



SHAPING  
WEALTH

# **25 questions for better client connections**

**Meghaan Lurtz**

Ph.D., FBS™

[shapingwealth.com](https://shapingwealth.com)

# AGENDA

1

Psychology of Questions

2

Styles of Questions

3

25 questions

4

Keeping the relationship fresh

5

Question pitfalls



# AGENDA



**Psychology of Questions**



Styles of Questions



25 questions



Keeping the relationship fresh



Question pitfalls



# **QUESTIONING PSYCHOLOGY**

Commands (and requests) versus questions lower anxiety



# COMMANDS (AND REQUESTS) VERSUS QUESTIONS LOWER ANXIETY

## Questions

Brain thinks: is there a 'right' answer?

**Is this your favorite shade of green?**

## Commands

Brain does not worry about 'right' answers.

**Tell me, what do you think of this shade of green?**



# COMMANDS VS. QUESTIONS

	CLOSED
ASK	Is this your favorite shade of green?
COMMAND	Tell me, what do you think of this shade of green?



# COMMANDS VS. QUESTIONS

Close-Ended versus Open-Ended changes information

	CLOSED	OPEN
ASK	Is this your favorite shade of green?	What is your favorite color?
COMMAND	Tell me, what do you think of this shade of green?	Describe for me your favorite color?



# QUESTIONING PSYCHOLOGY

Close-Ended versus Open-Ended changes information

## **Closed Questions:**

Brains answer quickly, but do not give much information

- ▶ Is this your favorite shade of green?
- ▶ Yes or No

## **Open Questions:**

Brains may be slower to respond, but give more information

- ▶ Describe for me your favorite color?
  - Well, I like green, and I think that shade of green is a bit too light





# QUESTIONING PSYCHOLOGY



Emotional activation  
is a key component  
of action



Emotional activation can  
be impacted through  
questions /commands



# AGENDA

1

Psychology of Questions

2

**Styles of Questions**

3

25 questions

4

Keeping the relationship fresh

5

Question pitfalls



# STYLES OF QUESTIONS



Projective



Scaling



Swing



Implied



# STYLES OF QUESTIONS: PROJECTIVE

Projective questions – use “what if” or “what would”

- What if money was not an issue or concern, how would you live your life?
- What would you change if you could change anything about...
- What if we thought about this outside the bounds of finance?
- What would you tell your best friend if they came to you with this question...



# STYLES OF QUESTIONS: SCALING

Scaling questions use a scale

- On a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 is amazing, how do you feel today?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 is financially confident, where are you after today's meeting?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 is ready to get started, where are you at at this moment?



# STYLES OF QUESTIONS: SWING

Swing questions use: will, can, could, would which makes them an invitation

- Would you be willing to do...
- Can you tell me a bit more about...

**Note:** Closed in nature, the person giving the response could say 'no'. Swing questions are best used in established relationships.



# STYLES OF QUESTIONS: IMPLIED

Implied questions use: “I wonder” or “you must”

- I wonder what you will do with this inheritance\*
- I wonder what you think about...

**Note:** Like wing questions, implied questions are best used in established relationships.

\* This is not the same as saying, “what do you intend to do with this inheritance?”



