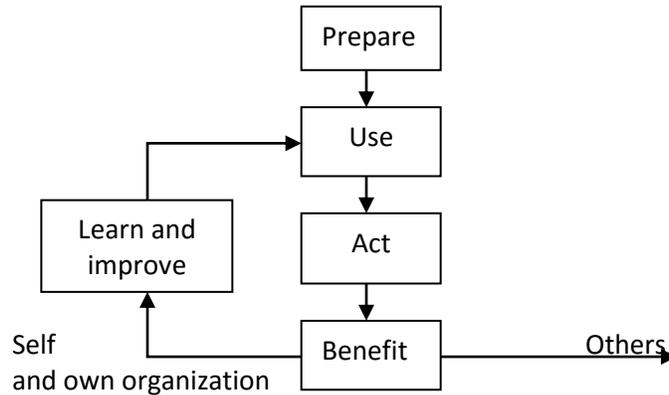


WCoMC  
Power Questions

How to use this book

The Worshipful Company of Management Consultants, one of the City of London’s respected Livery Companies is proud to offer this volume to the widest possible audience in the assurance that the authors have produced an outstanding aid to better management. We urge you to ask, and answer, these questions.

The heart of the book is the collection of 99 Power Questions. We here suggest a five step approach to using these questions to best effect.



Each of these steps is described below.

Prepare

These questions may be used in any of three main modes:

1. By asking oneself the questions
2. By arranging for someone else with whom you have a working relationship to ask you the questions
3. By someone independent of your management asking you the questions.

The advantages and disadvantages of each are summarised in this table.

Option	Advantages	Disadvantages	Comment
1. Self questioning	Fast Private Secure	Lack of challenge Only one point of view	Good place to start.
2. Related questioning	Challenge Second point of view	Slower Interested second party	Probable first further option used

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Option	Advantages	Disadvantages	Comment
3. Independent questioning	Challenge Added perspective Discipline	Slower to arrange Identifying good questioner Cost False starts	Likely to be the most powerful approach.

Asking and answering these questions requires a desire to improve performance, an open mind and honest answering. By open mind we mean clearly listening to the question in full and understanding it before considering and formulating your personal answer. To this end on the question pages we give hints as to the purpose of each question and of the insights that might be gained.

Users should also recognise that entering on this questioning is like starting a journey with no fixed end in sight. Like any learning it should be an adventure. We hope you will find valuable new understanding affecting your decisions and behaviour.

Your concept of value is likely to be something along the following lines:

“To realise improvements in my management practices that translate into measurable achievement of benefits to myself, to the organisations for whom I work and for the wider society, with minimum cost to myself and others.”

The price of obtaining these questions is the least of your costs and should fall into insignificance in relation to the benefits obtained. The most major resource use is likely to be your commitment, in time, thought and personal emotion. The best approach to maximising value is enthusiastically to pursue the benefits.

These Power Questions may be asked of a group, however we feel it important that members of such a group first have some experience of using the questions personally and also that the whole group consents to their use.

Finally, in preparation you should appreciate the way these questions are presented. The types of questions vary between short and long, between direct, probing and open questions. However, the three categories used for presentation are of a different order, these are:

Situations

There are well-recognised management situations when the right question helps to illuminate appropriate action. We identify 47 of these each linked to a maximum of 6 most relevant questions.

Questions

The 99 questions are distilled by us from a far greater number. You should find exploring them in relation to your own situation and that of your team challenging. We amplify the reason for asking each question and add hints as to the insights that might be gained.

Trees

## WCoMC Power Questions

Many questions are linked together through addressing common aspects of business management. Thus there are suggested sequences of questions that either probe underlying issues or work through related consequences.

### Use

The questions should be used one-at-a-time. So, where to start? There is no rule, initial options include using Situations or random selection. Once started the suggested Links may be found useful.

The three stages of asking the question, considering and exploring the question, and then answering should be clearly separated. These are not facile questions, so time spent fully appreciating the question before answering will not be wasted. A fourth stage of assessing the validity of the answer may often prove beneficial, possibly leading to a modified or substantially different answer.

For all questions we have included a brief description of the likely insights. This is to help you develop a response that leads to action where warranted. Responses might include the belief that this question is not applicable or not illuminating for you now, recognition that your current performance on the issue is valid and needs no change or acknowledgement that a change in your practice would be beneficial. Such a change might require new knowledge, changed communications such as self-disclosure or questioning or obtaining further input to explore the accuracy and significance of your answer.

Here are some final tips on using the questions:

- Use these questions in your most productive time
- Do not duck difficult questions
- Skip a question that does not resonate with you now
- Only ask questions within your attention span, not too many in one session
- Revisit one question as often as you wish
- Consider whether your answer is different when relaxed, in a typical situation or when under stress
- Note your answers
- Note your response

Add actions to your response note.

The notes pages have been set out to help with this process.

### Act

Your responses should have provided potential actions. Commit to those you think most likely to yield benefits and integrate these actions into your general action list. Do not add more actions if you already have sufficient for your time and energy available. As with any action list review frequently, preferably to a schedule, and record progress.

Do include actions which benefit other users of these questions thus implementing one of our Company's mottos, "giving and gaining".

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Benefit

The purpose of assembling these questions and of presenting them here is so that you and others benefit from their use. Two types of benefit are possible:

1. Direct management benefit to you and your organization from your increased effectiveness.
2. Improvement and extended use of these questions by others, through personal recommendation or by providing feedback to the authors.

We strongly recommend obtaining feedback from others when identifying benefits.

Learning

Through reflection on your questioning process you should improve your capacity to use these questions.