

Cultivating A Culture of Curiosity

by MICHAEL SIPE, Chairman — Vistage Int'l 667

Curiosity? Curiosity might seem like a “curious” topic for an article on aspirational leadership. However, curiosity and an inquisitive spirit are some of the most engaging characteristics of excellent leaders. Genuinely curious leaders have discovered that **the quality of the questions we ask determines the quality of the outcomes** we get. Poor questions... poor results. Great questions...great results.



exploration and growth.

Equally important is fostering an inquisitive mindset across the organization. An inquisitive mindset assumes there is always more to learn, more to explore, and more ways to improve. It resists complacency and values discovery over certainty. When teams adopt this perspective, they engage in meaningful dialogue, take smart risks, and contribute innovative ideas — even (or especially) in the face of ambiguity.

Here are some additional examples of the kinds of questions that open up space for reflection, discussion and innovation:

- What would your business look like if it fully reflected your highest values?
- What’s the decision you’ve been postponing that, if made today, would change everything?
- Where in your organization are you tolerating mediocrity, and what’s the cost?
- Who would you hire today if your goal was to 10x your business this year?
- What’s one belief about growth or success you’re ready to challenge or retire?

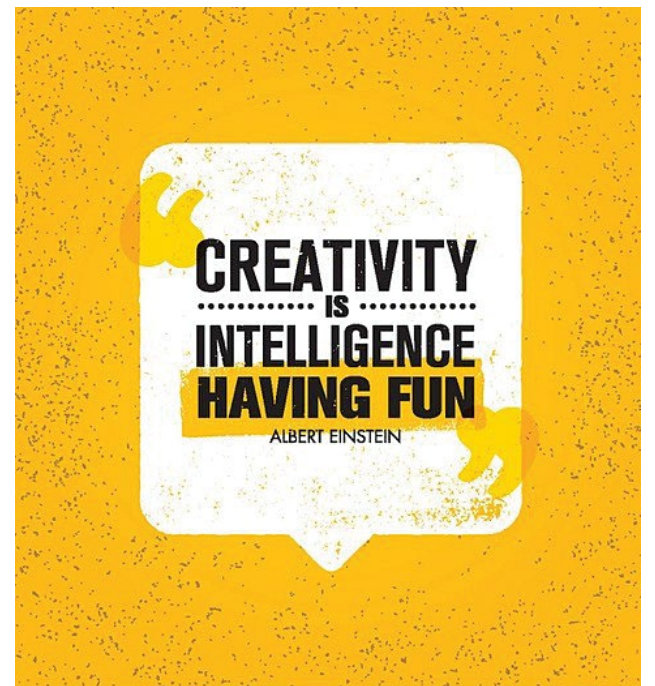
Mindset. An inquisitive mindset doesn’t accept things at face value. It’s a disciplined way of thinking that seeks to understand before deciding, explores multiple perspectives before concluding, and approaches setbacks with a posture of learning rather than judgment. This mindset fosters resilience because challenges are no longer threats — they’re opportunities for discovery. Team meetings become high-energy spaces of possibility and empowerment.

One place you can experience a powerful culture of curiosity is in a local Vistage CEO peer group. Vistage

A Game Changer. Developing a curious spirit is rarely focused on in business today. In environments dominated by execution and efficiency, embracing the simple power of asking quality questions can be revolutionary. Building a culture of curiosity — where inquiry is encouraged, uncertainty is welcomed, and exploration is rewarded — can be a game-changer for organizations striving for innovation, agility, profit margins and engagement.

The foundation of a culture of curiosity is built on **asking better questions**. Not just more questions, but deeper, more provocative ones. Leaders who model curiosity by asking thoughtful, open-ended questions inspire their teams to dig beneath the surface. Quality questions fuel strategic breakthroughs, uncover blind spots, and lead to better decision-making. They move teams from reactive thinking to proactive exploration. When curiosity leads, excellence follows...as **the desire to discover becomes the engine for growth, innovation and joy**.

Quality Questions. Instead of asking “How can we fix this?” a curious leader might ask, “What is this problem trying to teach us?” Examples of two powerful questions leaders can integrate into their rhythm are: “What’s the question no one is asking that we should be?” and “What assumptions are we making that might no longer be true?” These questions don’t just elicit answers — they shift the conversation toward



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is a confidential space where leaders with aspirations to excel can be open about the issues, opportunities and challenges they face. We uncover innovative options and spot unexpected pitfalls, as our peers ask penetrating questions no one else can or will ask. It’s a space where not only do your questions get answered, but your answers get questioned. If you are curious about what it’s like to be part of a leadership culture of curiosity, contact me for information on our high-performing local CEO peer groups.

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