

CHAPTER 5

HOW TO ASK QUESTIONS WHICH ARE NOT STUPID?

We will have to answer the question above with these series of questions:

- i) How many times do we feel that we are lost in a lecture without knowing head or tail of what the lecturer is talking about?
- ii) How many times do we feel like we are the only ones who don't understand what has been taught and dare not ask or to interfere the class?
- iii) How many times do we feel that if we ask questions, it will show the world how stupid we are and everyone will laugh at us?

I bet the answer to those questions is summed up by these words: plenty of times!

Knowledge is of two kinds. We know the subject ourselves, or we know where we can find information upon it.

Samuel Johnson

Then this chapter will unfold the mystery and mastery of asking questions without feeling or sounding stupid.

A person who speaks cleverly is witty; one who asks questions is smart.

Terry Carr

Ask Any Question, There Are No Stupid Or Clever Ones

Do not hesitate to ask questions in class. Any question is better than no question at all as this will indicate that you are interested and remain active in following the lectures. In fact, any lecturer will appreciate having questions thrown at them as they are good feedback from students on the effectiveness of his/her teaching.

Are there such things as good and bad questions? True, we always say that there are no stupid or clever questions but there still are **good and bad** ones.

Good questions will allow your lecturer to quickly identify exactly what you do not understand, while bad questions are too general, without actually pinpointing what exactly you want or the answers are just too obvious. In addition, good questions are those that show the student is at least aware of the lessons being delivered and trying to clarify misunderstood concepts.

Bad questions may also reflect that the student's mind has been wandering at least a mile away if not thousands! Worst he might have skipped classes the week before and not even bother to read course materials.

Questioning is the door of knowledge

Irish Saying

The following points are guidelines for students who want to improve and empower themselves:

- i) Be an active participant in the classroom. Get ahead in the book; try to work some of the problems before they are covered in class. Anticipate what the instructor's next step will be.