

Asking better questions

ENABLE



30 Years of Excellence

Welcome!

Your facilitator for today is



A large orange speech bubble with a white outline, containing the text "Why is it important to ask good questions?".

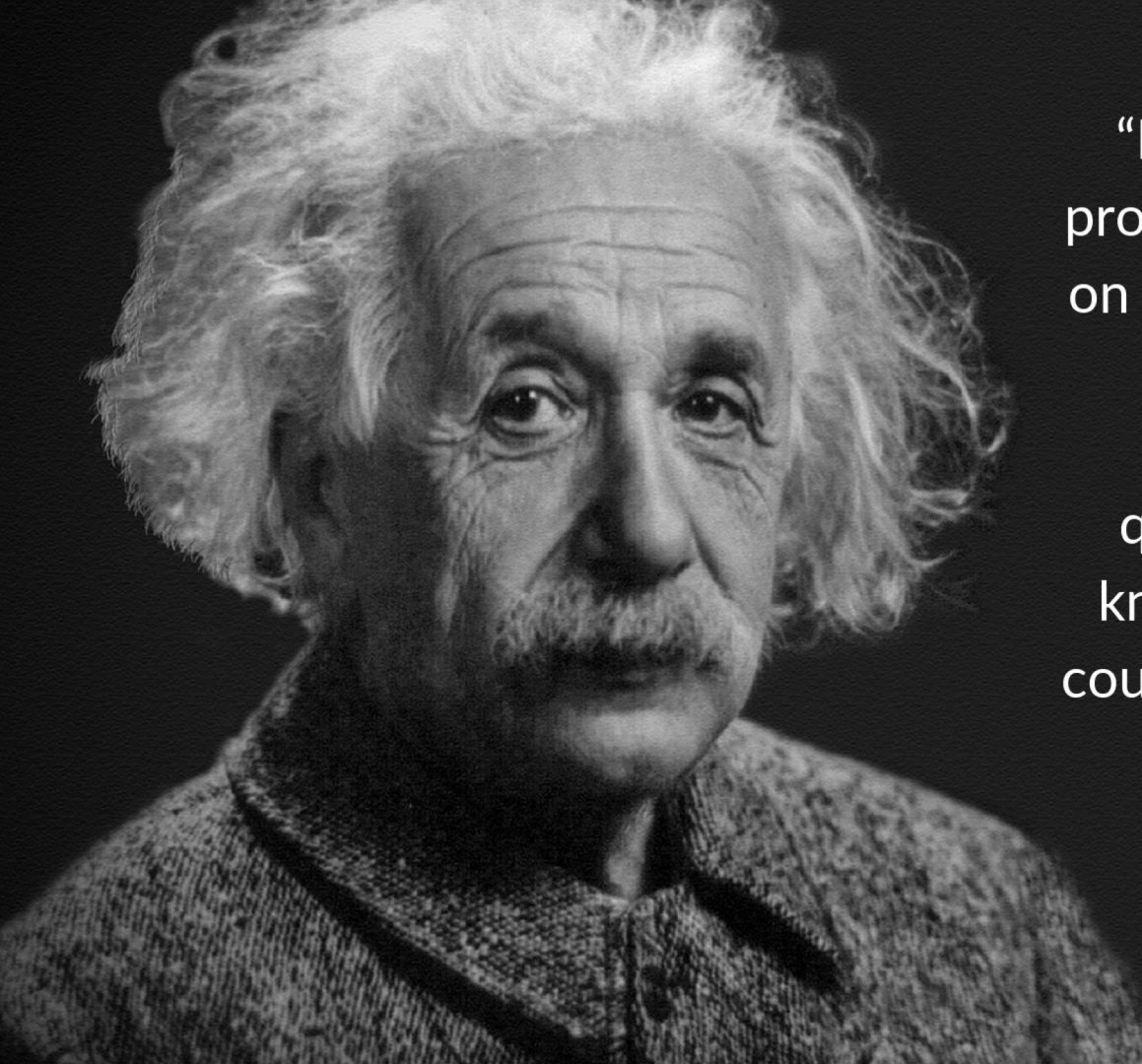
Why is it
important to ask
good questions?

- Write your answers on a post-it note and stick on the board

- **Why is it important to ask good questions?**

- Help you understand the other person/people.
- Can help you persuade others.
- Gather the right information efficiently.
- Create good relationships.
- Deal with complaints.
- Make the right decision.
- Start/continue conversations.





“If I had an hour to solve a problem and my life depended on the solution, I would spend the first 55 minutes determining the proper question to ask, for once I know the proper question, I could solve the problem in less than five minutes.”

Attributed to Albert Einstein



Aims of the session

1. Describe different types of questions.
2. Identify question types.
3. Practise using different types of questions.

• Types of questions



1. Open
2. Closed
3. Leading
4. Clarifying
5. Probing
6. Rhetorical
7. Hypothetical

Sorting activity

In groups, sort your cards so that you match one of each colour.

You will have matched together a question type, its definition and some examples.



Can you ask a question?

Get into groups of 3.

One person is 'observer', one person is 'questioner' and one is 'answerer'.

The die is rolled to select a question type.

The 'questioner' must come up with a question that fits the style rolled.

The 'answerer' tries to answer the question.

