

# Exploring Leadership

## ADAPTABILITY: CURIOSITY

Curiosity is a strong desire to know or learn something. It leads to exploration, investigation, discovery, understanding, or even invention. Curiosity is the driving force behind developments in science, language, and industry.

### CONVERSATION STARTERS:

- Show 2 min. video featuring Richard Feynman on Curiosity
- How can you identify a curious person?  
[They ask a lot of good questions.]

“Curiosity killed the cat.” is the beginning of a famous proverb. The end of the proverb, which is not so widely quoted, is “...but satisfaction brought him back.” In other words, asking questions can be a risk, but the results are worth it. Good questions are open-ended. They are not always quick and easy to answer, and there is seldom only one right response, but they provide more worthwhile information to inform decisions and solve problems.

### KEY OBJECTIVES:

- Discover the elements of effective open-ended questions.
- Ask open-ended questions that elicit the best answers.

### WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- Internet/Video Capability to play video clip:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UjEngEpiJKo>
- Copies of the Interview Questions (See Appendix)
- Pens/Pencils

## EXPLORATION ACTIVITY:

- Ask participants to pair up and pretend they have never met.
- Give a copy of the handout (appendix) to one person in each pair; that person is the interviewer who will ask the questions to the interviewee, who will answer them.

### FACILITATOR TIP:

- If appropriate for the audience, encourage different participants to approach the questions with different attitudes (formal/stiff, casual, genuine, disinterested).

Think: police interrogation vs. friendly chit-chat. Does the tone of the question change how people respond?

- After the interview, have them work together to identify the questions on the list that are open-ended. What do they notice about those questions? [They often begin with Why? or How?]
- Now have them write two or three open-ended questions with which they can interview each other for the time remaining.



## REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- How did different types of questions affect the length of the answers?
- What type of question provided the most information?
- When asking open ended questions and discovering new and interesting information, what did you naturally want to do? [Ideally, someone will note that the answers to open-ended questions often lead to more questions.]
- Why are open-ended questions a sign of true Curiosity?

## APPLICATION DISCUSSION:

- Are you a genuinely curious person? Why or why not?
- What are some situations in real life in which you can ask open-ended questions to get more and better answers from people?
- How can open-ended questioning improve relationships between people?



## CONCLUSION:

Being curious is a valuable trait in school, business, and life. Curiosity ignites innovation and discovery. It helps us solve problems. If it weren't for people asking questions and wondering about ways to improve the world, the human race would still be in the Dark Ages. Maintain your curiosity and ask open-ended questions.

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## REFERENCES

- <https://hbr.org/2018/05/the-surprising-power-of-questions>
- <https://www.brainbytes.org/blog/24-ways-develop-curiosity/>
- <https://youtu.be/UjEngEpiJKo>
- <https://www.mentimeter.com/blog/stand-out-get-ahead/how-to-create-open-ended-questions>



## APPENDIX:

### Interview Questions:

1. What is your full name?
2. Why were you given that name?
3. Where do you live?
4. How did your family decide to move there?
5. Who is your favorite teacher?
6. Why is that teacher your favorite?
7. When was the last time you were in a movie theater?
8. How do you decide which movies you are going to see?
9. Which food is your favorite?
10. What does your choice of a favorite food say about you as a person?
11. How would your life be different if you won a million dollars?

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