

## Open Questions

**What** - Content

**How** - Process

**When**  
**Where**  
**Who**

} Context

**Why** - Try to avoid **why** questions, they can create a defensive, justification or rationalization response from the other and are said to create lies and alibies. In other words they can provoke an unproductive response from the other.

When you can, change the "**why**" to a "**what**" or "**how**" question.

### **Open Questions:**

- Allows the respondent to think, reflect and share their perspective.
- Provides the respondent an opportunity to share opinions and feelings.
- This genuine curiosity is respectful, and is without judgment and blame.
- Not in control of the information you receive and therefore demonstrates openness.
- This curiosity demonstrates a commitment in understanding the other.

### **Probing statements:**

These are another way to open up the speaker's initial message.

"Tell me more about that."

"Help me to understand ..."

"Sounds like you have some thoughts, ideas, feelings about..."

"I'm interested in hearing more about ..."

"Say more about that."

These statements allow the speaker to expand and share more details in relation to their opening statement. Creates a space for a deeper understanding of what is important to the other.