

THEY ASK, YOU ANSWER CONTENT COMPASS

Liz Moorehead, Editorial Director at IMPACT

WHEN DO YOU USE IT?

- To quickly and painlessly prepare your thoughts before you sit for a content interview as a subject matter expert, without derailing your day.
- Before you create an outline for a piece of content, to orient the scope of what you want to cover, so your content will be memorable, thorough, **and** effective for your intended audience.
- OR (if you're an outline-hater), before you create your first draft as a more efficient outlining/thought organization exercise that gets you down the business of creating content quickly.

Time needed: Thirty minutes or less. With practice, you can get this down to under 10 minutes.

Note: Use this to prepare for any kind of content — blog article, video, content pillar, a talk as a speaker, and so on.

THEY ASK

WHO IS ASKING?

WHAT DO THEY WANT TO KNOW?

YOU ANSWER

WHY YOU?

HOW WILL YOU HELP?

THEY ASK

WHO IS ASKING?

Who are you talking to, and why are they coming to you with this question/problem **in this moment**?

WHAT DO THEY WANT TO KNOW?

What do they need from you, in their words and **on their terms**, based on what you know about their current situation?

YOU ANSWER

WHY YOU?

Why are **you** the right person to be answering this question, and how will you answer their question in a way that they **never** forget it was you who answered it?

HOW WILL YOU HELP?

Finally, how are you going to **tie the who, what, and why together**, so you cover everything you need to?

THEY ASK

WHO IS ASKING?

Who are they? What do they do?
Why do they care about this topic? Is it causing them pain, fear, or friction? If so, why?
Is it a goal they want to accomplish? If it's a goal, is it their goal or mandated?
Are they feeling pressure from above or below?

WHAT DO THEY WANT TO KNOW?

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WHAT DO THEY WANT TO KNOW?

How would they phrase the question to you in their words?
What follow-up questions will they have?
What objections or resistance might they have?
Finish this sentence, in their words: "Here is exactly what I need to know from you..."

YOU ANSWER

WHY YOU?

HOW WILL YOU HELP?

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YOU ANSWER

WHY YOU?

What specific area of expertise or experience do you have in the topic?
Do you have any stories, personal anecdotes, or other specific-to-you examples?
Is this something you've been through yourself? Do you know how they feel?

HOW WILL YOU HELP?

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HOW WILL YOU HELP?

Now that you know who is asking, what exactly they need from you, and precisely why you're the one qualified to answer their question, how will you help them? **Be specific.**

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**“Wait, but I want more space to
brainstorm in each box!”**

(Don't worry, I've got you!)

1. WHO IS ASKING?

*Who are you talking to, and why are they coming to you with this question/problem **in this moment?***

2. WHAT DO THEY WANT TO KNOW?

*What do they need from you, **in their words and on their terms**, based on what you know about their current situation?*

3. WHY YOU?

*What do they need from you, **in their words and on their terms**, based on what you know about their current situation?*

4. HOW WILL YOU HELP?

Finally, how are you going to **tie the who, what, and why together**, so you cover everything you need to?