



LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE

TOOLKIT



7

**MASTER
COMMUNICATION**

HOW TO USE THE TOOLKIT

1. Cultivate Key Habits

This toolkit is designed to help you **cultivate key habits** to become the leader who inspires, influences, and leaves a permanent impact.

2. Learn from Golden Stars

Each Golden Star has a **unique Toolkit**.

This is not a stand-alone resource. Use it in **conjunction** with the 10 Golden Stars to Leadership Excellence **Book** and/or **Masterclass**.

Maximize this learning opportunity by **answering** the questions in the space provided, with **honesty and self-reflection**.

3. Return to the Toolkit

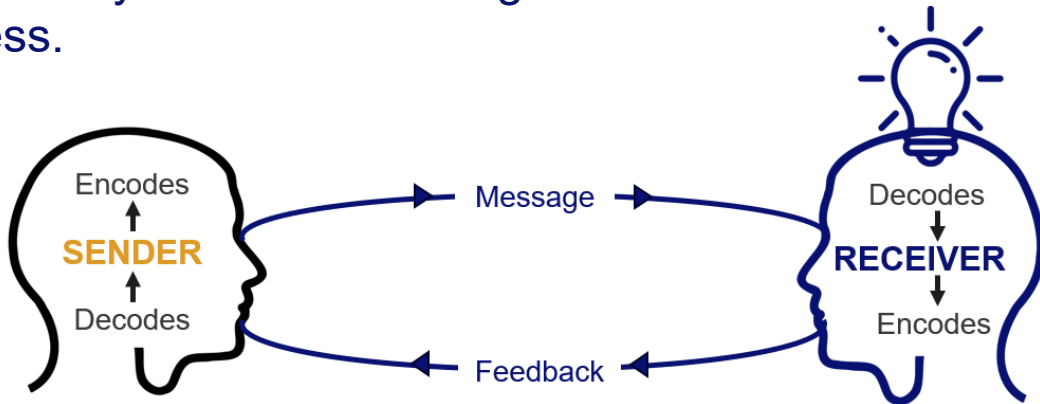
Use the toolkit as a method to **monitor your leadership growth**.

Regularly return to this toolkit to **refresh your knowledge** and compare past to present.



UNDERSTAND THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS

Reflect on your understanding of the entire communication process.



Are you clear on the roles of sender, receiver, and the nature of the message? Define the roles in your own words.

Are you making the most of your opportunities to communicate effectively, is there something you can do more?

ACTIVE LISTENING

Rate your active listening skills on a scale of 1–10.



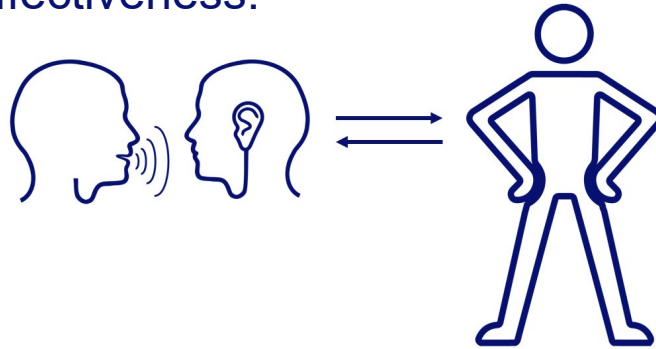
What practices do you have in place to ensure you're fully present when someone else is speaking?

Can you recall a recent conversation where you demonstrated active listening? If not, what distracted you?

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Non-verbal communication is very powerful.

Match your verbal and non-verbal communication for maximum effectiveness.



Reflect on when you interact with your team, does your body language, tone of voice, and facial expressions match your spoken words?

How can you better align your non-verbal cues with your messages? Write down specific actions you can take.

ASKING QUESTIONS

PART 1

Different situations call for different types of questions.



Open-ended questions:

These encourage dialogue and exploration. They allow respondents to elaborate on their thoughts and share them freely.

Examples include “What do you think about...?” or “How did you come to that conclusion?”

Closed-ended questions:

These are best when you want a straightforward answer, need to confirm facts, or obtain a specific, usually short, response.

Examples include, “Have you finished the report?” or “Will you attend the meeting?”

Probing questions:

These delve more deeply into a topic or response. They clarify details, explore underlying issues, and seek reasons.

