



INFO SITE:

ABOUT QUESTIONS

*Once you have learned how to ask relevant and appropriate questions,
you have learned how to learn
and no one can keep you
from learning whatever you want or need to know."*

Neil Postman

A question is a powerful *communication* tool. It can be used to push, pull, pry, stimulate, threaten, remind, reason, warn, tease, nag, clarify, influence (you could read 'manipulate'), build up, destroy, create—the list is endless. A question can send you on a flight of fancy or yank you back to reality. It can launch you on a journey into foreign territories—intellectually, emotionally, or even literally. And like any other powerful tool, a computer, for example, a question can make your life more difficult or considerably easier. The consequences of being clumsy in the use of a question are usually less than the consequences of a computer disaster or failure, but the principle is similar. (The same computer or question that, under normal circumstances, speeds and facilitates your projects can, under different conditions, play the starring role in a real life comedy of errors.) You will get better results if you learn more about how to ask **SMART** questions. (and give **SMART** answers).

HOT TIP

Maybe some questions about questions would be in order!

Questions about questions? Is that sensible? Kipling warned, "*Them that asks no questions isn't told a lie.*" But Einstein insisted, "*The important thing is not to stop questioning.*" And Voltaire recommended we "*Judge a man by his questions, rather than by his answers.*"

But a question is a question is a question—right?

Absolutely not. Some questions are inherently better than others. Good questions are *designed* to get to the core information the questioner wants. Poor questions don't accomplish the job they set out to do.