

“15.2 Questions Every Highly Successful Leader Should Know and Ask Everyone”

By Alonzie Scott

“15.2 Questions Every Highly Successful Leader Should Know and Ask Everyone”

I landed upon this idea of asking questions long ago. The skills of asking question really showed me how people really think. When my team and I interviewed people, I perfected this skill on people who wanted to work in our organization.

Asking profound questions leads people to tell you how behave or respond to real world predicaments. In short, you get to hear their subconscious speak to you. Based upon twenty years of experience of asking questions, I now believe ability to ask questions is a competency every successful person, boss, manager, supervisor or leader learns and become experts at asking not only questions but also the right types of questions to improve decision-making.

Behind every great decision maker is a smart question. Ask yourself questions first when confronted with a new budget or strategic choice, a potential employee or a client negotiation, a bright idea or an intractable problem. And finally ask, what questions do I need to ask the people doing the work? To test your projections, tackle the cause of the problems to make the right decision -ask the right question.

Bosses, leaders, supervisors and managers are usually expected to know the majority of the answers that confront the perils of the organization every day. Yet, the lightening speed of change in the world of today really makes this premise not realistically possible.

In fact, knowing all the answers is probably never been possible. Those in charge probably pretended to know everything or speculated about what they did not know. However, some people have the uncanny ability to know how to ask the right question that leads to great success or helps others leap into the circle of success with answers that are simply remarkable.

Steve Morgenstein, author of “In Grow Your Business with Desktop Marketing,” says that a good marketing plan can lead to success. He also adds, who has time to write one. Morgenstein helps you get on tract by offering some lightening fast questions modified here for any business organization including my colleagues in the leisure, hospitality, recreation and parks organizations.

As you digest each, you will see a David Copperfield type magic appear before your eyes. The illusion will captivate your organization and offer you ideas to continuously improve your productivity and bottom-line.

1. How healthy is your Organization or business? Growing...sprinting or flatling. You've heard the popular motive phrase, “Show Me the Money?” As the millennials might say, hey you have to keep it real. Don't ever divert yourself from this contention. Consider the hard cold fact and profligate action accordingly.

2. What marketing channels do you currently employ? Remember, boomers, zoomers, X'ers, Y'ers, net-generation, millennials or echo-boomers get the message differently. The nub, find their needs and fill them, find their problems and solve them, or your organization will wear a crown of thorns...FOREVER!

3. Who are your customers? If you don't know who you are trying to reach, sell, influence or capture, guess what you don't make any headway. It's an old adage that still prevalent and you get what you seek. In short, you can't serve your customers unless you know who your customers are. Imagine operating a business or organization without ever accepting any money. Without customer who drive revenues, you will quickly fade away...find ways to avoid this predicament or your demise won't be far away.

4. How do your customers and potential customers perceive your business or organization? Okay, you get it...Hurray. Know the message and image you deliver to customers. It is a key premise to understanding how you win customers for life.

5. What benefits does your organization provide? Perhaps you know your programs, services and facilities you offer, the real sizzle for that great steak. Okay let's get a little healthier...the aroma smell for your garden fresh organic salad. Distinguish between the features and benefits and target your customers using those benefits in your marketing, advertising and promotions...MAP.

6. Do you know who your competitors are? Simple enough you think. You should ask your customers. You can fish where your customers or potential customers go. Once you learn the magic of your competitors, start fishing in the same lake. You can't catch the big one unless you fish where the big one is. Government agencies pursue this one with caution. Know the rules before you leap into a competitive venture.

Partnership and networking ventures might work best for you. Check with your legal team first, then find a way to enter the competition or convert the competition to your new partners.

7. What trends dominate your industry? There's an old fashion adage in the African American community that says, "if you don't know, you better ask somebody." The same premise holds true here. You must know what is transpiring in your industry to be on top of your game. When your customers and their needs or interest change, you had better change with them. If not, you might as well pick up a bag of dirt since you're already dead, you might as well bury yourself. And your change better be mega-fast because technology, mass marketing, value, fun, novelty and people change. So should you.

8. How much does it cost? Or, what are you charging people to buy, use, rent or lease what you offer? Every wonder why China is America's most favorite nation...it's not their great political system. It's price and cost baby. Let me elaborate. You get more for your buck than almost any place on the face of this planet. And, never, never, never and ever forget that PRICE dominates the American consumer. Americans want everything for less and businesses hear you load and clear. Corporate American is tuned to radio station "WITFM...what's in it for me."

9. Are you reacting fast and quick to the needs of your customers and prospects? Adjusting and reacting the right way is as easy as taking candy from a baby. Forget the baby, the mother won't let you take anything. Really, your organization should take time to respond to inquires, questions, complaints, issues, challenges or problems. Operating a 24/7 front desk services is a dynamic way to win the war for outstanding service.

