



INFO SITE:

The Basic Six—Plus

*I keep six honest serving men
they taught me all I knew:
their names are What and Why
and When and How
and Where and Who*

—Rudyard Kipling

When you were in school, you undoubtedly learned about those famous 5W's of question-asking: **who, what, when, where, and why**. You probably also learned to add some of the basic “H” questions like: **how often, how many, how much, and how to**. You may also have learned to add other refinements like **what if**. All of these are important—they are the building blocks of good questions. Take the time now to do a quick inventory of the basics.

HOT TIP

*'Quick' really does mean 'Quick'—
Do this in two minutes, maximum,
even though the list looks l-o-o-o-ong.*

HOW TO DO IT

- ▶ Use the five W's to run a 'systems analysis' check of your question-asking.
 - **WHO?** Are you the best person to pose this particular question, or might you get better results if someone else did the asking? There's also the matter of who should *answer*. How many times have you asked a question only to discover you have queried someone who either doesn't know or is unwilling to give an answer? Being an efficient question-asker means judiciously selecting whom you are going to ask.
 - **WHAT?** Out of a wide variety of possibilities, you will need to consider what *type* of question will get the most useful response.