

We all Crave Dialogue Here's How to Achieve It

This election is over. Throughout the trials and tribulations we continually heard, "Why can't we talk to each other rather than at each other?"

We all crave dialogue. We resist monologue. Let me rephrase that - we resist the monologues of others but love the sound of our *own* voices.

It's easier to see the lack of dialogue in the extreme rhetoric of what's happening politically. It's more difficult to see that we all engage in some version of this in our own lives.



Because my work is focused on Employee Engagement, I see it most clearly in the work environment. It doesn't matter whether it's leaders or front-line workers we are making more declarative statements than we are asking questions.

The formula for dialogue is simple:

Questions = dialogue
Statements = monologue

In workplace situations, there are great questions to ask that can stimulate some eye-opening dialogue:

- At staff meetings: What would you like to accomplish this week, team?"
- Walk me through this. Why do you think this is the best approach to take?
- How can we make this work better?

These questions have something in common: they can't be answered "yes" or "no" and so open up a dialogue.

A monologue can feel like an assault. A dialogue is an invitation to participate.

If you're bone-tired of the divisiveness we're being subjected to, why not take on the task of improving your corner of the world? Encourage dialogue at work. Heck! Why not try it at home, as well?

Like the old joke goes, "How do you eat an elephant? One small bite at a time."

How do you get people to talk with each other? One question at a time.