

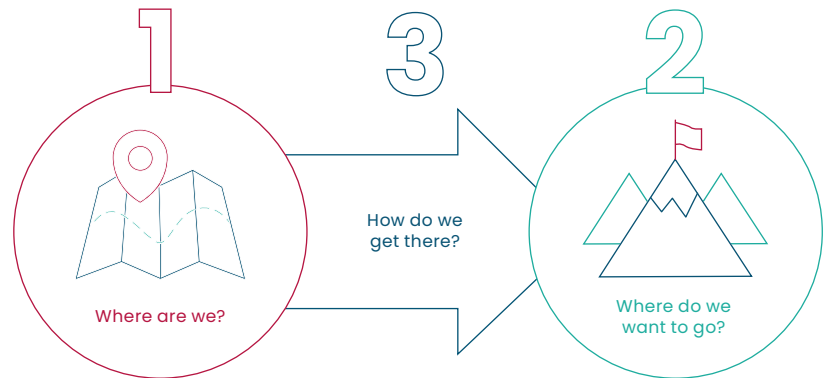


The Strategic Moment™

A Faster Way to Obtain High Performance

What is it?

The Strategic Moment™ is an elegantly simple model containing three questions that can be used in a range of circumstances, from the very strategic to the tactical. With a large group, it can help create alignment; when used during a difficult one-on-one conversation, it can help regain a high-performance focus. Think of this model as a great tool to use in moments when you are feeling stuck and unsure of how to move ahead. The best part is that you don't need to have all the answers. Rather, having the right questions can be far more powerful and effective.



How to use it?

The Strategic Moment™ is made up of three questions:

- 1 Where are we?
- 2 Where do we want to go?
- 3 How do we want to get there?

Three Steps

- 1 When using these questions, simply ask the first question, **“Where are we?”**. Then listen to where others think you all are, share your view as well and then confirm understanding to align on the current state. This is so simple yet so often not used, creating gaps between people's perceptions. Alignment is critical before moving forward. You do not need to reach an agreement, but aligning on

“ “ **The harder the conflict the more glorious the triumph.** ” ”

— Thomas Paine

the understanding is a must. (See *Quick & Dirty: Master Meetings* for additional information on how to build agreements). Use active listening, suspending your own judgements while taking in what others are saying. Mirror back to others what you're hearing, sharing the emotions that are being expressed as well as the content. Mirroring is a powerful way to actively demonstrate empathy and understanding.

- 2 Once you have alignment on the first question, move to the second question, **“Where do we want to go?”**, the future space. Depending upon the outcomes you are trying to achieve, this question is critical. For instance, let's say that you are trying to hold



a conversation related to performance, in that your direct report is not behaving the way you need them to behave. Sharing what your view of what an A+ performance means is essential for their future success. Too often we don't make what 'great' looks like crystal clear. Now you have the opportunity to ask what their interpretation of 'great' means, which can be very revealing. This moment also highlights any gaps in perception and offers an opportunity to close those gaps.

- 3** In moving to the third question **"How do we want to get there?"** for the performance conversation above, clarity and agreement of ownership as it relates to closing the gap is essential. Specifically, you want the person who is doing the work to create their path. If they can't define the path, ask questions that create options, such as **"What might be some ways to approach getting to X?"** or **"What could be some initial steps that would help make progress toward X?"**. Asking such questions increases the likelihood of success for the person who answers and executes the action, since they have greater ownership over their own response.. You will also want to ask, **"What might get in your way of getting to X?"** and then ensure you have a path laid out to mitigate potential obstacles. At this point, it is essential to agree on the path forward. The next step is about holding them accountable for what they are agreeing to implement.

Overall, this powerful set of questions allows leaders to quickly regain focus, clarity and confidence on how to best proceed, even in the trickiest of situations. Use The Strategic Moment™ in conjunction with the Quick & Dirty: Triangle of Disempowerment so that you can start from a centered place when applying these questions.

“ A step in the wrong direction is better than staying on the spot ... once you're moving forward you can correct your course as you go. Your automatic guidance system cannot guide you when you are standing still. ”

— Maxwell Maltz

Source:

Adapted from Interactions Associates