How do I use question sets to support my learners?

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This article explores how to use question sets to help learners reflect on what they're learning and apply it to their work. Click here for steps on adding and managing questions.

We cover best practices for writing questions that go beyond recall, since recall questions often don't show whether a leadership program is working. We also recommend Connie Malamed's guide, *How to Write Effective Reflection Questions*, for more on writing reflection questions.

Question Sets let you add questions to a curation. You write them, so you can track what matters most to your goals. Ask learners what they want from a program before they start, or what they'll do with it when they finish.

Which question types work best for your program?

Multiple-choice questions ask learners to pick one option from a list. Use them to gauge where learners are, show how they'd handle a common workplace moment, or track how often they practice a skill.

- **Make every option a realistic choice.** Use answers people might actually give or believe, so their pick shows how they think. Skip "all of the above" and silly options.
- **Keep it to three to five options.** Extra options that nobody picks add reading time without adding insight.
- **Avoid knowledge checks.** They mostly test recall. Questions that ask learners to apply ideas to their own work build skills they'll use on the job.

Open-ended questions ask learners to write in their own words. Use them to reflect, explore ideas, or plan next steps.

- **Ask about the learner's own work.** Adults learn best when they see how an idea applies to their job, so situations and decisions work better than definitions.
- **Keep each question to one idea.** Learners should be able to answer in a sentence or two.
- **Show the answer you want.** Add a prompt, such as an example or a next step.

What are some example questions?

An opening question to start reflection before learning.

> *What would you like to know by the end of this learning program?*

A multiple-choice question to explore a common workplace moment.

A colleague keeps interrupting you in meetings. What would you most likely do?

a. *Wait until they finish, then respond*

b. *Ask them to hold that thought until you're done*

c. *Let it go and follow up with them one-on-one later*

A multiple-choice question to track a behavior.

How many times in the last week did you practice a breathing exercise?

a. *Never*

b. *1–2 times*

c. *3–4 times*

d. *Every day*

An open-ended question to apply the lesson to their specific situation.

Who might you ask for feedback to help you handle conflict better? Make a plan to reach out to them.

An open-ended question to prepare for a live session. Ask learners to bring a reaction or question to your next live session, so the discussion starts with their thinking.

After watching these lessons, what's one reaction to discuss at our upcoming live session?

[Expert] advises that you [idea]. How does this apply, or not apply, in your role? We'll discuss these ideas in our upcoming session.

A closing question to prompt learners to use what they learned.

In the next week, how will you incorporate mindfulness techniques into your routine?