose you may be right in saying so.
- 3) There is not enough time to go into details, but ...



6. Questions of Agreement or Disagreement

- 1) I would agree **with** you and Mr. Odetts on this viewpoint.
- 2) I think I am quite in agreement with you and there is nothing to add to this connection.
- 3) That's not what I'm saying.
- 4) To avoid being misunderstood, I would like to explain myself for ... It goes without saying that ... What we should not forget is that...

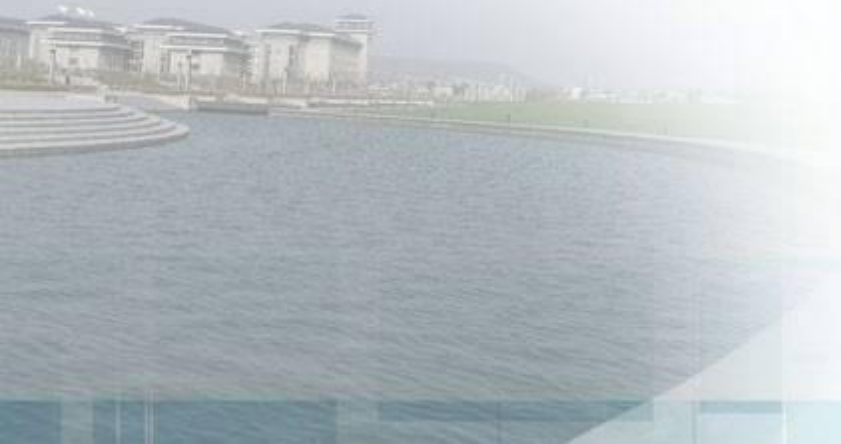


7. Dismissing Irrelevant, Unfriendly or Unanswerable Questions

- 1) I am very pleased at your interest in this subject, but in all fairness I think we should hear some questions from others now.
- 2) **That is a very personal question I'm afraid I couldn't answer to your satisfaction. If you wish to discuss it with me after the meeting, however, I'll be happy to do so at that time.**



3) I'm afraid everyone present here could sense that the remarks in **your** questions are less friendly, and that they are far beyond the theme of the conference.





8. Turning to Others for Answers

1) My colleague, Dr. Zhang, who is on my left, is the second author of this paper. I would like to leave this question to him. I'm sure Dr. Zhang will certainly give you a satisfactory answer.

2) Mr. Chairman, do you know anyone among the audience who is expert in this problem?

3) This is the field of John Smith. See me after the session and I'll tell you how to contact him.



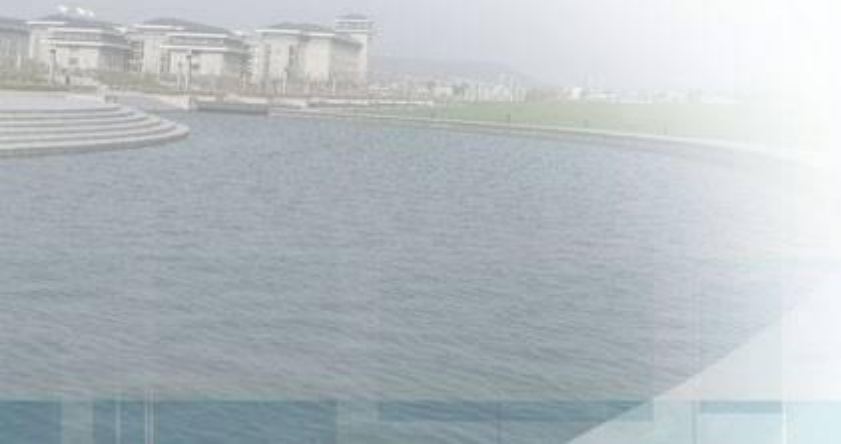
9. Answers Giving Examples or Suggestions

- 1) I do not intent to dwell on **small details**,
but I wish to call your attention to the
fact that?
- 2) Here, I am just showing **you** a few
examples of ... The best one is ...
- 3) Examining the matter in the light of past
experience, we'd like to suggest that...



10. Remarks at the End of an Answer

- Our allocated time is almost up. Now I would like to answer one more question?
- Thank you for your questions. I hope you are satisfied with my answers. Now it is time for me to turn the floor over to Professor Smith.





IV. Tips for Facilitating Q& A Sessions

1. *Anticipate* likely questions and *formulate* possible responses before you present.
2. When rehearsing your speech, *practice* your Q&A session too, so that you will have practice articulating responses to likely questions.



3. Establish a time limit and inform your audience of the length when you begin the session.

Be firm about cutting off questions when the predetermined time is up.

4. Restate each question clearly.

This helps you clarify the question, ensures that the entire audience hears the question, and gives you a moment to consider your response.



5. **Direct** your response to the entire audience to maintain everybody's attention.

6. **Be brief.**

Give simple answers to simple questions. When faced with a complicated question, answer concisely and then offer to meet the questioner later for further discussion.

7. **Be straightforward.**

If you do not know the answer to a particular question, refer the question to somebody else or offer to get back to the questioner with an answer.



8. Whenever possible, refer to your speech as you respond to the question.

This helps maintain the focus of the question and answer session.

9. Do not allow anyone to dominate the session.

Try to maintain momentum to sustain the interest of your audience, which can easily be lost if only one member is participating.

10. Conclude smartly.

Prepare a concluding statement to indicate the end of the question and answer session and to reinforce the main points of your presentation.



Thank you!

