

Developing Skills or Insecurities?

Asking thoughtful questions can help people develop stronger thinking, consider different perspectives, and make better decisions. But continued questioning can also have the opposite effect. This reflection explores whether your questions help your team build confidence and ownership—or leave them uncertain about what it takes to move forward.

01 Reflect: Through Your Team's Eyes

Consider how you believe your team would answer—not how you intend to lead. Think about what happens most often, across people and situations. What specific meetings, conversations, or decisions might they point to?

1. If members of your team were asked how often discussions with you feel like an ongoing cycle of exploring more possibilities and identifying more risks, without moving toward a decision, what do you believe they would say?

☐ Never
 ☐ Rarely
 ☐ Sometimes
 ☐ Often
 ☐ Almost always

2. If members of your team were asked how often they know what it takes for a recommendation to be considered good enough to move forward, even if it isn't perfect, what do you believe they would say?

☐ Never
 ☐ Rarely
 ☐ Sometimes
 ☐ Often
 ☐ Almost always

3. If members of your team were asked how often they approach discussions with you already anticipating that their recommendations won't be good enough, what do you believe they would say?

☐ Never
 ☐ Rarely
 ☐ Sometimes
 ☐ Often
 ☐ Almost always

02 Look a Little Closer

Think about the last several times members of your team brought you recommendations. How many discussions ended with a clear decision or agreed path forward, even when uncertainty remained?

When you challenge someone's recommendation, how do you determine when enough exploration has taken place? Are you looking for a reasonable path forward, or an option without meaningful drawbacks?

What might repeated experiences of having recommendations questioned, challenged, or sent back for further exploration be teaching your team about their own judgment and ability to make decisions?

03 Stop / Start / Continue

Based on what you've noticed, consider what you might want to:

STOP

What might you be doing that keeps your team exploring more possibilities or revisiting potential risks when a reasonable path forward has already emerged?

START

What could you begin doing to establish clearer boundaries for when enough exploration has taken place and it's time to move forward, even when some uncertainty remains?

CONTINUE

What are you already doing that helps your team think critically, evaluate risks, and strengthen their recommendations?

04 One Thing to Try

Choose one behavior from your reflections to stop or start. Keep it specific.

What will you do?

Where will you try it? Name an upcoming meeting, conversation, decision, or relationship.

What will you pay attention to that might help you understand the impact of your approach?

The goal of challenging your team's thinking isn't to eliminate every uncertainty. It's to help them develop the judgment and confidence to move forward.

Continue the Conversation

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