Twitter Thread by Erik Torenberg



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1/ Here’s a list of conversational frameworks I’ve picked up that have been helpful.

Please add your own.

2/ The Magic Question: "What would need to be true for you to...X?"

https://t.co/JxjjUTV0is

> 1/\u201cWhat would need to be true for you to\u2026.X\u201d
>
> Why is this the most powerful question you can ask when attempting to reach an agreement with another human being or organization?
>
> A thread, co-written by @deanmbrody: https://t.co/Yo6jHbSit9
>
> — Erik Torenberg (@eriktorenberg) December 4, 2018

3/ On evaluating where someone’s head is at regarding a topic they are being wishy-washy about or delaying.

“Gun to the head—what would you decide now?”

“Fast forward 6 months after your sabbatical--how would you decide: what criteria is most important to you?”

4/ Other Q’s re: decisions:

“Putting aside a list of pros/cons, what’s the *one* reason you’re doing this?” “Why is that the most important reason?”

“What’s end-game here?”

“What does success look like in a world where you pick that path?”

5/ When listening, after empathizing, and wanting to help them make their own decisions without imposing your world view:

“What would the best version of yourself do”?

6/ When someone asks you a personal or vulnerable question and you don’t yet have an answer, although you want to answer soon:

“The Quakers have this idea where you don’t speak unless the spirit moves you. I'm waiting for the spirit to move me.”

h/t a friend

7/ When someone confronts you w/ a problem they have with you

A/ Thanks for sharing because I value this relationship + want both of us to get needs met
B/ What I heard was X (summary)-- was that accurate?
C/ How can I contribute to meeting your needs?

8/ When really angry:

“….” Don't’ say anything!

Take a lap. Or cold shower. Workout. Change your mind state before re-entering the conversation

9/ When really angry during the heat of the moment:

“....” Still don’t say anything!

Ask for a pause: “Do you mind if we take a quick break and return tonight? I want to make sure I can fully listen to your story + appreciate where you are coming from.”

That last part is key.

10/ When giving unsolicited feedback

“…” Probably best not to.

Unless you ask the caveat: "Are you interested in hearing feedback?"

11/ When confronting somebody:

Instead of “Why did you do that?”

Maybe: “What was going on for you?”

12/ Discovering ambition:

“If you had a billion dollars what would you do with

a) the money
b) your time”?

This shows where they want to change society and what they truly want to be doing.

13/ "What was your past manager (or friend) like?"

This determines how they'll talk about you in the future--whether they'll view you in a charitable light or not.

14/ When rambling with nowhere to go:

“I’m going to pause right there for reactions”

https://t.co/g2en4UnweD

> Conversational tactic:
>
> After rambling so much you either forgot your intended original point and/or don\u2019t know how to elegantly stop talking, say \u201cI\u2019ll pause for any thoughts or reactions.\u201d
>
> — Erik Torenberg (@eriktorenberg) February 28, 2018

15/ in group meetings when two people are talking about something unrelated:

“Let’s take this offline”.

16/ When assessing VC/founder alignment in an VC pitch:

“Why not bootstrap it so you can control your own destiny and have more optionality over selling for 50m, 100m?”

Also just a good question for every founder to ask themselves.

17/ Note: conversational frameworks are effective when coming from a genuine place of wanting mutual benefit--seeking win-win.

https://t.co/YfOt4FzoPt

> 9/ Note: The Q should come from a place of seeking mutual benefit. Or else it\u2019ll ring hollow and manipulative.
>
> When asking for a raise, it's less: \u201ctrue for you to feel I deserve this?"
>
> More: \u201ctrue for you to feel it\u2019s in all of our best interest?\u201d
>
> And you genuinely mean it.
>
> — Erik Torenberg (@eriktorenberg) December 4, 2018

18/ When someone asks a somewhat vague Q:

"What's the question behind the question?"