

# 7 questions for an effective coaching session

Globally renowned coaching expert Michael Bungay-Stanier shares questions that will help you to uncover useful insights in your next coaching session.



If you want to learn more about Michael Bungay-Stanier's work, visit [mbs.works](https://mbs.works) for a range of helpful resources.

## 1. "WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND?"

**What this does:** Starts the conversation and gives you a small piece of the full story. For example, they might say they're feeling stressed at work. Stop yourself from jumping into advice giving mode at this point and ask the next question.

## 2. "AND WHAT ELSE?"

**What this does:** The first thing people share is rarely the thing they're actually concerned about. This will help you to get them thinking differently and they're more likely to disclose the root cause of their issues. For example, they are feeling stressed because they feel their manager has been too hands off lately. Keep asking, 'And what else' until you feel you've got all the important information.

## 3. "WHAT'S THE REAL CHALLENGE HERE FOR YOU?"

**What this does:** Again, avoid jumping into advice at this stage because the chances are that you'll take it in the wrong direction. For example, you might assume that the person wants their manager to be more hands on because they need guidance, but if you stay curious for longer, perhaps they'll tell you they're lacking social connection.

## 4. "WHAT DO YOU WANT?"

**What this does:** This question once again stops you from going into advice-giving mode too early. Let them share their proposed fix first.

## 5. "HOW CAN I HELP?"

**What this does:** This gives you a really clear picture of what they'd consider to be helpful from you, rather than you assuming you know what's best for them.

## 6. "IF YOU'RE SAYING YES TO THIS, WHAT ARE YOU SAYING NO TO?"

**What this does:** This is a great way to help people prioritise their work lives without being prescriptive or micromanaging their approach.

## 7. "WHAT WAS MOST USEFUL FOR YOU?"

**What this does:** Provides instant feedback on the 'coaching' session, so you're creating a teachable moment for both the person you're coaching and yourself.