

*ACPI Exclusive*

# High Impact Questions

**Help Clients Discover Possibilities**

*Opening the space for a client to reflect can unveil answers—new possibilities may appear.*

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All training programs provide certificates as a Coach or Consultant.

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## THE POWER OF HIGH IMPACT QUESTIONS

High impact questions make a person think more deeply about an issue.

Closed-ended questions result in a yes or no and often don't get any deeper than that. Open-ended questions can solve problems, but they may also just generate a list of options or ideas. High impact questions get the client out of their set way of thinking and presents problems to them with an urgency that leads them to take action. They deal in the here and now.

### THE ELEMENTS OF A HIGH IMPACT QUESTION

The elements that lend this impact to a question are:

- It's simple and direct, dealing in reality instead of speculation
- It encourages creative thinking and thinking at a deeper level
- It encourages self-reflection

High impact questions get a client closer to attaining a goal or solving a problem. They get things done by dealing not in 'why,' but in 'what' and 'how.'

### WHICH ONE DO YOU CHOOSE?

You can take any question and turn it into a high impact question by simply wording it differently and seeking a different answer. Imagine, for example, if you'd like to ask your client, 'What tasks would you like to outsource in your business?' An alternative high impact question that asks essentially the same thing would be, 'If you could pick just one task to outsource in your business today, what would it be?'

In the original question, you're asking something in the realm of imagination and ideas. The 'would like' of the question places it in the abstract. What you're doing with the second question is asking them to make a clear decision – which *one* would they outsource? You also put a time marker on it by asking them which

they'd choose *today*. It becomes more urgent and real, and the question's answer leads directly to an action step – outsourcing that task.

This is a priority question and can be used for anything at all to get effective answers. You can ask clients which one thing they'd change about their business or which one expense they'd like to cut. This forces them to choose one top priority, and that's the first step of taking action when you have many options.

## **PICTURE YOURSELF...**

Here's another example. Instead of asking your client, 'What would you like to be doing in ten years?' ask them instead, 'Imagine that it's ten years from now. What does your life and business look like on a day to day basis?' With this example also, we're not asking them what it 'would' be like. Even though we're using our imagination and picturing the future, you make it more real and immediate by saying 'what does it look like,' as if you were living it right now.

This is more likely to produce answers that are clear and specific. Instead of saying, 'I'd be happy and successful,' they may say something like, 'I don't spend any time creating my own content because I have a writer who does that.' They've just defined a goal – finding and hiring a good writer for their content creation.

## **PART 2 – LISTENING**

Turning regular questions into high impact questions that elicit clear actionable answers is only the first step. As a coach, you also need to listen to their answer closely and use it to guide them toward those action steps. Don't judge their answer on whether it's wise or unwise, but rather on whether or not it's coming from a genuine place. The whole point of high impact questions is to get them into the zone of thinking more deeply about their problems and challenges.

## HIGH IMPACT QUESTIONS

These questions are provided through the courtesy of

[TheCoachingToolsCompany.com](http://TheCoachingToolsCompany.com). Go there and review their wonderful tools and receive their newsletter where you will find great coaching ideas.

1. "So, what do you think you're SECRETLY afraid of, that's getting in the way of \_\_\_\_\_?"
2. "What do you think you're afraid of, that's getting in the way of living the life you want?"
3. "What are you ready to change?" Then, "What are you NOT ready to change YET?"
4. "What would you suggest I ask you to move this forwards?"
5. "What haven't you admitted out loud yet?"
6. "What's the problem in a nutshell?"
7. "Now, what's the problem in one sentence?"
8. "And what's the problem in one word?"
9. "How important is this to you REALLY?"
10. "What would YOU suggest I ask you to move this forwards?"

### **Relationship Impacts**

1. "How will taking action towards this goal impact other people in your life?"
2. "Who else could be affected if you achieve this goal?" Then, "What if their response is not what you expect?"
3. "How does what others think and feel affect how YOU feel about your goal?"
4. "Who might be upset if you achieved this goal?"
5. "What's an action you could take straight after this phone call/session?"
6. "What can you do today?"
7. "What will you do in the next 24 hours?"
8. "Who drains you?"
9. "How do you teach people to treat you?"

10. "Thinking of \_\_\_\_\_ (*specific situation*), what is the positive intention behind your behaviour?" Then, "What could be the positive intention behind their behaviour?"
11. "So, I was just wondering what role you played in this?"
12. "If you were to relive the situation as someone who takes FULL responsibility for your actions and feelings, without blaming others, what do you notice?"
13. "What signals could I have given to others (either explicitly or implicitly) that contributed to this situation?"
14. "Which action/s can you see yourself taking this week?"
15. "What are three actions you could take that would make sense this month?"
16. "Imagine you've just had an ideal week. What 3 things did you complete?"
17. "Name someone who has done what you want to do. What would \_\_\_\_\_ do if they were in your position?"
18. "So which choice do you like best?"
19. "So which choice do you like least?"
20. "What's the EASY way forward here?"

## HIGH IMPACT QUESTION WORKSHEET

\*Prepare open-ended questions to use in your coaching sessions. Brainstorm ones that will make your clients really think about their business, goals, purpose, motivations, challenges, or any other issues that you typically address in your sessions.

<b>Topic/Issue</b>	<b>Questions for Coaching Sessions</b>
(Example: Relationship Coaching	Example: If you could pick just one communication skill to practice with your partner, name it now.
