

Human Capital Consultants INTL, LLC.

THE ULTIMATE COACHING GUIDE

80 Powerful Coaching Questions

BY LEYDA ALEMAN, SHRM-SCP

THE ULTIMATE COACHING GUIDE

Good Leaders Ask Great Questions

INFLUENCE OTHERS & MAKE A DIFFERENCE

80 POWERFUL QUESTIONS

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GOOD LEADERS

ASK GREAT QUESTIONS

"No matter how small the action, it can have a huge impact as other opportunities begin to emerge. Inaction breeds doubt and fear. Action breeds confidence and courage. Value your thoughts, fall in love with your ambitions, be intentional about your growth, execute, smile and live with determination. Life can and should be an exciting adventure."

— Leyda Aleman

Welcome to the challenging journey of Leadership. You have chosen the road less traveled, and you are to be congratulated for taking this crucially important first step in a lifelong pathway of self-discovery. I admire you for stepping forward from the pack to make a worthy difference. You have made one of the wisest choices in your life: TO TAKE THE LEAD!

For the last decade I have enjoyed the opportunity of working with leaders throughout the world; the experience has served as the basis for the information within this powerful guide. I am passionate about leadership and I am often asked to speak about it, a subject that is fundamental to any organization. To stay-up-to-date, I continuously study the latest thinking and research and selectively employ new ideas that resonate with me in my leadership development work. Leadership is not something you do; leadership is something you are. Leadership is about action and putting in practice what you learn. That's what I call LYLL2A.

Don't let your knowledge lead to learning. Let your Learning Lead To Action.

"Leaders are made; they are not born. They are made by hard effort, which is the price which all of us must pay to achieve any goal that is worthwhile." Vince Lombardi said that, and he was right. Every individual has the ability to become a leader. Leaders are not born; leaders are the product of a disciplined commitment to LEARNING, GROWING, and BECOMING.

Thank you for going the extra mile, thank you for realizing the importance of asking powerful questions, thank you for believing in your unlimited ability to make a positive difference, and thank you for investing in your most important commodity—YOUR FUTURE.



All My Best,

Leyda Aleman, SHRM-SCP

Founder & CEO, HCCI, LLC.

THE POWER OF QUESTIONS

“Can you give us some more examples of coaching questions? Do you have a list that you use that you could share with us”? Fielding that request over and over provided the original impetus to write this Mini Guide. I decided to respond by sharing some of the great questions I’ve collected and used (or that popped into my head during key moments) with you.

I would like to start off by asking you a simple question....How would you like me to add value to you? Just shoot me an [email](#) and let me know. You see, I am obsessed with questions and passionate about listening. Why ask questions, anyway? What’s the benefit of using coaching questions instead of advising or telling in a mentor or consultant role? Quite simple, questions have power. Questions hold the power to cause us to think, create answers we believe in, and motivate us to act on our ideas. When I look back at the progression of my life, I can see that questions have marked the way for my growth, prompted positive changes of direction, and led to many successes. Though many of us try to make ourselves look smart by giving clever answers, we would be much better off if we focused our attention on asking questions. If we ask good questions of the right people, we will have a wonderful return for our lives. Never forget: good questions inform; great questions transform!

SMART QUESTIONS MAKE SMARTER PEOPLE. We learn, connect, observe, and invent through the questions we ask. We push boundaries and we discover secrets. We solve mysteries and we imagine new ways of doing things. We ponder our purpose and we set our sights. We hold people accountable. Curiosity opens our minds and captivates our imagination. But the fact is, most of us don’t really understand how questions work—or how to make them work for us. In school we study math, science, literature and history. At work we learn about outcomes and metrics, profit and loss. But never do we study how to ask questions strategically, how to listen actively, or how to use questions as a powerful tool toward accomplishing what we really want to achieve.

"People don't mind being challenged to do better if they know the request is coming from a caring heart."

