Power Questions

Business: What business are you really in and what do your customers value most.

Woodrow Wilson: If I am to speak 10 minutes I need a week of preparation, if an hour I am ready now.

Focus: Well what would you like to know about us? What would you like to focus on?

Assumptions: What do you know already about us?

Question to Question: Master the art of turning clients questions into questions so that they are the ones to answer.

Reaction: What do you think?

Is there a problem they have worth solving: What is this costing you right now? If you don’t fix this what are the consequences? What do you think this is worth? How much time are you spending on this? Is this a high priority for you?

Do they own the problem: Are you responsible for fixing this? Who would authorize this? Who needs to be involved to make this decision?

Is there dissatisfaction with current offering: How satisfied are you with the current solution? What would you say is missing? Why do you feel now is the time to work on this?

Buyer trust: What other solutions are you looking at? How do you feel about our capabilities in this area? What concerns do you have about our approach?

Care: Until people believe you care, they won’t fully engage with you. Make them believe you care through the little things.

Mission: What is your mission? How will this further your mission and goals?

Allegory of Caves: Questions help you see the world outside of your cave.

Service: How would you assess our customer service levels?

How To Get it Done: Begin at the beginning…and go until you come to the end.

Company Background: How did you get started? What was the toughest lesson you had to learn?

Off to the wrong start: Walk out of the room, come back and say do you mind if we start over?

Personal Interest: Why do you do what you do? What in your life has given you the greatest satisfaction?

Jobs: No one could rival his sense of drama. Make it even better he would always say. Is this the best you can do? Is there room for further improvement? In what ways cold this be even better?

Gorilla Dust: Running around a question instead of asking: is it a yes or no?

Cliché Questions - Don’t Ask: What keeps you up at night? What has surprised you? What questions haven’t I asked. Make sure you research client and ask questions that really focus in on their problems.

Plus minus exercise: Writing pros and cons on each side of a piece of paper and asking what do you fell is the right decision for you.

Preview Conclusions: Always preview your conclusions with the client before you present.

CEO Intake: You don’t communicate with CEOs with 100 slides, they digest information in short, concentrated bits. Top executives are not interested in methodology, they want to know if they can trust you.

Debrief: What did you learn from that experience?

Meals: Are good for relationship building.

Time: What parts of your job do you wish you could spend more time on, and what things do you wish you could do less of? What are the most enjoyable parts of your job?

Difficult Question: What is the most difficult question you have ever been asked?

Life: Its not what happens in life that matters it is how you handle it. If you had to write your obituary today what would you like it to say? What was the happiest day of your life?

Jesus: Used counter questions to fight off persecutors? Will you give me a drink? Who do you say I am? How do you see me as a leader?

Preparation: There is no substitute for a genuine lack of preparation.

Verbal Confidence: Avoid saying “ums”, “you know”.

Humility: To discover truth you must become as humble as the dust, you must believe you can learn from everything you encounter.

Curiosity: As we grow older our curiosity dies. The average five year old asks 200 questions per day. How many questions do you guys ask?

Awareness: Your bias and prejudices will blind you. Women often make decision about new car to buy but men often target sales to men.

Fairness: If the circumstances were turned around how would you like to be treated? What do you wish they would do more of?

Five Why’s: In consulting you have to get to the root of the problem or else you won’t fix anything. Why do you want to do that? Why is that happening? Why is that? How do you know that?

Dress: If you dress properly you think properly.

Legatus: Largest Catholic organization in the world for CEOs.

Semper Fidelus: Always faithful. What is the greatest achievement in your life?

Decisiveness: What decisions have we made today? What decisions do we need to make?

Start End: You can tell what kind of day it is going to be from the morning.

Trust Answer: You want to hire us because of our expertise, experience, efficiency, and reputation in the marketplace.

Clarity/Brevity: What’s your question?

Appreciation: What made this day special to you?

Key Skills: Relationships and analytical vigor.

Empathy: I know what it is like to walk in your shoes.

Drucker Principles: Mission, People/Customer, Values, Expectations, Plan.

Focus: What’s the most important thing we should be discussing this morning?

Chasing Daylight: Is you had three years to live what would you do? What difference will your footsteps make one hundred years from now?

Competition: Is there a particular competitor you admire?

Customers: Who would you say your most valuable customer is?

Complaints: When your customers complain what do they say?

Follow-Up: What would be a helpful follow up to this meeting?

Need: Can you give me an example?

Success: How have you been successful so was and how will those reasons change in the future?

Unlimited Resources: If you had additional resources what would you invest them in?

Presentation: I have planned to cover the following areas. Which of these area are most valuable to you guys so that I can focus extra time on?

Family: How old are your children?

Free-Time: How do you spend your free-time.

Mentors: Who have been influential role models to you?

Books: Tell me a book you would recommend.

Parents: What were your parents like?

Communication: How do you best like to communicate?

Work Activities: What activities take up most of your time at work?

Follow Up: What should I be doing more of? Less of? What have I done that has been most helpful to you.

Recovery: I’m sorry this happened, what would you like to see done at this point?

Support: What can I do to support you as you pursue your goals?

Future: What gets you excited about the future?

Feedback: What ideas would you have to help grow our organization?

Meeting: Can we do this in thirty minutes?