



Finding the Reason Behind the Resistance – Framing Questions

Engaging with stakeholders using a framework of five question types to explore complex ideas, reveal issues and problems, uncover assumptions, increase understanding and develop relevant, practical solutions can help to truly understand what people really think about a change initiative.

- ▶ **Clarification** questions are designed to create a detailed understanding of what people think.
- ▶ **Assumption** questions go one level deeper to uncover why people have these ideas.
- ▶ **Reason and evidence** questions help us to focus colleagues on facts rather than perceptions.
- ▶ **Implication and consequence** questions generate an exploration of probabilities and possibilities, allowing us to embrace solutions.
- ▶ **Viewpoint and perspective** questions help us to walk in other people's shoes, bringing richness to the whole discussion and helping us to create solutions that can work for the majority.

Question type	Example
Clarification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ What do you mean by ...? ▶ What do you think is the main issue? ▶ Could you give me an example of how this will impact? ▶ Can you expand on ... further? ▶ Why is this question about this issue important? ▶ Why do you think that? ▶ Does this question about this issue lead to other important issues and questions?

Question type	Example
Assumption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ What assumptions are you making about this issue/this change? ▶ What would lead someone to make this assumption ▶ What are we assuming here? ▶ What could we assume instead? ▶ You seem to be assuming ...; do I understand that correctly?
Reason and evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ What would be an example of this impact/concern/issue? ▶ Why do you think that this is true? ▶ What other information do we need to analyse this impact/concern/issue? ▶ Could you explain your reasoning to me? ▶ How did you come to this conclusion? ▶ Is there reason to doubt that evidence? ▶ What led you to that belief? ▶ Is this your idea or did you hear it elsewhere? ▶ Have you always felt this way? ▶ What, in particular, has influenced your opinion on this?
Implication and consequence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ What effect would that have? ▶ On a scale of 1–10 how likely is that to really happen? ▶ What alternative is there? ▶ How would you mitigate that effect? ▶ If that happened what else might happen as a result?
Viewpoint and perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ How would others respond to this question/concern/issue? ▶ How could you answer the objection that ... would make? ▶ What might someone who believed ... to be true think? ▶ What alternatives are there? ▶ How else could you look at this issue/concern? ▶ What would you need to know to be able to do that?

*Adapted from: Moulton, T. (2017)
People's Needs Defining Change – Health Services Change Guide*