

WHY CURIOSITY IN THE WORKPLACE IS SUCH AN IMPORTANT SKILL

If you want to be the employee that stands out with your boss, show him or her that you have a curious mind and you are always on the lookout for ways to improve the business. For example, suggesting that products be moved to a different place in the store so they will sell better, or coming up with a great idea on recycling or how you can get more customers into the café.



Other great reasons why it's good to be more curious are:

- **It gives your brain a workout instead of just thinking nothing and accepting whatever is happening.**
Curious people always ask questions and search for answers in their minds. Their minds are always active. Since the mind is like a muscle which becomes stronger through exercise, the mental exercise caused by curiosity makes your mind stronger and stronger.
- **It trains your mind to be on the look-out for new ideas.**
When you are curious about something, your mind searches for new ideas related to it. Without curiosity, the ideas may pass right in front of you. You miss these gold nuggets because your mind is not ready to spot them. The world's great inventors are constantly looking for these nuggets of a great new ideas. Just think how many great ideas *you* might have missed by not being curious!
- **It opens up new worlds and possibilities.**
By being curious you will be able to see new worlds and possibilities which are normally not visible. They are hidden behind the blur of everyday work and life. Curiosity helps you escape this mind fog and gives you a chance to see a great solution to a problem you have been struggling with at work or home.
- **It brings excitement into your life**
The life of curious people is far from boring. There are always new things that attract their attention and there are always new 'toys' to play with. Instead of being bored, curious people have an adventurous life.

So how can you become more curious?

1. Keep an open mind

This is essential if you are to have a curious mind. Be open to learn, unlearn, and relearn. Some things you know for sure and others you *think* are right. There are many ways of looking at things, so listen carefully to everyone's perspective and then decide what you think is right or wrong.

2. Don't accept things as being unchangeable

If you just accept the world as it is without trying to dig deeper, you will certainly lose your curiosity. Sure, we need to accept that some things don't change but there are many parts of our lives that can change with some curiosity and hard work. If you accept everything as being fixed solid, like a rock, you will live life like a hamster on a wheel that goes round and round. Try to dig deeper beneath the surface of your situation so you can see what's possible.



3. Ask lots of questions

A sure way to dig deeper beneath the surface is to ask questions. Look out for the old timers at work who have lots of knowledge and experience. Ask questions like: *What* is that? *Why* is it made that way? *When* was it made? *Who* invented it? *Where* does it come from? *How* does it work? *What, why, when, where, who* and *how* questions are the best friends of curious people.

4. Don't be too quick to label something as boring

Whenever you label something as boring, you close one more door of possibilities. Curious people are unlikely to call something boring before they have considered the possibilities of the task. Instead, they are always on the look-out for a way to make the task more interesting or fun. And, at work, they try to be as efficient as possible with the less interesting parts of their job so they are completed quickly. Choose to stop being bored and start being bold.

5. See learning as something fun

If you don't like learning, you are probably not too interested in finding out how things work and why. This is an unhelpful mindset as it limits what you can do and achieve in your life. But if you think of learning as something fun, you will naturally *want* to dig deeper and find out more. Bosses enjoy seeing young people enjoying learning. When you act bored, you look disinterested and this is not a good look to your boss. You can learn anything. Learn to love learning!



6. Read

Make time to read and look at books and magazines. Find out what others are thinking and doing around the country and the world. Get excited by what's new, which may spark your interest to explore them further. Feed your mind.



How curious are you? Answer the following questionnaire

1. You try to light the BBQ but it won't work. What do you do?

- a. Turn it off and cook your steak in the frying pan on the stove top.
- b. Kick the BBQ.
- c. Go get someone to fix it for you.
- d. Go get the manual or go online to see if you can find out what's wrong.
- e. Try to figure out what's wrong and see if you can fix it yourself.

2. Your girl/boyfriend seems angry with you but you have no idea why. What do you do?

- a. Ask them what their problem is.
- b. Ask them about what the problem is.
- c. Go find someone else to hang out with.
- d. Give them some space, watch a Netflix movie and talk to them later.
- e. Get annoyed as they are spoiling your day for no reason.
- f. Be genuinely interested in finding out what has happened.
- g. Tell them to snap out of it.

3. Your boss has told you to throw out all the leftover bread from the bakery into the skip outside. You think this is a real waste of food. What do you do?

- a. Do as you are told because she is the boss.
- b. Sneak a few loaves into your car and toss the rest.
- c. Chat with your boss about being able to share some of the bread with your family.
- d. Chat with your boss to see if she would consider getting rid of the bread another way, like having the City Mission collect it at the end of each day to give to the homeless.
- e. Tell the boss you think it's disgusting that she's throwing out good food.

4. You have been told to unpack all the vegetables onto the shelves in the supermarket. There isn't enough room even though you have packed them as high as you can. What do you do?

- a. Keep stacking them up and if they fall onto the floor, it's not your problem!
- b. Ask a colleague if they have any ideas what to do.
- c. Take a long break and hope someone else sorts it out while you're gone.
- d. Have another look at the shelves and see if there's another way they could be stacked which could sort the problem.
- e. Go back and tell the supervisor that it can't be done.

5. You see your boss walking around the building site very slowly, measuring the distance from the foundation to the fence. He is clearly not happy. What do you do?

- a. Get on with your own job
- b. Say to the boss that you are curious what he is doing and find out whether you can help him sort out the issue
- c. Ask your mate what he thinks the boss is up to
- d. Go ask your boss a random question and hope he might tell you what he is doing
- e. Use the time when the boss is distracted to have a sneaky smoke

Add up your points

Q1:

a: 1 point
b: 0 points
c: 1 point
d: 2 points
e: 3 points

Q2:

a: 0 points
b: 1 point
c: 0 points
d: 1 point
e: 3 points

Q3:

a: 1 point
b: 0 points
c: 2 points
d: 3 points
e: 0 points

Q4:

a: 0 points
b: 2 points
c: 0 points
d: 3 points
e: 1 point

Q5:

a: 1 point
b: 3 points
c: 1 point
d: 1 point
e: 0 points

Find out your result

10–15 points: Congratulations! You are a curious person who is always on the look-out as to how you can improve yourself or the world around you. Keep up the good work!

5–9 points: Well done! You tend to play it safe and do what's expected of you without creating problems. Perhaps try to be a little bolder and look out for ways you can make a positive difference both at home and at work.

4 or fewer: It may be time to get more serious with your job. Jobs are not easy to find so make sure you look after the one you have. Also, take a little more care with your relationships with people, whether it be your boss or your partner. Try to be more curious and a little less judgmental.