The observer makes notes on the quality of the question and answer to see which question styles work well.

After each roll of the die, swap over.



Feedback

Which questions worked well?

Which ones got a high quality answer?

Which ones did not work so well?

Why do you think that was?



Five whys

A technique created by Toyota to find the root cause of a problem rather than to just fix a symptom of the problem.



Five whys

Asking 'why' five times can help to solve a problem or reveal underlying motivation.



Try out the five whys

In pairs pick a topic. One person makes a statement and the other asks 'why' five times (or more) to get the real root of the statement.



TOP TIPS ON ASKING BETTER QUESTIONS



Pausing for 3 seconds is the ideal length of time before asking a question, after asking it and before responding to the answer.



Remember to listen to the person's answer rather than focusing on what you will ask next.



Avoid asking very long questions that will confuse the listener.



Be aware of asking ‘guess what I’m thinking questions’.

If only a specific answer will do, then be clear at the start about what you want.



Try to avoid interrupting the speaker or finishing their sentences.



Closed questions can be used early in a conversation to start to build rapport and put the other people at ease.

Too many open questions straight away can seem too personal or complex.



Ask

why

what if

and

how

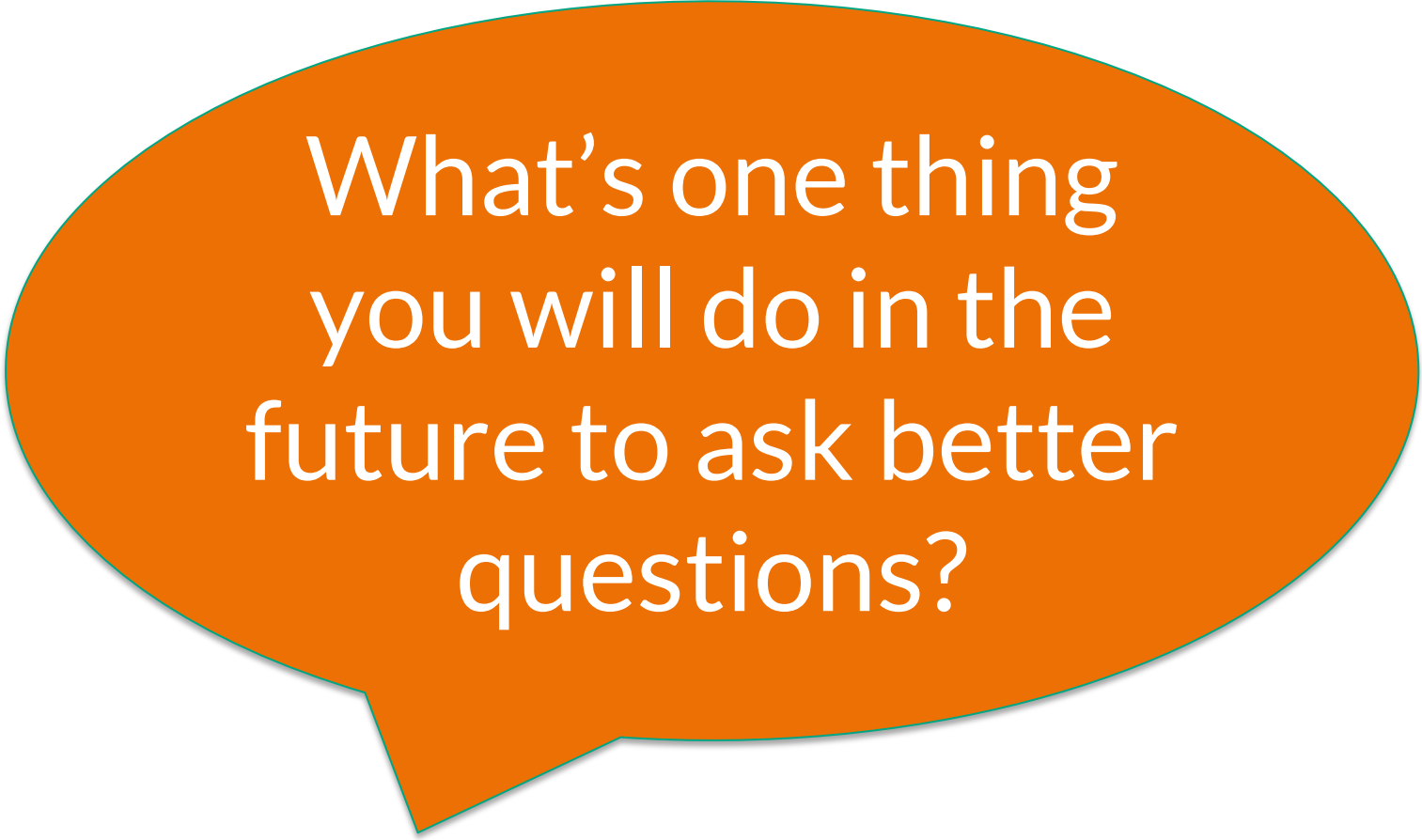
(in that order) to solve a problem.



Did we achieve our aims?

1. Describe different types of questions.
2. Identify question types.
3. Practise using different types of questions.





What's one thing
you will do in the
future to ask better
questions?

Thank you!

