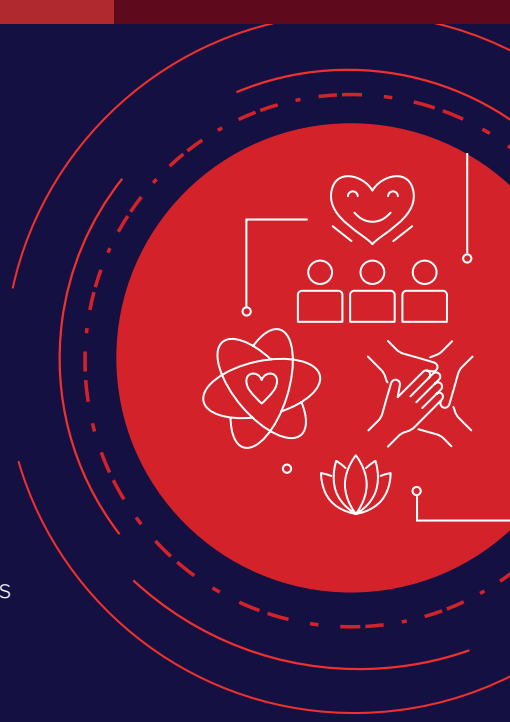




Cultivating Culture: 8 Steps To Develop Effective Questioning Techniques

Asking better questions is the key to unlocking better answers. Determine when to broaden the discussion, when to narrow it, driving toward a decision. Here are 8 steps board members can take to ask questions in a way that demonstrates commitment to the mission yet adds understanding.



1. Come to your board meeting prepared

Coming to the board meeting prepared fosters more positive communication.



5. Disagree graciously and refrain from arguing

Disagreements are inevitable in a boardroom; extending grace to other speakers and stating your position based on data or facts helps others hear your argument.



2. Listen to the voice of empathy

Putting yourself in someone else's shoes may help you respond positively rather than in anger.



6. Understand that you might not get it right

You can do everything right ask the right questions, be as prepared as possible and surprises will always pop up. A learning process allows you to start fresh after a unpredictable event.



3. Keep a positive attitude

It's important to assume positive intent. Other board members want the best for the district even if you disagree on what that is; finding common ground is helpful.



7. Ask what you want to know

Get to the root of what you are asking. Questions based on principle or belief should be dealt with at the outset of the budget process, to ensure over-arching goals are funded.



4. Respect others and grant them plenty of validation

Always be respectful in your comments and conversation. To encourage civility, thank the speaker for their thoughtful comments or tone. Build on the positive.



8. Demands are not productive

When speaking to administrators, fellow board members, or a stakeholder, it is best to frame needs as a request rather than a demand.

Impacting the culture of a board is a slow process, but it can be done. As educational and community leaders it is incumbent on boards to set the example for civility and respect.

It may seem futile to try to create a culture when elections change the makeup of the board yearly; using a board portal, such as [Diligent Community](#) or [BoardDocs](#) to codify decisions and procedures creates a foundation for the board to always be moving forward.

To learn more about Diligent's governance solutions for K12 education, contact us today:
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