

# English for Presentations 6

Question and Answer sessions. Structure & Useful Expressions.



# Objectives

- Explore vocabulary and grammar related to inviting, asking and answering questions.
- Think about thematic and conceptual elements.
- Listen to examples.
- Learn how to deal with interruptions.
- Explore indirect questions, reported speech, reformatting questions.
- Participate in role play of a question and answer using appropriate expressions and intonation.

# Question and Answer, things to think about.

- Do you prefer questions during or after the presentation, why?
- How do you feel about the question period at the end of a presentation?
- How do / can you prepare for the question period?
- How do you deal with questions that you can't answer?
- How do you deal with domineering participants?
- Do you remember a presentation where the Q&A was dealt with well or badly?

# Reformulating questions;

Sometimes useful to repeat questions in your own words, to paraphrase, it helps to check that you have understood the question and can 'reframe' the question and eliminate negative emphasis if necessary.

The question is...	Reformulate it to...	method
Negative; "Why is the system so slow?"	Positive; "How can we make the system faster?"	Omitting negative words and forms
Aggressive; "The new system is terrible, do we have to use it?"	Neutral; "So you're asking how we can improve the user experience of the new system."	Avoiding strong opinion words.

Reformulate the following questions;

- Are you sure we will really meet our deadline?
- Won't we get support from headquarters?
- Do you really think that this will work?
- Do you honestly think we can rely on them?
- Isn't there a better way to reduce costs?

# Summary of phrases to invite questions.

- Now, I'd be happy to clarify any doubts that you might have.
- We now have some time allocated to any questions...
- Are there any questions / doubts / queries?
- Does anyone have anything that they would like me to clarify or expand on?
- If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask me now..
- Is there any topic from the presentation that you would like to discuss further?

# Phrases in context.

What example sentences can you think of to;

- Ask for clarification.
- Avoid giving an answer.
- Admit that you don't know the answer.

# Asking for clarification.

- I'm sorry, could you repeat your question please?
- I'm afraid I couldn't hear you very clearly, would you mind repeating the question?
- I'm afraid I don't quite follow the question.
- Sorry, I'm not sure that I'm clear about what you're asking me.
- Sorry, I don't understand, could you rephrase the question please?
- Sorry, I'm not sure that I understand what you're getting at, would you mind rephrasing the question?



# Avoiding Giving an Answer.

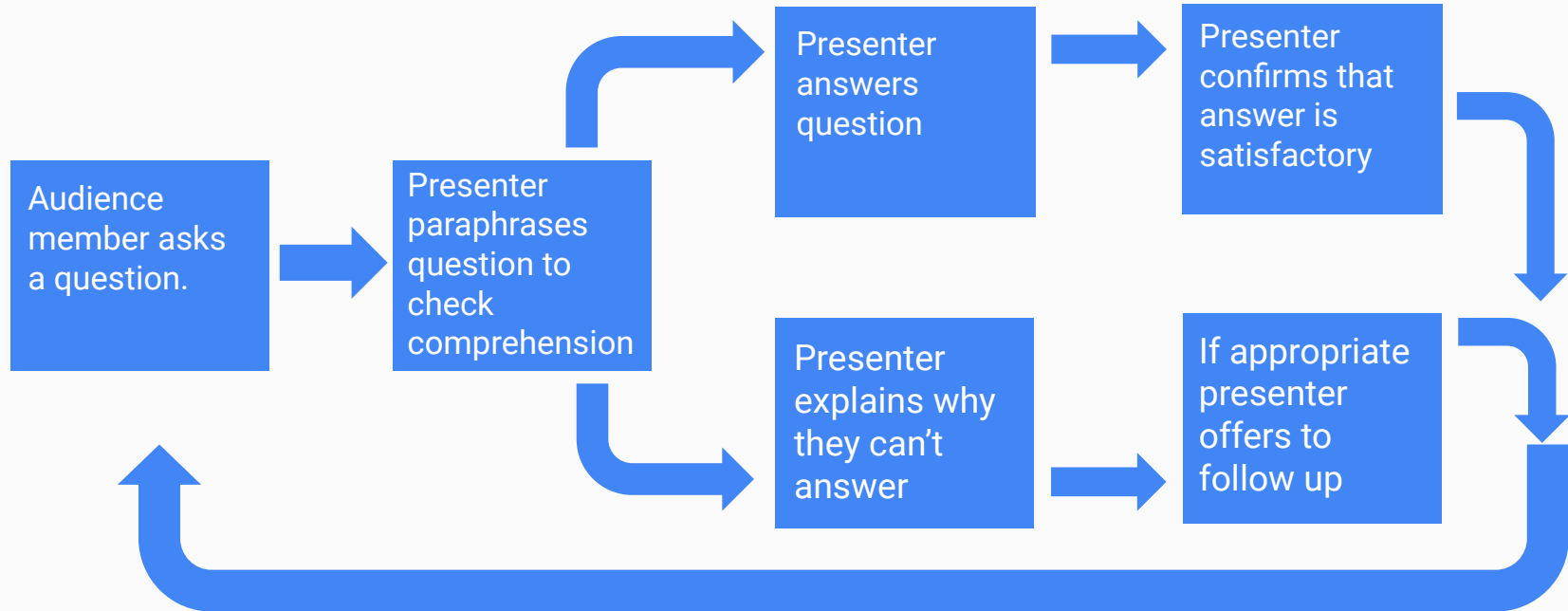
Avoiding answering a question.

- I'd rather not go into that at the moment.
- I'd prefer to address that at a later time.
- I'd rather not stray from the central topic if you don't mind.
- If you don't mind I'd rather not discuss that right now.
- I'm afraid that I'm not able to discuss that at present.

# When You Don't Know the Answer.

- That's a good question, unfortunately I don't have the data to answer right now but would be happy to send you the details later.
- That isn't really my area of expertise, so I don't feel qualified to go discuss.
- Well that's not really my field, so I couldn't say.
- At the moment we just don't know, but we are investigating.
- I must admit that I don't know, but I will try to find out for you!
- Off the top of my head I really couldn't say, but if you leave your contact details I'd be happy to pass on some relevant information.

# Flow Chart of a Q&A interaction.



# Dealing with questions checklist.

## Listen Carefully

- Listen attentively / actively.
- Confirm that you have understood the query correctly
- Paraphrase or reformulate the question.
- If you don't want to answer, politely explain why.
- If you don't know how to answer, say so and explain why.
- If questions are irrelevant or inappropriate address them briefly and move on.
- Confirm that the response satisfactorily answers the question.