What is Thoughtful and Reflective Questioning?

Thoughtful and Reflective Questioning is the second skill set of effective **COMMUNICATION**. Questioning can serve two purposes:

- Help inform the **COACH** of the team’s knowledge and intentions
- Help the team clarify its thinking and uncover possibilities and solutions

Thoughtful questions are designed to help teams **REFLECT** on their practice. Using carefully chosen questions will allow the coach to probe for deeper complexity and encourage team self reflection. As a coach, careful thinking about the type of questions to ask is important. Considering the purpose and intended **OUTCOME** will lead to choosing effective questions.

Why is Thoughtful and Reflective Questioning important?

As coaches develop the **ART** of thoughtful questioning, they can guide teams to be reflective of their practice. Thoughtful questioning helps build team capacity through evaluation of current status and determination of next steps.

How does a coach help the team develop the skills and competencies to function independently?

Carefully choosing specific, thoughtful questions is a process to help a team move forward with focus and intent. As a team moves through the planning and improvement process, a coach’s use of strategic, **REFLECTIVE** questions supports team progress.

**Asking the right kinds of questions empowers the team to move forward to action in powerful ways.** Through questioning, the coach sends the message that the team’s ideas are critical to the **PLANNING** process. The team gains confidence and becomes more skilled at working through tough problems or thorny situations.

A thoughtful question does more than convey respect for the team’s ideas; it develops the team’s problem **SOLVING** abilities. However, when a coach is overly directive, or asks questions that are condescending, disingenuous or put people on the spot, the confidence of a team is reduced and the team’s performance and success are sabotaged.

The **PROCESS** of asking thoughtful and reflective questions supports both short-term and long-term capacity building goals: the short-term goal of helping the team to generate a **SOLUTION** to the issue at hand and the long-term goal of helping the team develop the skills and tools to handle similar issues in the future independently.