Examples include, “Can you elaborate on...?” or “What makes you say that?”

ASKING QUESTIONS

PART 2

Strategic questioning asks the “**right**” **questions** at the **right time** to understand or discover things, generate ideas, solve problems, or initiate action.



Diagnostic questions: “Can you tell me more about this?”

Prioritizing questions: “How important do you think this is?”

Action questions: “What is your plan?”

Exploratory questions: “Do you have any suggestions for how to resolve this?”

Questions that challenge assumptions allow leaders to consider all options. They can also stimulate innovative problem solving.

Identify assumptions: “What assumptions are we making here?”

Challenge assumptions: “What if our assumption is wrong?”

Explore alternatives: “What other possibilities could there be?”

ASKING QUESTIONS

PART 3

Use questions based on dialogue and consensus to facilitate collaborative decision-making



Solicit opinions: “What do you think we should do?”

Build consensus: “Can we all agree on this?”

Explore pros and cons: “What are the benefits and drawbacks of this option?”

Questions directed towards personal feelings can help resolve issues, manage conflict, or ease difficult conversations.

Seek understanding: “Can you help me understand why you feel this way?”

Acknowledge feelings: “How did that make you feel?”

Facilitate problem-solving: “How do you think can we resolve this?”

Follow-up questions give leaders the opportunity to dig deeper, clarify their own understanding, and encourage others to expand their thinking.

Probe: “Can you elaborate on that?”

Clarify: “What do you mean by that?”

Explore: “What would be the implications of that?”

QUESTIONING SKILLS

Think about the last team meeting or one-on-one conversation you had.



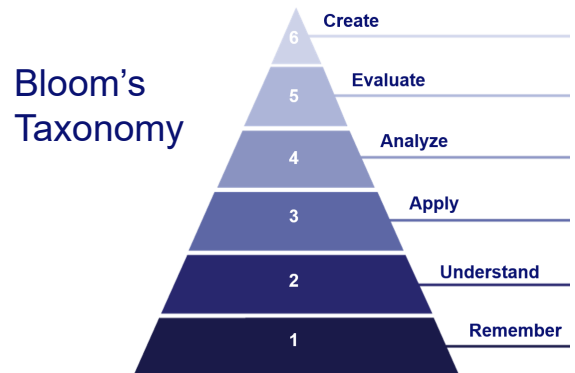
Did you ask meaningful questions that fostered critical thinking and dialogue?

What questioning models can you incorporate into your leadership practice?

EFFECTIVE QUESTIONING MODELS

PART 1

Use the following example questions as ideas when you implement Bloom's taxonomy.



Remember: Confirm that specific information or facts are recognized and understood, or that the relevant details can be located or recalled.

“Can you list the main components of our project plan?”

“Do you know where to locate our company policy on flexible work hours?”

Understand: Asking individuals to explain or interpret information in their own words is a good indicator of how well they understand it.

“Can you explain why we need to meet this deadline?”

“What is the objective of our new marketing strategy?”

Apply: Ask individuals to apply facts, concepts or knowledge to a problem or situation.

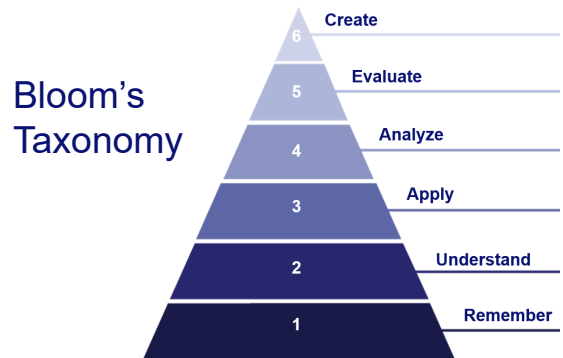
“Will our problem-solving protocol resolve the issue we’re currently facing?”

“What aspects of our previous marketing campaign can we apply to the new project?”

EFFECTIVE QUESTIONING MODELS

PART 2

Use the following example questions as ideas when you implement Bloom's taxonomy.



Analyze: Break down the components of an issue and explore the connections between them.

“What trends can we identify from our latest customer feedback?”

“If we go ahead with this initiative, will there be any impact on other departments?”

Evaluate: Use questions to stimulate critical thinking and evaluate the value of information or ideas before proposing alternative solutions.

“Based on our team’s strengths and the project requirements, how should we structure our approach?”

