

Turning Self-Awareness into Action

PROMPTS FOR BUSINESS MENTORS

ABM Core Competency 2.1

The January Skills Sharing session, hosted by ABM Fellow Barbra Carlisle, explored self-awareness - both our own as mentors and that of our clients.

Clients may sometimes demonstrate a clear awareness of an issue without translating that awareness into meaningful action. They might say, “Yes, I’m aware of that. I have it under control and I’m working on it,” while little or no progress is being made.

The following prompts can help mentors explore what may be preventing a client from moving forward. Use them with curiosity, care and appropriate challenge. Always ask permission before challenging and stay curious, not critical.

SUGGESTED PROMPTS

- You’ve said a few times that this is in hand. But looking at the last few weeks, nothing has moved. What do you think is actually going on there?
- If we assume you meant to work on it, what got in the way?
- Knowing isn’t the issue - you’re very aware. What I’m curious about is: what’s stopping awareness turning into action for you?
- Does this pattern - saying you’ll handle it, then it slipping - show up anywhere else in the business?
- When you tell yourself ‘I’ve got it under control’, what does that allow you to avoid dealing with?
- What’s the impact on the business or on your team if this stays where it is for another month?
- What, specifically, have you done so far? And what’s the very next concrete step?
- I’m noticing a mismatch between what you say you’re doing and what’s actually happening. How do you see it?
- Is ‘I’m working on it’ your way of buying time, protecting yourself, or avoiding a difficult decision?
- Does your current behaviour match the kind of leader you want to be?

Mentor reminder

Constructive challenge is most effective when trust has been established. Remain curious rather than critical, and give the client space to reflect before moving towards action.