10. Do you have a system to follow-up on new and exiting customers' interest and needs? Peter Drucker, the undisputed father of modern management by most experts account, says "nothing is

less productive than to make efficient what should not be done at all.” Analyze your systems, processes, facts, values and discover those flaws and then eliminate them. Never forget the reason why your organization functions in the first place and what drives revenues and profitability...customers (both internal and external). Did I make this point earlier? Hint...Hint...Hint!

11. What are the unfulfilled FANAFI or FAPASI...find a need and fill it or find a problem and solve it? Baffled you didn't I. FANAFI or FAPASI is an acronym that leads organization to the success bank 24/7. If an organization achieves FANFI or FAPASI, they create a win-win scenario that grows an organization. As Gandhi stated many years ago and paraphrased here, you must create an organization to “be the change you want to see in the world.”

12. What do you want people...customers and prospects to know about your organization or business? Government agencies and many large organizations pontificate or articulate this nebulous contention. Yet, the way government agencies convey their mission and vision for exceeds the everyday perception people ought to know. The nub, keep your messages to 15 words or less.

Recently on a flight to Denver, CO, I had a conversation with marketing expert from Toyota. He shared their mission statement and it captivated me. Toyota mission statement, “provide transportation for the galaxy.” Wow...it was simple, easy, powerful, loveable, believable and unforgettable. Hint. Hint. Hint.

13. How can your organization or business expand its offerings, services, programs or facilities to connect to your customers? Here is a rational and ready made implementable idea for you. Improve your amenities.

For example, if you operate a lodging business and offer a newspaper only at the front desk, then ask the customer if they want you to deliver it to their room. You can do this by asking them at check in. To eliminate waste and lower your cost, contact the newspaper and only order what you need for each day based upon your occupancy. Just in time works in the service industry too!

For a catering operation, you might want to toss in a “Free Ice c\Carving” for every wedding with 200 or more people in attendance or for every wedding. Amenity improvements can add value to the service you offer and generate more business that will keep existing customers and attract new ones. Seth Godin, author of Purple Cow, would say you are on your way to implementing an idea virus...a new form of word of mouth marketing modified for the knowledge management age.

14. Have you turned your current customers into referral specialists to generate new business? Okay don't shoot the messenger but in the bible, there is a passage that says “give and ye shall receive.” Hey, hey find a way to give-a-way some thing to customers who become your referral specialist.

Here's an example. Give personalized referral business card to your best customers with their name and your company information. The card should say, “present to Z-Best Club,” and earn a special prize or discount. For every card returned to you, send your referral specialist a very special gift and later host a referral gala of your guest every quarter. Make it a fun affair.

15. Have you formed an alliance with mutually supportive businesses or organizations? Remember, studying and analyzing your competition. Well... you sometimes can never beat the competition so you make those mutually support businesses and organizations your partners or join them in a networking arrangement. Think I am starting to repeat my thoughts...YES I Am. It's all for you to GET IT.

Colleges student activities program work this angle better than King Arthur wheeled his trusted sword Excalibular with the knights at the round table. Colleagues and universities piggyback on entertainment, lecture, and traveling acts as the tour in the same state or region. These higher education institutions use this strategy to keep production and delivery cost down, and thus introduces and exposes the students to world class events and activities.

15.1 How you can increase your credibility and visibility? Yes...here is a bargain budget but highly effective tools you should release immediately. Try public speaking, email, chat rooms, email clubs, e-letters, flyers, poster and public service announcement (PSA). Remember, your target audience loves to accept information in different ways. The only message to add here is that you should convey your message 6 times and in at least 3 unique selling ways to your target audience.

15.2 Did I get your “gray matter” pondering and considering the abundant possibilities? Let's hope this sun flower feature focuses your brainstorming efforts. If you learned one new IDEA from reading the message revamped from a “retro” business book as attempted here, your organization will make a heroic “buzz” to succeed in a boundless and fast paced hip hop or flux marketplace.

Your efforts will change your organization and the outcome is “Everybody Wins.” As a winner you instantly follow Casey Stengel philosophy, “there are three kinds of people, those who make things happen, those who watch things happen and those who say, what happened.” Don't ever be in the latter part of the bell curve but always consider the options and take assertive action. Every winner does and so should you.

Biographical Sketch: Alonzie Scott III is a nationally recognized leisure and hospitality management services expert and workforce development analyst. He authored several leisure services articles over the last 20 years in various publications. He is the Chief Bright Idea Dude of FLATR SUCCESS STRATEGIES, an in the trenches leisure services management consulting team. For FLATR (food, lodging, activities, tourism, recreation and parks) consulting services, workshops, clinics or speaking engagements, email him at flatrss2@hotmail.com or visit the company web site at www.flatrss.com

[Get-Articles.com : 1000's of reprintable business and internet marketing-related articles.](#)

[Submit your article for reprint.](#)