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*Newsletter Issue #31
Are You Asking the Right Questions?*



THE HUMAN FACTOR, Inc.
enabling strategic agility...

More Than a Minute Video Series:
Lesson 4



Thinking the
Unthinkable

Holly explains why changing the way you think might be your most important task as a business leader. [Click here](#) to learn about the biggest challenge facing today's business leaders.

**Get a Headstart on Your
Competition!**



Have you started thinking about where you need to go in 2011 and how you will get there?

Success starts with having a clear picture of what winning looks like for your organization? But that picture doesn't paint itself, so why not let Holly help you get a jump on the competition?

If you're struggling to gain clarity around your strategic goals and direction, Holly will help you: 1) get clear on what winning looks like; 2) create a road map

Are You Asking the Right Questions?



As a business consultant, behavioral scientist and keynote speaker, much of what I talk about runs counterintuitive to conventional leadership

thinking.

I constantly urge business leaders to slow down to go fast. Unlearn to learn. Stop making stuff up (or at least be aware when you are). Regularly challenge what you think you know about your customers, your markets and your industry.

Here's another one: *stop trying to have all the right answers and start focusing on asking the right questions.*

A generation ago, when the world didn't move so quickly, leaders had ample time to gather information, analyze the data and make informed decisions regarding the strategy and direction for our organizations. But the increasing speed and complexity of our world now makes it impossible to have all the information we need to make fully informed decisions. That's why today's leaders must develop the critical skill of asking questions rather than having all the answers.

The trick is coming up with the right questions.

Too often, leaders ask questions that keep people focused on problems and obstacles rather than on solutions. For example, suppose your company has set a target of 20% sales growth but the numbers keep lagging behind the goal. The typical approach involves asking the sales team questions like: Why aren't you selling more? Why

for getting there; 3) inform, inspire and engage employees in achieving the plan.

Choose from two different service levels to fit your specific needs: she has to turn clients away due to scheduling so we're excited to offer two options to help more organizations define winning for 2011 and beyond.

"Regular" Holly. Includes on-site facilitation and support for everything from defining your mission to implementing your customized plan. Ideal for companies that are starting their plan from scratch or taking the company in new directions.

Holly "Lite". Provides customized consulting over the phone and includes tools and worksheets for application. Best suited for companies that need help in refining and adjusting rather than creating a brand new plan.

Don't leave winning to chance. [Contact Holly today!](#)

Professional Certificate in Core Management and Leadership

Don't just survive. Thrive! Advance your leadership and management skills and competencies by joining us at the Management Development Institute program this fall (Wednesdays, Oct. 13-27) taught by Holly Green. Holly will provide critical learning experiences in this three day course that will transform you into an innovative and progressive leader.

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can't you work together more effectively? What are you going to do differently to sell more and catch up to the plan?

On the surface, these seem like reasonable questions. However, they usually produce negative outcomes because they focus everyone's thinking on problems rather than solutions. They also cause the sales team to feel attacked, which puts them on the defensive. This, in turn, causes them to look for scapegoat answers that have nothing to do with achieving the goal.

So, how do you ask the right questions? It starts with a process I call "success visioning". This involves focusing on where you want to go (your target destination) and then picturing what it looks like when you get there. Not *if* you get there, but *when* you get there. Once you have a clear picture of what winning looks like for your organization, ask a series of future, active, past-tense questions that presume the target has already been achieved.

In a world where you can no longer predict the future with any degree of accuracy, the success of your business may hinge upon your ability to ask the right questions at the right time. What are the right questions for your business, and when do you plan to ask them?

To read the complete article and see examples of future, active, past-tense questions and why they work, [click here](#).

Answer to last edition's ***Who said this?*** "Social media is like teen sex; everyone wants to do it, no one actually knows how. When finally done, there is surprise it's not better."

Avinash Kaushik

Congratulations to Steve De Santolo who received a \$5 Amazon.com gift card for correctly identifying him.

This issue's ***Who said this?*** "Intelligence is something we are born with. Thinking is a skill that must be learned."

Find out who in the next newsletter.

Keynote Presentations



Need a world-class keynote speaker for your next big event?

Holly's interactive presentations are refreshing, practical and engaging. Participants walk away with tools, tips and techniques that can be put into practice immediately as well as individual follow up materials via email to achieve lasting results.

To learn more about how she can support your next event, meeting or production with the right content and approach, [email us](#) today. To view a sampling of her most popular topics, [visit our site](#).

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