

Talking About Culture:

# Conversation Starters



Here are some conversation starters to help you learn about the culture in your organisation and listen to the everyone's experiences.

You can adapt the wording to suit your organisation, whether you are a club, team, group or squad, for example.

- 1 What's your favourite thing about the club?
- 2 If you were in charge for a day, what are the top 3 things you'd change and why?
- 3 How would you describe your club to a friend?
- 4 What do you **most** look forward to coming to the club?
- 5 What do you **least** look forward to coming to the club?

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# 1 What's your favourite thing about the club?

**This question can:** help you understand the positive cultural elements that you might want to encourage.

**Follow up questions:**

- Do you think we should do this more?
- Do you have any ideas of how we can encourage this?
- Is there anything we can do to expand on this?

**Listen out for:**

- Actively listen to what **is** said  
Are there any themes which have started to emerge?
- Pay attention to what **isn't** said  
Is there something you would have expected to hear that you didn't, or do you have an activity or scheme you've already introduced with the aim of improving your culture which isn't mentioned at all? If so, consider why. How does it match up with what everyone has said already?

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## 2 If you were in charge for a day, what are the top 3 things you'd change and why?

**This question can:** allow people to explore and express things they think could be better in the club.

### **Listen for the 'why'**

- What is behind the reason?
- Do any of the team's 'whys' have things in common?

### **Be sure to:**

- Ask follow up questions
- Have a plan in place to show you're taking on feedback and enacting it

### **Examples to consider:**

- Someone might say they'd make training later, earlier, shorter or even joke that there shouldn't be any at all. This could be an indication that they are looking for flexibility, understanding or variety in training.

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### 3 How would you describe your club to a friend?

**This question can:** help you learn what feelings participants and staff associate with your club.

**Follow up questions:**

- Would you encourage your friend to come along?
- What changes would you make to encourage your friend to come along?
- Is there anything we can do to expand on this?

**Listen out for:**

- What they value about the club or team
- What themes begin to emerge
- How they feel about the group itself – is it friendly, welcoming and comforting?

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## 4 What do you **most** look forward to coming to the club?

**This question can:** help you learn why your participants, staff and volunteers want to be there.

**Follow up questions:**

- Is there anything that could make you look forward to coming more?
- If there anything you wish you were looking forward to?
- Is there anything which dampens your excitement about your favourite thing?

**Listen out for:**

- Group goals – friendship, camaraderie, morale
- Personal goals – strength, fitness, dedication
- Ways to make your club more inclusive, appealing and a positive environment

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## 5 What do you **least** look forward to coming to the club?

**This question can:** help you learn why your participants, staff and volunteers don't want to be there, or why some may have left.

**Follow up questions:**

- Is there anything that could make you dread your least favourite thing less?
- How can we help?
- How can we change that?

**Listen out for:**

- Known issues – are there things you think would have been raised?
- Surprises – are there any issues that surprise you?
- Emerging themes

**Be sure to:**

- Encourage open and honest conversation
- Invite and welcome discussion
- Be open about the aim of these conversations and what you want to do with the information

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