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# MANUFACTURER'S REPORT

## **Great Leaders Ask Great Questions: Twenty Questions to Energize Your Safety Process**

**Questions – A tool for leaders**

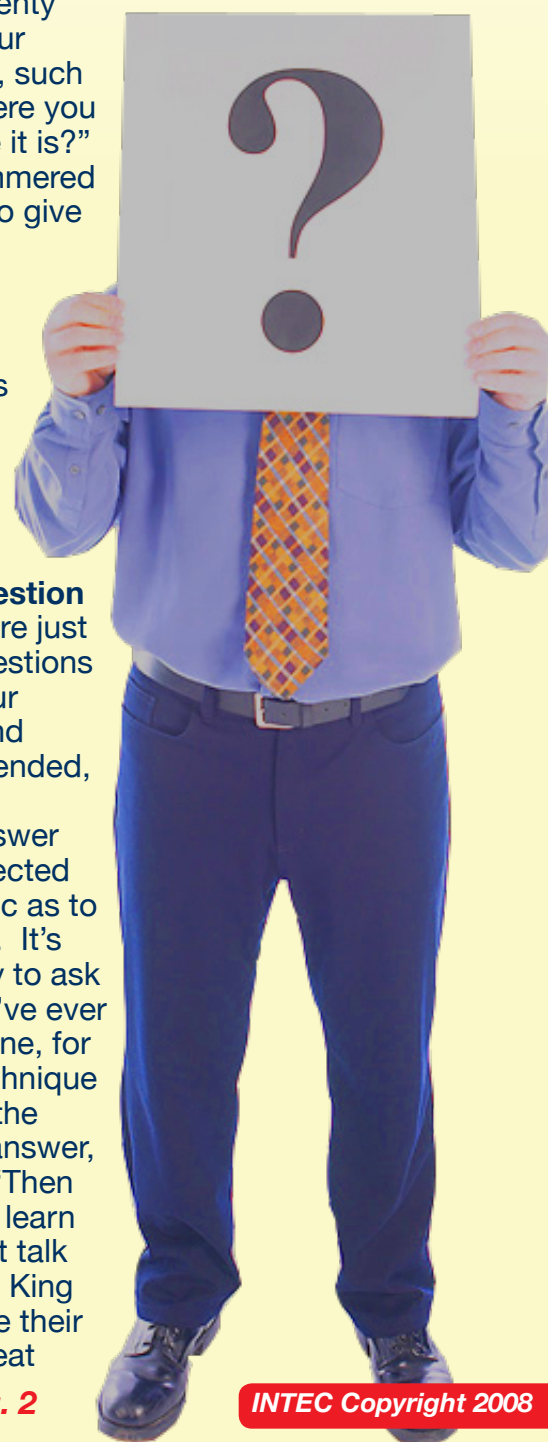
Did you ever play the game "Twenty Questions" as a kid? Maybe your mom liked to ask you questions, such as "Where were you?" "Who were you with?" "Do you know what time it is?"

Most of us don't like to be hammered with questions, but we do like to give our opinions. Great leaders understand that about people and work to find ways to ask questions that invite input and stimulate dialog. When it comes to safety, leaders can use questions to gain significant insight into the state of the organization.

**No Such Thing as a Dumb Question**

No questions are dumb, some are just better than others. Creating questions to gain understanding about your organization requires both art and science. They should be open-ended, not lead to a specific answer, encourage the participant to answer honestly and openly, and be directed toward a topic yet not so specific as to allow a one or two word answer. It's important to develop your ability to ask follow-up questions, too. If you've ever watched a TV lawyer (or a real one, for that matter) you've seen this technique in action. The attorney will ask the witness a question, wait for an answer, then follow up with a question, "Then what happened?" You can also learn this technique by watching great talk show interviewers such as Larry King or Oprah Winfrey. They've made their careers on their ability to ask great questions. **continued on pg. 2**

by Carl and Deb Potter



*continued from cover*

### **Make a List and Check it Twice**

Have you ever realized that it was a good idea to ask questions, but you just can't think of any – especially open-ended ones? You're not alone. It happens to all of us. One technique that works is to make a list of open-ended questions and add to it. Keep your list in your daily planner and refer to it frequently. Assess your questions to see if you can improve them or add to them.

