

## Questioning Techniques and Categories

We ask questions to obtain various kinds of information and important details to gain a better understanding, draw conclusions, or even guide further research. Effective questions provide the researcher with a focus, knowing what to include and what is off topic or irrelevant. Frequently, an interviewer or researcher already knows the answer, but asks the question to elicit additional perspectives, put the information “on record,” accumulate supporting data and evidence, establish the logic and basis for a conclusion or outcome, or help the intended audience (readers, listeners, viewers) obtain the same information. Sometimes, the question asked results in creating more issues or topics to be researched. And, once in a while, a question is intended to highlight controversy and provoke further discussion or analysis.

<b>Purpose or focus:</b>	<b>Example/sample:</b>
Clarifying terms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who are the main groups affected by this plan?</li> <li>• What does the “law of intended consequences” mean?</li> </ul>
Identifying positions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What official position has your group taken on the issue?</li> <li>• Which groups would most likely benefit from this action? Who might be hurt?</li> </ul>
Supporting positions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why is this action or process an improvement?</li> <li>• Why do you say the problem doesn’t exist?</li> </ul>
Providing background or perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the current procedure?</li> <li>• How long has the current process been in effect?</li> </ul>
Connecting position/situation to other issues/situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will change affect other events or aspects of the issue?</li> <li>• What does the “law of intended consequences” work in this situation?</li> </ul>
Predicting outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could the affect on people living in one region differ from that on people living elsewhere?</li> <li>• What changes in the law might need to be enacted to accommodate the new system?</li> </ul>
Establishing precedence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If this action is taken in this situation, how will it affect other similar situations?</li> </ul>
Highlighting controversy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why should young people care about this issue?</li> <li>• What do you say to your critics?</li> </ul>
Addressing inconsistencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In your opening statement, you claimed...but now you seem to be saying.....Don’t these two statements contradict each other?</li> </ul>