# AGENDA

1

Psychology of Questions

2

Styles of Questions

3

**25 questions**

4

Keeping the relationship fresh

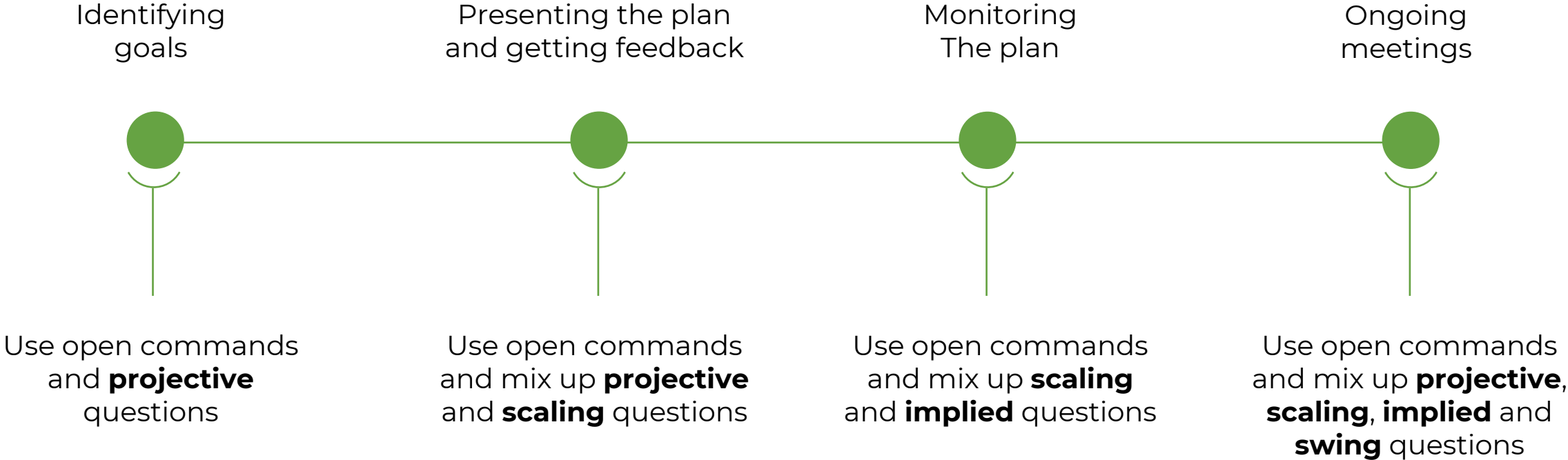
5

Question pitfalls





# QUESTION ACROSS ENGAGEMENTS



# **PRE-ENGAGEMENT AND ESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONSHIP**

Open and Projective



# PRE-ENGAGEMENT AND ESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONSHIP

1. Have you worked with a planner before?
2. Tell me about your past investment experience
3. Do you feel that you are reaching your goals?
4. Why do you think you need my help?
5. If we were having this discussion 3 years from today, and you were to look back over those 3 years to today, what has to happen, both personally and professionally, for you to feel happy about your progress?



# **UNDERSTANDING CIRCUMSTANCES**

Open and Projective



# UNDERSTANDING CIRCUMSTANCES

6. What are your pressing financial concerns?
7. Who else needs to be involved in your financial decision-making process?
8. What keeps you up at night?
9. What is important to you about money?



# IDENTIFYING GOALS

Open and Projective



# IDENTIFYING GOALS

10. What are 3 financial milestones in your future?
11. If you could solve any financial issue today, what would you solve?
12. What motivates you?
13. Fast forward to retirement, how do you spend your day?
14. You now have a shorter time to live, how do you want to live what you have left?
15. You now have a single day to live what do you regret not having done?
16. If we could get rid of all financial concerns today, how would you live?



# **PRESENTING THE PLAN AND GETTING FEEDBACK**

Open, Projective, Scaling





# PRESENTING THE PLAN AND GETTING FEEDBACK

17. As we tackle this next step or 'to-do', how do you want to be supported?
18. As we work toward this next step or 'to-do', what does 'done' look like for you?
19. Who else needs to be involved?
20. What risks are currently left unaddressed for you?
21. How are you feeling today/given this information on a scale from 1 to 10, where 10 is ready for action today?



# **MONITORING THE PLAN**

Open, Scaling, Implied



# PRESENTING THE PLAN AND GETTING FEEDBACK

22. Do you feel you are making progress to your goals?
23. What are your expectations for the future – personal, professional, the market?
24. What new perspectives does today bring on the goals we are currently working toward, are these/those still the 'right' goals or the most important goals?
25. How have you been feeling during this process: Scale of 1 to 10 where 10 is great/on-track.



# AGENDA

1

Psychology of Questions

2

Styles of Questions

3

25 questions

4

**Keeping the relationship fresh**

5

Question pitfalls



# KEEPING THE RELATIONSHIP FRESH



Keep those  
positive vibes  
going takes work



Revisit Goals and  
Circumstance  
Questions



Try invitations for  
information over  
commands



# AGENDA

1

Psychology of Questions

2

Styles of Questions

3

25 questions

4

Keeping the relationship fresh

5

**Question pitfalls**



# QUESTION PITFALLS

PITFALL	WHAT IS IT	IMPORTANT NOTES
Transformation questions	“Tell me about your investment experience up to this point. Has it been positive?”	The brain answers the simplest question and does not revisit the more difficult question, but probably the one with better information
Pacing	No more than 3 questions (especially if open questions) without stopping for reflection.	This is not an interrogation.
Reflection	Repeating back what you have just heard – could be the action or the emotion. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I hear you say you are ready</li><li>• I hear you say you are stressed</li><li>• Correct me if his is not right, but for clarity on my end, you are saying you feel...</li></ul>	This helps with the pacing, but also really helps with clarification.



# A FEW PARTING THOUGHTS...

- Use a list
- Be curious
- Practice pacing
- Get clarification
- Accept honest push-back as a sign of trust







**THANK YOU!**

**25 questions for  
better client connections**

**Meghaan Lurtz**

Ph.D., FBS™

[shapingwealth.com](https://shapingwealth.com)