

POWER TOOLS FOR POWER QUESTIONS

Six Questions Your Should Rarely or Never Ask

The Question	Why It's a Poor Question
"What keeps you up at night?"	Client hate this question, especially coming from someone they don't know very well. It's a <u>lazy</u> question that shows you haven't prepared. It's a problem question rather than one that focuses on growth and innovation. Avoid clichéd questions like this that people have been asking for 25 years!
"What has surprised you?"	This question sounds good, but it puts the other person in the position of having no good reply. If lots of things have "surprised" them, it makes them look unprepared for the job they took on. If nothing "surprised" them, it makes them look complacent.
"What question haven't I asked you?"	This is innocent-sounding question is actually manipulative because it's trying to get the other person (usually a prospective customer) to give you advice on how to succeed with them. It's also a cliché, like <i>what keeps you up at night</i> .
"What would it take for us to become one of your suppliers?"	This is a ridiculous question that you still find in books on selling. A prospective client cannot possibly answer it, because they don't know what value you would add over and above current suppliers. YOU must demonstrate how you would add value to the client in order to be considered as a vendor.
"If I were to demonstrate substantial cost savings from using our products/services, would you place an order with us?"	Also a silly question. Buyers today are just too sophisticated and intelligent to fall for manipulative questions like this one. In any event, you don't ask this—you <i>show</i> them how you can save them money.
"How can we add more value to you?"	This may seem like a great question to ask, but the problem is, few clients can actually answer it. You'll get one of three responses: 1. "Gee, just keep up the good work." 2. "Please don't mess this project up." 3. "I don't really know, let me think about it." You learn how you can add more value by spending time with the client and getting to know their business. Then you will learn about their frustrations, concerns, problems, challenges, and so on.