Here is a list of twenty questions to get you started. What questions can you add to the list?

1. How safe do you feel doing your job?
2. What do you hear employees say about safety in our company?
3. What is the last safety training course you attended?
4. What do you like best about the safety meetings in your department?
5. What do you expect of me when it comes to safety?
6. What safety policy or rule is the most aggravating to you and why?
7. What is a hazard that you face when doing your job that you think I don't know about?
8. How are you personally involved in the safety process here?
9. What are your safety goals for this year?
10. How do you like to learn about safety incidents?
11. What did you do in the last job briefing?
12. Who is responsible for safety here?
13. What happens when you have a safety concern?
14. How does the company demonstrate that it cares about your personal safety?
15. What else could the company do to show you that we care about safety?
16. When an injury occurs how do employees react in your group?
17. How were you trained to do your job safely?
18. How do you learn about hazards that affect your work?
19. How do you know if you are working safely?
20. If you could change one thing about our safety process, what would it be?

These are just some of the questions you can use to gain insight into your safety management process. Remember, the most important part of the question is the answer you hear, so take time to listen.

### **Keep Those Questions Coming**

Learn all you can about asking good questions by making a list, watching and listening to experts who have mastered the art of inquiry, and continually practice listening. You'll be amazed at what happens when people know you care enough to ask them a question and then take the time to listen to them. You can have a very significant influence on your organization's safety when you use this technique.



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*Carl Potter, CSP, CMC and Deb Potter, PhD, CMC work with organizations that want to create an environment where nobody gets hurt. As advocates of a zero-injury workplace, they are safety speakers, authors, and consultants to industry. For information about their programs and products, see [www.potterandassociates.com](http://www.potterandassociates.com) or contact them at Potter and Associates International, Inc. 800-259-6209 or [carl@potterandassociates.com](mailto:carl@potterandassociates.com).*

## Summer's Hidden Danger

from Professional Health Services

**T**hirsty summer should be fun, but heat-related illnesses are always a danger, especially for the elderly, infants, those with chronic diseases, or even young and healthy people who overexert themselves in high heat.

Heat-related deaths and illnesses are easily preventable. Protect yourself and your family members with the following tips and stay safe in the heat!  
What is heat exhaustion, and who's at risk?

Heat-related illnesses occur when the body is unable to cool itself and overheats. The elderly are very prone to heat exhaustion because they don't sweat as much as younger adults and sometimes take medications that affect how much they perspire.

Young children also do not sweat enough to cool themselves off adequately — so never leave a child in a parked car, even if the temperature outside is not sweltering! The temperature inside the car can rise 20 degrees in just 10 minutes.  
Preventing heat exhaustion

Heat exhaustion develops after exposure to high temperatures, and includes symptoms such as heavy sweating, fatigue, dizziness, paleness, weakness or headache.

### The good news is that heat exhaustion is easy to avoid:

- Plan outdoor activities in the morning or late afternoon and early evening.
- Stay indoors in an air-conditioned building during the heat of the day.
- Drink lots of water, and replace salt and minerals you lose through perspiring by drinking a sports drink.
- Wear lightweight, light-colored and loose-fitting clothing.
- Monitor those at risk: Call elderly relatives or neighbors once or twice a day during a heat wave.
- Acclimate to the heat slowly by taking breaks often during yard work or outdoor activities.
- Avoid getting a sunburn — sunburned skin can't rid itself of excess heat.

### Signs of a heat stroke

Heat stroke is a more severe heat-related illness than heat exhaustion. Besides taking the necessary precautions to avoid heat-related illnesses, you should also be able to recognize heat stroke symptoms in yourself or others:

- Red, hot, dry skin that isn't sweating
- A fever above 103 degrees Fahrenheit (taken orally)
- Throbbing headache
- Nausea and/or dizziness
- Confusion

What to do if someone you know has these warning signs? Call an ambulance, but don't give the victim a drink. Instead, bring the body temperature down by spraying him or her with a garden hose, wrapping him or her in a cool, wet sheet, or sponging him or her with cool water. Monitor the person's body temperature until it is down to 101-102 degrees.

Enjoy a safe summer, and help friends and relatives who are at risk for heat-related illnesses enjoy the summer safely too!



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