



FOUNDATIONAL  
WORKBOOK

4TH  
EDITION



# 21 QUESTIONS

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TO TAKE CONTROL

CONVERSATION AGENT

# WHY START

## WITH QUESTIONS?

“The future is the intersection of choice and interruptions,” say Christopher Locke and David Weinberger in *The Cluetrain Manifesto*. “The questions we ask aren't going to predict the future. They will create the future.”

Things are what we make of them. Producer Brian Grazer says, "curiosity is the secret to a bigger life." Questions are a very high-level, sophisticated form of thinking.

Technical founders, scientists, researchers and academics practice their craft by asking and doing, observing and experimenting. They seek to make the motion right and build momentum in the right direction.

This is why questions are important. Questions open up your thinking, direct, and focus it.

These 21 questions organized in 4 sections will help you gather the facts about why, what, who, where, when, and how your imagining is purposeful. **Start here.**

1

**WHY AM I DOING THIS?**

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**MAKING THINGS RIGHT**

# PURPOSE

TO DIRECT VALUE FOR WHO

Why am I doing this?

What happens because my business or project exists?

Is there a more important question I should be addressing?

# PURPOSE

TO DIRECT VALUE FOR WHO

Why I am the right person to do it?

What is my point of view?

# PURPOSE

TO DIRECT VALUE FOR WHO

I'm already doing it:

a. Am I getting the kinds of results I want?

b. What weaknesses will get in the way if I don't address them?

c. What does success look like today, this year, next year, and five years from now?

# 2

**WHAT'S NEEDED?**

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**TO ACHIEVE PURPOSE**

# NEEDS

WHAT'S NEEDED TO ACHIEVE  
PURPOSE

What is possible?

What do I value?

What are my assumptions?



# NEEDS

WHAT'S NEEDED TO ACHIEVE  
PURPOSE

What I already have:

a. What are my strengths?

b. If I were starting over again, what would I do differently?

# 3

**WHAT ELSE IS NEEDED?**

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(MOSTLY)  
WHERE QUESTIONS

# NEEDS

WHO HAS WHAT IS NEEDED AND WHAT  
DO WE NEED TO GIVE TO GET IT

Who is my audience?

What do they need:

- a. Where can I add more value?
- b. Will they care?
- c. What do the people I serve want?
- d. What do they believe in?

# NEEDS

WHO HAS WHAT IS NEEDED AND WHAT  
DO WE NEED TO GIVE TO GET IT

How do I find them:

a. Why is the timing right?

What do I have that they need:

a. What promises do I want to make and keep ?

4

**HOW DO I DO IT?**

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**THE HOW QUESTIONS**

# CONTROL

WHO'S IN CONTROL. WHAT ACTIVITIES  
AND WHAT RESOURCES ARE NEEDED

We would be pleased to engage with you and help you attract opportunity and create higher value.

We can work together in one of three ways:

- story tune-up
- fractional CCO
- connecting you to the appropriate people



**CONVERSATION**

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**AGENT**

# ABOUT

BREATHE NEW LIFE INTO YOUR  
CONVERSATIONS, TELL A NEW STORY

Conversation is the best model for learning faster, empathizing better, and communicating more effectively than your competitors.

Good decisions don't happen without a focused dialogue about the idea. The myth that good ideas sell themselves is just that—a myth.

Values don't work in a vacuum: specificity gives them depth, incentives give them accountability.

Good products and solutions are often just a "what" without a "why," "who," "how," "where," and "when."

Making your case is smart business.

Evidence makes part of your case, but it needs a compelling story to reflect human intention and persuade your employees, customers, collaborators, and investors.



# ABOUT



Valeria Maltoni leverages years of experience working inside companies to create business value and strategic differentiation that get results.

As an independent consultant and advisor, she provides solutions-neutral thinking and doing.

Conversation Agent delivers communication and conversation design, connection strategy, and evaluation services that address business development and shape work collaborations.

In addition to creating sustainable companies, her reinvention work led to two acquisitions, one merger, and profitable joint ventures, partnerships, products and services.

Prior to Conversation Agent, Valeria worked in senior marketing and communication and digital strategy roles in global companies and agencies. She helped many companies use story as arbitrage to compound value, increase capacity and build new capabilities.

Valeria is intimately familiar with the challenges of building a company and team. She worked with young entrepreneurs as part of Venture for America Accelerator program with First Round Capital and International consultants at The Fox School of Business at Temple University. She taught Advanced Digital Marketing at the prestigious Bologna Business School.

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