

# Question Your Team

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Imagine you are absolutely STARVING with only a few minutes to eat before your next Zoom call. You sit down to eat the closest thing you can grab, and you quickly inhale your food. Before you know it, you are reaching for seconds, polished off those crumbs, and just as your meal starts to hit bottom, you realize, holy moly, you are STUFFED!

When you are rushing, you are not mindful, when you are rushing, you are not making wise choices, you are likely overeating. It is not a healthy way to consume. Your brain does not have a chance to register and process the fact that you are full. And your stomach cannot digest your food properly.

In today's bizzzy virtual environment, leaders and team members need the opportunity to digest and process what the heck happened in the last few months. We are too tempted to check Coronavirus off our list and just keep plugging through projects and tasks.

I was reminded of this need to take time to reflect and look forward as I facilitated the closing retreat for a year-long leadership program recently. I coached the participants as we took a walk down memory lane and reviewed their year, reflected on the impact of their experiences, and planned how they would take action.

Your team members likely will not take the time to do this on their own. Since we are more dispersed and connecting in all types of different ways, it's more important now than ever to ask your team questions to help them digest and process recent changes in their work and in their roles in order to have the most success moving forward.

I have found that the "What? So What? Now What?" technique can work really well. And this technique can be used day in and day out when you check in with your team – not just after a training program or yearly review.

The goal for you and your team members is to stop before your grab that second plate, or answer that 50th email, and identify what is going well, what is not going well, and adapt accordingly.

Here are a few questions you can take for a spin. As with any technique, adapt it to your situation and your style and personality.

## What?

- What's on your mind?
- What have you learned?
- What surprises you about this situation?
- What is the real challenge here?
- What obstacles are in your way?
- What is working well?

## So what?

- Why does this matter?
- What did you do that was effective? Why? What did you do that was ineffective? Why?
- How is your experience different from what you expected?
- What are the possible ramifications of this situation?
- What would the consequences be if we did nothing about this?

## Now what?

- How can you apply your learning?
- What will you do differently, going forward?
- How can you coach others so that they benefit from your learning?
- What are the opportunities for improvement?
- Where do we go from here? What are the next steps in this process?