

Anonymous Q&A

👤 Large Group

💡 101

🔒 Low Trust

🕒 20 mins

📁 LGBTQ

⚙️ Necessary supplies

- Scrap paper
- Writing utensils

🚩 Goals & objectives

- Provide an opportunity for all participants to ask the questions they are most curious about and have them answered
- An opportunity to generate scenarios for the activities later in the training

1 2 3 Step-by-step walk through

1. Hand out scrap paper or index cards.
2. Request that everyone write you at least one question. Let them know (if you are comfortable) that this question can be about anything. Personal, political, social, curiosity, misconceptions, random ideas, or a scenario that they would like to go over as a group. Ask people to leave them on your desk or pass around a “hat” of some sort.
3. Once the questions have all been handed in, review them (quickly) and see if there are any that are on a similar topic to address all at once.
4. Read out the questions verbatim and answer them to the best of your ability. Alternatively throw the questions out to the group if you think others would also have interesting thoughts/input on the questions.

✍️ Make it your own

You could direct participants to ask more specific questions, it is up to you how broad or how narrowly you direct them. Prompting them in some way is important so they know the scope that their questions can cover.

📄 Notes

It is important to wait until the vast majority (if not all) hand in their questions so that people don't feel like you will know which question is theirs because you've already begun to read through them. Additionally, while it is up to the facilitator(s) to decide, it can be helpful to promise that all questions will be answered, it encourages trust and reassures people that their question will be answered even if a discussion is prompted from an earlier question.

If you receive a question that you are not comfortable answering - don't read it aloud. Only you and the participant that asked the question will recognize that you did not answer the question. Alternatively, leave a number of questions unanswered and let participants know that you will get back to them via email about questions you did not get to answer. This will allow you time to discuss optional answers with others before answering the question(s) - but it is important to follow through on this.

★ All-Star Tips

This activity can create a lot of awesome opportunities to facilitate discussions that the participants *really* want to have, they wrote down the topic so you know at least one person is interested. As you move forward in your facilitation skills you can really allow these conversations to go and just help focus the conversations to be productive dialogue.

If you don't want to answer a question that is totally ok, you also have the option of reading the question and letting people know that you don't know the answer. This is that imperfect role modeling that you are showing and demonstrating for the group.

Reading out the questions verbatim allows you to practice your **"Yes... and"s**. Often participants may phrase a question in a way that uses a word that sounds awkward or in a way that others may find offensive. This is a great opportunity to practice rephrasing or correcting without shutting someone down. If someone was to write, "Why do all queers go to pride?" You could read that out loud and they say, "Right ok so you're asking why do all queer people attend pride, just added the word people in there cuz we wanna use the word queer only as a an adjective, so cool. Why do all queer people go to pride?" And then chug along!

Remember if you phrase things as if your opinion is true for the whole group of people who share your identity this may be how the group absorbs it. Be cognizant to ground your answers in your identity, experience, or understanding that way you're both *not* speaking for the group *and* being aware of your salient identities.

If you are unsure how certain questions could be answered and want to read about some that we've answered over the years Meg has a series on her the [pride blog](#).