“Can we synthesize feedback from our clients to come up with a new product idea?”

Create: Consider how you can combine everything you’ve learnt to come up with a new idea, product, or problem-solving solution.

“Based on what we know, what is our most likely route to a successful product?”

“What are the pros and cons of implementing this new software system?”

EFFECTIVE QUESTIONING MODELS

PART 3

Use the following example questions as ideas when you implement the GROW Model.



Goal: Set SMART goals and ask questions that help team members define milestones.

- *“What would you like to achieve from this project/task/role?”*
- *“Can you define your goal in specific and measurable terms?”*
- *“How relevant is success to you in this situation?”*

Reality: Establish the current situation (reality) such as challenges or obstacles that stand in the way of achieving the goal.

- *“Where are we now with respect to your goal?”*
- *“What challenges or obstacles are you currently facing?”*
- *“What resources do you have at your disposal?”*

Options: Explore possible strategies to reach the defined goal. Use open-ended questions to encourage problem-solving.

- *“What strategies could we explore to reach your goal?”*
- *“If there were no constraints, what options might you consider?”*
- *“How can you leverage your available resources?”*

Will Do: Create a realistic and achievable action plan, outlining tasks that will move the individual or team towards the goal.

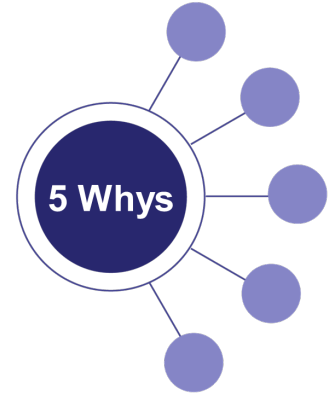
- *“What specific steps will you take to achieve your goal?”*
- *“What potential challenges might you encounter, and how will you address them?”*
- *“When and how will you start implementing this plan?”*

EFFECTIVE QUESTIONING MODELS

PART 4

Identify the **problem**: Start with a statement, such as:

“We missed our sales target for the third consecutive quarter.” Now ask “Why?”



- Question: *“Why did we miss our sales target?”*
- Possible answer: *“Because our key product was out of stock for a month.”*

Probe deeper: Repeating “Why?” in response to each answer. You will eventually get the root cause problem.

- Question: *“Why was our key product out of stock?”*
- Possible answer: *“There was a delay in production.”*
- Question: *“Why was there a delay in production?”*
- Possible answer: *“There was a supply chain disruption.”*
- Question: *“Why was there a supply chain disruption?”*
- Possible answer: *“Our single supplier couldn’t fulfill the order on time.”*

Identify the cause: After several iterations of “why?”, the cause of the problem will be revealed.

- Example: *“Our reliance on a single supplier led to a disruption in the supply chain and subsequent delay in production.”*

Implement solutions: Once the cause has been identified, the team can create and implement a solution. As a leader, check in regularly to confirm that the problem has been solved.

- Example: *“We should diversify our supplier base to reduce the risk of supply chain disruption in the future. Regularly checking our sales figures will ensure we remain on target.”*

CRAFT QUESTIONS

Use the following example questions as ideas when you implement the CRAFT Model.



Clarify. Questions to consider in this phase:

- *“Can you describe the situation in more detail?”*
- *“What challenges are we facing?”*
- *“What is the main issue here?”*



Reason. Questions you can ask are:

- *“Why did we decide to take this approach?”*
- *“What are the underlying reasons for this situation?”*
- *“What factors led us to this point?”*



Analyze. Consider asking:

- *“What are the potential outcomes if we follow this course of action?”*
- *“What are the alternatives?”*
- *“How does this situation relate to our past experiences?”*



Focus. Questions to help you focus:

- *“Which option is most aligned with our goals?”*
- *“What will be the immediate next steps?”*
- *“What resources will we need?”*



Transform. Answer questions like:

- *“What have we learned from this process?”*
- *“How can we apply these insights to future situations?”*
- *“What changes can we make to prevent this from recurring?”*

S

SPECIFIC

M

MEASURABLE

A

ATTAINABLE

R

RELEVANT

T

TIME-BOUND

GOALS

Set 2–3 SMART goals to improve your communication skills.
For example:

“Over the next three months, I will share a relevant story or anecdote at the start of team meetings to engage everyone and give them a memorable take-away.”