— Ken Blanchard

Questions asked the right way, under the right circumstances—can help you achieve both short-term and lifelong goals. They can open doors to discovery and success. Insightful questions help you connect with a stranger, impress a job interviewer, or entertain at your next dinner party, and they can be the keys to a happier, more productive, and fulfilling life.

That's why I would like to share with you some powerful questions that I have used throughout the years and hope they serve **you** and **your** team well during this journey.

COACHING - IT'S ALL ABOUT QUESTIONS!

Studies have shown that a coaching style of management can create greater employee engagement and commitment, improve performance, and accelerate talent development. When employees are coached, they feel supported and encouraged by their leader and the company. Retention can improve as employees are more loyal and motivated when their managers take time to help them improve their skills.

I know what you're thinking... "But, what about progressive disciplinary procedures?"

Progressive Discipline will likely always be appropriate for certain policy violations (for example harassment or other types of misconduct) and it is also the second phase when coaching hasn't worked to improve performance.

Using company disciplinary procedures to address employee issues puts the ownership of the issue on the manager and human resources department. The employee is asked to take whatever course of action the manager and HR decides upon. This can create compliance but also resentment, and no real change in the employee. Change may be motivated by fear and only when the employee is closely monitored. This can be a negative way to motivate an employee which doesn't increase morale or engagement.

"In the past a leader was a boss. Today's leaders must be partners with their people; they no longer can lead solely based on positional power."

— Ken Blanchard

Coaching, on the other hand, puts ownership of the employee's performance with the manager and the employee. The process of resolution is created between the manager and employee and it becomes the employee's responsibility to find ways to solve any issues under the manager's guidance.

Trust is an essential ingredient in coaching relationships. Trust enables the direct report to be open to the lessons that come from coaching. Trust means that an employee will believe their manager is providing coaching for the purpose of development and not just as a means of getting the job done.

For best results using a coaching management style, you will also need to shift to a "growth mind-set." If you have ever found yourself thinking "My employee will never be able to accomplish this task" or "He just doesn't get it" then you were thinking with a "fixed mind-set." Low expectations severely limit your ability to coach an employee. While there are occasionally people who are unable to develop, most often the barrier is the belief that a person won't make progress or succeed. A "fixed mind-set" leads a manager to do things like not delegate, doing things that the team could do, and providing answers instead of allowing the team to learn by doing.

Adopting a growth mind-set means that you focus feedback, both positive and negative, on employee's efforts to achieve their goals, and not on their inherent abilities. When employees fail, as a manager you focus on learning from the experience and understanding the areas where doing something differently could have resulted in success.

Instead of giving the employee the solution to a problem (more of a "command and control" style), with a coaching style, you assume the employee has the wisdom within to come up with answers on their own. Sometimes you may know a possible answer, but sometimes, as is the case with employees who handle very specific technical information, you may not. With a coaching approach you ask instead of advise as much as possible. If you provide an answer, you limit the possible outcomes.

THE POWER OF LISTENING

What value is there to asking questions if you don't listen to the answers you receive? None. Do you have an open-ear policy?

Listening Has High Influence Value. One of the best ways to persuade others is with your ears. That may seem counterintuitive, because we expect persuasion to involve speaking. But when a leader listens to members of the team, that act gives the leader greater credibility and therefore influence. On the other hand, when team members no longer believe that their leader listens to them, they start looking around for someone who will. Listening Leads to Learning.

GOOD LEADERS

ASK GREAT QUESTIONS

"If you take the risk to stretch your present level of ability, you will discover that trying is the key. You will come to know that taking a chance is not the end of the world. You will realize that security and peace are not the grounds on which self-confidence is developed. Give yourself the chance to find out what your abilities are."

— Leyda Aleman

80 POWERFUL COACHING QUESTIONS

The list that I am sharing with you today is by no means exhaustive as there are infinite amounts of powerful questions. The vast majority of coaching questions are attached to specific coaching tools and they are open-ended to create a greater possibility for expanded learning and a fresh perspective. Remember, the most powerful questions are often the simplest.

"I have no special talents. I am only passionately curious."

