



Question cheat sheet:

Below is a list of some great questions I was forwarded, shared or constructed to get deeper meaning and understanding of players or athletes you are coaching. I always ask if you can think or have additional questions you would like to see added to the list, I shall make this dynamic and update every couple of weeks.

I have offered credits where fellow coaches have forwarded via email and encourage you to do so too. Please forward ideas to jonny@coachingthecoaches.net

Quick fire round: questions to ask for quick insight into their thoughts and ideas. Always pause for response and consider your next question as a result:

- How are you feeling today?
 - Owen Mooney from ICoachKids Podcast
- What's on your mind today?
- What can I do to help you or support you?
 - Multiple references including Dan Cottrell of Rugby Coach Weekly, UK
- What would you do differently if offered a second chance?
 - Dan Cottrell of Rugby Coach Weekly, UK and Gavin Clarke via online form
- What is it you see? What did you notice? What caused it to happen?
 - Tim Tunncliffe from Amateur Rugby Podcast and senior coach developer Geraint Davies
- What would you like to explore today?
- What was your favourite bit of and why?
- What mistakes did you make today that you don't want to make again?
- What did you struggle with today?
- What must you do daily to keep yourself 'sane' ?
 - Alternative: What does your daily routine look like?
- Use 5 words to describe yourself.



- What 5 words would teammates use to describe you?
- What's the best way to start your day?
- How was your life different a year ago?
- How do you relax after hard day at work, uni or training?
- What's the most annoying question people ask you regularly?
- What qualities do you admire about your parents?
- What's the most exciting thing that's happened to you this week or month?
- What could you give a half hour presentation on with zero preparation?

NB: Little tip; possibly consider re-asking with "really" inserted within the question to allow more honesty or expression within their offered answers; examples being, "what's really on your mind today?"...what did you struggle with today really?"...and "really, how are you feeling today?"





Reflective practice: As we all know, coaching is cyclical and therefore, you need to ask questions and listen to answers to develop your craft. See below questions to help you become aware of areas of strength and improvement:

- What did you learn from me?
- What type of coach would you like me to be for you?
- Where can I/you ask for help to enable me/you to improve a skill or technique?
- What was most useful for you today/this week/this season?
- How would you rank today's practice from 1-10?
 - If answer 6, ask follow up question of "what stopped it from being a 5 and/or what could we have done to make it a 7?"
- In one sentence, summarise this session/week/season...?
- What would a perfect session/season look like to you and why?
 - Follow up question: What's the first thing we could change to start the steps to the perfect season/session?
- What 5 things would make the biggest difference to you now, on or off the pitch/court/arena?
- What does praise sound like to you? How do you like to receive feedback?
- What's the best compliment you have ever received?
- Who is or was your favourite coach in another sport and why?
- What do all good coaches have in common?
- What would you do differently if you were the coach?
 - Owen Mooney from ICoachKids Podcast
- What would you do against us if you were the opposition coach?
 - Kevin Mulcahy from The Movement Coach
- What is your goal for today/this year?
 - Follow up: What do you need to change for this to happen? What benefits are there in not making any changes?
 - From Joe Winpenny of Oxford Harlequins, UK





- Who has given you good, honest feedback today? What other resources do you have access to?
 - Russell Earnshaw from The Magic Academy, UK
- What 1-2 things do I not know about you that would help me coach you better?
 - John O'Sullivan from Changing the Game Project, USA



Funny or quizzical questions to make them think: Questions don't always need to be around technical or tactical aspects. You need to have questions in your toolbox to catch them off guard and get them thinking. It shall show you who they are as a person as well as an athlete, an important, over looked area.

- If a friend or teammate was in your shoes, what advice would you give them?
- How does your teammates/other athletes make training fun? What do they do to make it challenging?
- What's kept in your bag or part of your kit that might surprise some people?
- If you were a, what would you be and why? Had plenty of options around this from wildlife animal, Simpsons character to takeaway meal!!
- What are you grateful for today?
- What are you planning on doing after today's practice?
- What 2-3 emotions are you feeling right now?
- What would be your first question after waking up from being cryogenically frozen for 100 years?
- If you could fast forward a decade, what would your sport look like and what would you change now?
- If you could go back 10 years, what would you tell the younger version of yourself?
- What are you giving up to be involved in this session/game/season? Why would you rather be here than there?
 - Matt Coldrey via Twitter
- If you could change one law within your sport, what would it be?
- What would you call your autobiography?
 - Follow on: If you had 5 chapters, what would they be called or be about?
- When did you last make a mistake and were OK with it?
- What would you sing on karaoke night?





- What have you given up yet used to love?
- Amongst your friends and family, what are you famous for?
- A genie gives you three wishes; what's the first one?
- At a party, where would I find you or what would I find you doing?
- If you were prime minister or president for one hour, what would you change?





Deeper reflective questions: Once the relationship is established and you trying to establish better reasoning or understanding for whom the person is on and away from the pitch, these questions may start to help peel back the layers and develop better insight:

- Who do you wish was watching every time you played a match/competed in your sport and why?
- What's your personal motto, spoken or unspoken?
- What obstacles have you faced, what did you do, and what did you learn?
- What can you accomplish that doesn't depend on others?
- What's the real challenge here for you? What can we do to overcome this challenge?
- What are you uncomfortable talking about?
- If money was no object, what would you do all day?
- How can you earn or lose someone's trust?
- How are the people whom have helped you most throughout your life and how?
- If you could pick your ideal career, what would it be (and why)?
- What's your current biggest problem at the moment? If this weren't a problem, what would then be your biggest problem?
- What skills, talents, or competencies do you have that you are most proud of away from sport?
 - Follow up questions: Which make you the happiest? Which make you feel accomplished?
- What's the biggest decision you've made this month/year and why was it such a big deal?
- If you could spend ten minutes with your 'hero' alive or dead what would you ask them?
- What story does your friends and family always tell about you?
- What makes you feel that you need to be alone?
- If pressure or confidence didn't exist, how would you play or compete differently?
 - Phil Llewellyn, rugby coach educator based in UK

