

## Common Mistakes in Asking Questions:

1. **The non question.** This includes statements, comments, compliments and assertions followed by three little dots. The non question makes no demands of the guest.
2. **The double-barreled question.** For example "How did you feel when you found out you got the Governor Generals' Award and what were you doing when you found out?". Inevitably, the last question gets answered and the first question gets lost.
3. **The overloaded question.** This is where the interviewer gives the guest a menu to choose from i.e. "In selecting your cabinet, how much weight have you given to diversity, how much to experience and finally how much weight to personal loyalty?" The subject generally picks the part that serves him best. It gives him the control.
4. **Leading questions.** You know the kind: "Do you not think that." The path for an answer is narrow and can put the guest on the defensive.
5. **Editorializing.** The guest will address the comment and not the question.
6. **Assumptions and Presuppositions.** "What are your *true* feelings about abortion?" (The assumption is that the guest has not been leveling with us and guest goes on the offensive). Or: "When did you stop beating your children?" The subject is forced to attack the presupposition.
7. **Trigger words.** "How does it feel to be a media darling/sex object/ control freakr?" The subject reacts to the value of the term. It leads to an outburst, not an explanation.
8. **Bias words.** Cousin of Trigger. "Why did you detest him so much?" Be sure of what you're asking or avoid words that contain a value.
9. **The long question.** It collapses under it's own weight and leaves the interviewer asking "did you get my drift?"