— Albert Einstein

- 1. Tell me more about that. (When the person hasn't provided details or you don't thoroughly understand the situation.)**
- 2. Help me to understand... (Puts the responsibility on the Manager/Leader for not having understood.)**
- 3. Tell me more about why you feel this way. (You can reflect "You said you don't think that you are as challenged as you would like to be. Tell me more about why you feel this way.")**
- 4. What's holding you back?**
- 5. What is happening right now around [this issue]?**
- 6. What have you done so far?**
- 7. What effect did it have?**
- 8. What is your goal/desired outcome in this situation?**

9. What do you propose?
10. What is your plan?
11. Which of these two subjects would you like to focus on?
12. Who could you ask to find the answer?
13. Have you been in a place like this before? Describe what happened.
14. How have similar situations in the past affected you? How have you responded to them?
15. Where do you see this going?
16. Give me some background: how did you arrive at this place?
17. What does this look like from the other person's point of view?
18. It seems like this is something important to you—talk about that a little.
19. Who are the other players in this? How are they involved?
20. Give me a concrete example of that.
21. What did you mean when you said_____?
22. Give me some background: what led up to this situation?
23. Give me five options for how you could tackle this challenge.
24. What do you need that you don't have to reach this goal?
25. I've heard you say twice that you don't have the time to take this on. Let's look at that obstacle: give me five options for how you could find the time.
26. What are some different ways that you might approach this situation?
27. What are some ways that you could make [stated desired result] happen?
28. What could be your next step?
29. What options do you have?
30. What would happen if you do nothing?
31. What has worked well in similar situations in the past? or How have you solved a similar problem in the past?
32. What are the costs and benefits (or pros and cons) of each approach?
33. What approach seems most effective to you in reaching your goal?
34. What else do you need to consider?
35. What is the goal of the meeting? How can you ensure that you accomplish it?
36. What impact do you think this presentation will have? What changes might you make for it to have more impact?
37. What is your desired message? How effective do you think this [news story, grant proposal, presentation, etc.] is at communicating it?

- 38. What is the worst that could happen?**
- 39. What evidence do you have to support that? (Can be useful if the employee is expressing a limiting belief or making an assumption that something will fail. The question helps point out contrary and more positive point of view. For example, use in response to things like: This project will never work. No one in the accounting department respects my opinion.)**
- 40. What's another way that you could look at that?**
- 41. What might another interpretation of that situation be?**
- 42. What do you think is really causing this situation?**
- 43. What will an indicator of success be?**
- 44. What will a successful final outcome look like?**
- 45. How will you measure success?**
- 46. Envision that you are finished with this. Describe the final product.**
- 47. What steps do you need to take to get there?**
- 48. How will you know if you've succeeded on [this project]?**
- 49. What do you need to do to achieve your goal?**
- 50. What will it take for you to be successful on [this project]?**
- 51. Whose input is necessary to ensure the project is successful?**
- 52. Who are the stakeholders for this project?**
- 53. Who could negatively impact this project? How?**
- 54. Who could positively impact this project? How?**
- 55. If you will finish the project on time, what tasks do you need to concentrate on in the short term?**
- 56. If you need to complete this project by January 10th, what steps need to be finished immediately to ensure that happens? (Also, working backwards and breaking a large goal into smaller parts by asking questions about what needs to be accomplished and by when. Often employees need help breaking down large projects into manageable parts. Ensure that the action items and dates they are committing to are attainable/realistic.)**
- 57. How attainable is that goal?**

