

## Impossibility Question

---

*“Most of the things worth doing in the world has been declared impossible before they were done.”*

*Louis D. Brandeis, Supreme Court Justice*

---

A great technique to broaden other people’s thinking as well as your own is to use the impossibility question.

Simply ask your coachee:

*“What is something that would be impossible to do, but if you could do it, would dramatically increase your success?”*

Allow some time to brainstorm and for your coachee to come up with the one most important impossible thing that they could do.

Follow up with:

*“Great idea, now what would make it possible?”*



These simple questions open up a dialog that could otherwise be shut down by someone declaring “that’s impossible.” Since we acknowledged the difficulty at the start, it helps reframe thinking from a “can’t” mindset to one that looks for creative possibilities.

Of course some people may be tempted to respond flippantly when you ask them what would make the impossible possible. Let it sink in a little further and most people will come around and ideas will start forming.



Try to come out of these conversations with a few actionable steps. Most of the ideas raised will be difficult; there is a reason people thought they were impossible. But once you get the ball rolling with some next steps, you are already that much closer to your goal!