

POWER TOOLS FOR POWER QUESTIONS

Questions For First Meetings with Prospects

First Meetings (General)

1. What's the most valuable way for us to spend this time together?
2. What would be useful for you to know about our firm?
3. What prompted your interest in our meeting?
4. In talking to my clients in your industry, I'm struck by a couple of particular issues that they are consistently grappling with. These include X, Y, and Z. How would these resonate with you and your management?
5. How is your organization reacting to ____ (a recent, important development in this client's industry or function)?
6. How are you handling ____ (e.g., new competition, low-cost imports, a new regulatory framework, etc.)?
7. Is there is a particular competitor that you admire?
8. Can you share with me what you think are the most vexing issues that you face right now?
9. What are your biggest opportunities over the next several years?
10. What exactly do you mean when you say ____? (risk-averse"/"dysfunctional"/"challenging" etc.)
11. How would you describe the biggest challenges facing your own customers? Why do they buy from you?
12. From your perspective, given everything we've discussed, what would be a helpful follow up to this meeting?

First Meetings (Issue-Specific)

1. What's the driving force behind this particular need (e.g., to reduce costs, implement a new IT architecture, design a new organization, etc.)?
2. How did you reach the decision to seek outside help/consider an alternative?
3. What would "better" (risk management, organizational effectiveness, etc.) look like?
4. How much agreement is there, internally, about the problem and the possible solutions?
5. How much do you think this is costing you? What do you think it's worth to fix this?
6. Can you give me an example of that?

POWER TOOLS FOR POWER QUESTIONS

7. How do you think this problem affects ____ (sales, costs, productivity, morale, etc.)?
8. How do you know that...? (turnover is high, productivity is low, risks are not being well managed, etc.)?
9. Who in your organization really owns this problem?
10. If an effective solution is found, how will it affect your own job?
11. In thinking about choosing a partner to work with on this, what's most important to you?
12. To whom else are you talking?
13. Can you walk me through your decision-making process?
14. Who will make the final decision about choosing a firm to work with? (Who is the economic buyer for this?)
15. Is there anything I haven't asked about that you think is relevant to understanding this