- 58. What actions do you need to take to get to your goal?**
- 59. What specific steps do you need to take to reach your goal?**
- 60. What might get in the way of your completing these steps?**
- 61. What can you do to ensure success? How will you do that?**
- 62. When will you do that?**
- 63. When should I follow up with you on this?**
- 64. Who needs to know about this and how will you inform them?**
- 65. What do you need from me right now?**
- 66. What would you do if you knew that you couldn't fail?**
- 67. What areas do you want to strengthen, improve or develop?**
- 68. How will you benefit from developing this skill?**
- 69. What resources are available to you?**
- 70. If you started this project today, knowing what you know now, what would you do differently?**
- 71. What can you learn from this situation? or How can you view this as a learning experience?**
- 72. How can you double the number of [people impacted by our services, clients, audience that sees your message, etc.]?**
- 73. What will you take away from this?**
- 74. What led up to this?**
- 75. What other angles can you think of?**
- 76. Let's assume for a minute that this situation is custom designed for your inner growth as a leader. If that's true, what's the opportunity here?**
- 77. Are there any obstacles to getting this done that we need to address?**
- 78. How would you like me to hold you accountable?**
- 79. Do you need any accountability on this?**
- 80. Give me a quick update on what you've accomplished since our last meeting/check-in/1:1.**

MY FINAL THOUGHTS

Congratulations on grabbing your ULTIMATE COACHING GUIDE, 80 POWERFUL COACHING QUESTIONS. I truly hope that this guide has opened your eyes to a whole new level of thinking.

This is only the beginning. So now the important thing is for you to get started... because that's the place where I've seen most leaders get stuck.

Never forget...leadership is about action and putting in practice what you learn. Don't let your knowledge lead to learning. Let your Learning Lead To Action.

So if you're ready to take control of your growth, your life... then it's time to start. YOU are now in the driver's seat. Now you can make the impact that you really want.

So now it's your turn. Go get started. The time is now.

Yours In Success,

Leyda

P.S. If you want to learn more from me: [HCCI](#) - this is my company website

And, of course, you can also follow me on [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#)

ABOUT LEYDA



Leyda Aleman, Executive Coach & Everything DiSC® expert, is a highly trained Executive Coach and [Senior Certified HR professional](#) with more than a decade of experience, commitment and dedication to providing HR strategy, direction, support and professional coaching opportunities. She is a highly sought-after and well-known HR Executive, Mentor and Leadership Coach who works with senior executives from around the world to help identify developmental opportunities for both individuals and organizations.

Leyda's corporate background includes holding various senior level corporate positions ranging in Fortune 500 organizations to privately owned companies and start-ups. Leyda founded Human Capital Consultants INTL (HCCI), after receiving her certification in Professional Coaching and partnering with her mentor, the renowned Leadership expert John C. Maxwell. Doing so has allowed her to share her passion and talents with a broader audience - those desiring to experience meaningful and lasting behavioral changes within their organizations. Her unique, practical and powerful strategies make her easy to talk to and she has a way of demystifying what it takes to become more effective. Like so many people, her greatest strengths have been developed through the lessons learned while in the trenches. It is these lessons -- learned from her mistakes and failures -- which she enthusiastically shares with clients. Her goal is to help reduce your learning curve and to help build and develop capability for both individuals and organizations.

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She is also the Founder of the Mentoring Program – Let your Learning Lead to Action in South Florida. She took mentorship to a whole different level. This program offers a structured setting in which to develop beneficial one-on-one relationships between students and professionals. It addresses HR Competencies and Knowledge as outlined in the [Society of Human Resource Management Body of Knowledge and Competencies \(SHRM BoCK\)](#). This program is recognized by the world's largest HR professional society, representing 300,000 members in more than 165 countries to offer Professional Development Credits for the SHRM-CP and SHRM-SCP.

Leyda is someone who makes life happen. She believes the everyday choices we make have a significant impact on whether or not we will live out our dreams. She likes to inspire others to look at the way they think, feel, work and live. She also specializes in team leadership, employee engagement, organizational assessment, change management, and career transitioning. She holds the highest credential awarded by The Society of Human Resource Management and currently serves on the Board of Greater Miami Society of Human Resources Management (GMSHRM).

Leyda holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Marketing and a Master Certificate in Human Resources Strategy and Leadership from Cornell University, ILR school. She has additionally earned the highest credential awarded by The Society of Human Resource Management. Leyda is also certified as a Coach, Mentor, Trainer and Speaker from John Maxwell Team, and Neuro-Linguistic Programming Master Practitioner.

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