CONCEPT

The best ideas rarely walk through your door. Draw out great ideas and overcome unspoken fears by asking courageous questions.

WHY this tool works:

Courageous Questions address the concerns your people have about whether you want to hear what they're thinking and whether you have the confidence and competence to do something with the answer. A courageous question differs from a generic "How can we be better?" question in its specificity and humility.

RESULTS

Results improve when you have every mind on your team thinking about how to be better and discussing potential obstacles to success.

RELATIONSHIPS

The humility of courageous questions connects you to your team and shows how you value their perspective and thinking.

WHEN to use it:

You can use a Courageous Question to start a team meeting, a one-on-one, as part of a strategic retreat or any time you want to draw out your team's best thinking. Use them regularly to create a culture of contribution.

Clarity   Curiosity
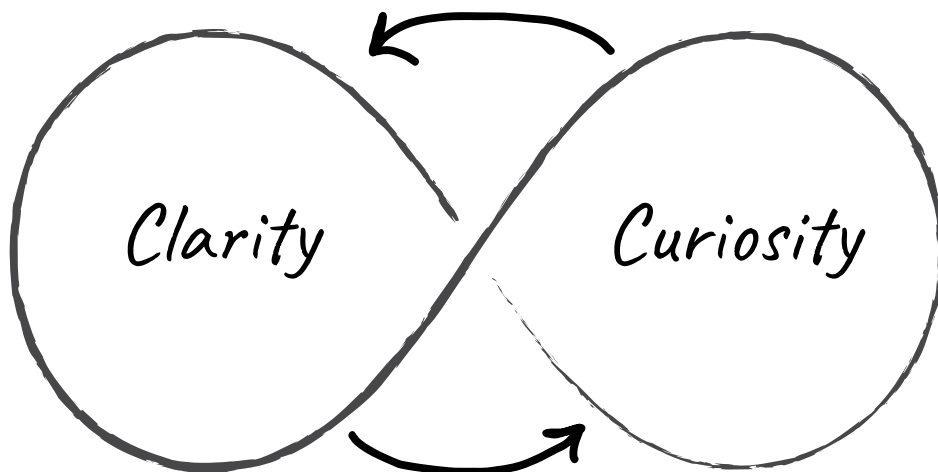
SAMPLE COURAGEOUS QUESTIONS

What is the problem we have that no one talks about?

What do we do that really annoys our customers?

What is the greatest obstacle to your productivity?

What must I do better as a leader if we are to be successful?

What do you think we could do differently next time to help this project (or person) succeed?

What recommendations do you have before we start on this conversion?

What are you most afraid of with this program / project / process?

What is the biggest source of conflict you're having working with X department?
(How might we be contributing to the issue?)

What's sabotaging our success?

Remember:

▶ **Get Specific**
Focus on a specific activity, behavior, or outcome.

▶ **Be Humble**
Remember that you are implicitly saying "I know I'm not perfect. I know I can improve."

▶ **Don't Respond . . . Yet**
Listen without defensiveness. Process, and let them know when you will respond.

Create Your Courageous Questions:

Topic	Question

Topic	Question

Topic	Question