

# PQ&A : Precision Questioning and Answer

## **Duration**

1 day

## **Instructors**

Stacey Dickinson

## **Class Limit**

20 students

## **Prerequisite**

None

## **Price**

- *On-site delivery*

Please contact SPC for pricing

(contact information on page 2)

- *Public Training*

\$595 (1 day)

\*Discount available for early registration

## **Materials Provided**

- Workbook containing class notes and class exercises & after class quick reference card

## **Course Description**

In today's increasingly complex business environment, software development organizations face intense pressure to think and learn at higher levels. Precision Questioning (PQ&A) is designed to help software leaders increase their problem-solving and decision-making abilities, enhance their critical thinking skills and improve overall productivity through reduced errors and re-work.

PQ&A is a one-question-one-answer discussion format used to ensure better thinking and solutions. In PQ&A, the questioner uses precise questions to quickly get to the heart of an issue, exposing problems in thinking and bringing key unknowns to the surface. Developed from more than ten years of research at Stanford University, PQ&A workshops have been delivered since 1994 to over 16,000 participants worldwide, including IT industry leaders such as Oracle, Microsoft and HP.

PQ workshop attendees learn key skills, including:

- how to organize thinking at a profound level
- how to get to (and stay at) the core of an issue despite increasing volumes of information
- how to better prepare for project review meetings with management

Equally important, the time-to-benefit is extremely fast. The PQ format stresses participant exercises, and most of these focus on the attendee's daily work. As a result, the lessons from the workshop can be applied the very next day.

By the end of this one-day workshop, participants will be able to:

- solve more complex business problems
- quickly formulate precise questions for any issue
- surface unknown issues, which then become action items
- accelerate decision making
- engage in more effective interaction with executives

## **Intended Audience**

This workshop is ideally suited to anyone whose work involves complex problem solving, or who wants to improve his/her meeting experience by having less reporting and more time spent on critical thinking. Managers who want to efficiently investigate and understand the thinking of the people who report to them would also benefit.

Students are encouraged to come to the workshop prepared to discuss a recommended solution to a problem they've been trying to solve. This needs to be a problem they are willing to discuss with another class participant who may or may not be from the same company. Issues under non-disclosure should be avoided.

TRAINING

## PQ&A: Precision Questioning and Answer

### **Instructor**

Stacey Dickinson has worked in the technology industry for over 20 years specializing in relational databases and training. She began teaching customers to administer and design databases on Microsoft SQL Server version 1.0 in 1989 and continued working on the product in both training and courseware development through version 7.0. As a training manager at Microsoft, she owned all of training for Program Managers and Marketers in the Product Groups. Stacey has delivered the Precision Questioning workshop to over 350 attendees, including classes in Brazil and Argentina.

### **Workshop Outline**

In this one-day workshop, participants learn the core principles of PQ and how to apply these principles to their daily work. The workshop is interactive throughout and makes extensive use of video.

Topics include:

- The basic principles of PQ
- Drills to teach the seven categories of Precise Questions
- How to surface assumptions
- How to do Precision Answering
- Practice periods using participant's own work
- The keys to building credibility with senior management
- Strategies for using PQ with people who have not taken the workshop

### **How do we know PQ works?**

The PQ Workshop has been taught for more than ten years at Microsoft, where it has played an important role in the company's success. PQ is used at every level, and is an essential element in executive reviews. PQ is the most popular workshop in the company's history, and it is the workshop most requested by intact teams. Currently PQ has been taken by more than 15,000 employees worldwide.

### **How does PQ impact the bottom line?**

PQ helps organizations:

- Test thinking before making costly mistakes
- Improve the effectiveness of meetings
- Meet deadlines more consistently
- Streamline executive reviews

### **What do PQ workshop attendees learn?**

PQ graduates learn how to:

- Attack complex problems from new angles
- Ask questions, when churning, that get straight to the heart of things
- Test thinking rigorously before implementing
- Surface risky assumptions in milestones
- Communicate in ways that improve the efficiency of a discussion

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