



5 Minute Activity

The Power of a Question

Lead Through Relationships

One of our foundational beliefs about leadership is that you lead through relationships. Let's take a minute to read an excerpt from an interview with Simon Sinek discussing leadership lessons learned during COVID. His comments speak to one of our core philosophies, lead through relationships. It also speaks to the values accompanying this philosophy. Let me set the stage for you. Sinek is discussing lessons he learned during COVID. One key lesson focused on the use of questions instead of statements to build trust in a relationship. This strategy could serve us well when having a difficult conversation.

Values

“It’s people, not programs who make the positive difference.

Doc

Be present and be visible.

People need to know they are cared for, cared about, and that they matter.

Build teamwork and trust through relationships.

Make time for mentoring.

Everyone is here to serve kids.

Take the time to deliver important news in person.

One of the things I learned by accident a couple of years ago is that sometimes statements work better than questions. Because questions people can avoid, right? This is what we all did during COVID. “How are you?” “Fine. Fine.” Everyone’s fine, right? And then what do you do with that? So, try making a statement. Something’s wrong. Something’s different. You’re not the same. I’m worried about you. Make statements. And it leaves very little room for somebody to divert the conversation. You’re not the person I know. And do it with love and empathy and the most important thing, you don’t show up to solve the problem. You show up to create an environment in which they’d be willing to open up to you. That’s the only goal. So, try a statement instead of a question.

Emerging Leaders (101): Read the excerpt above and discuss situations/times when you used a questioning technique. Discuss a situation where questions instead of statements would help build a relationship.

Established Leaders (201): One tendency a leader sometimes has is the desire to solve problems for others. It’s what we do, right? Describe a situation in which solving the problem is the right thing to do. Now, describe a situation when asking questions would be the appropriate response.

Tenured Leaders (301): Think about an employee whose behavior has changed. Let’s say, he/she embodied the attributes you wished everyone displayed. In the last month something has changed in their work performance. Role play a discussion you would have with this employee using questions.



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