

Steer a Rambling Client in 3 Questions

Use it: when a client talks for ten minutes and no outcome appears.

The steps

- 1 Acknowledge: 'Thank you, I can see that matters.'
- 2 Interrupt kindly with their name, lower your voice.
- 3 Q1 positive: 'What would you rather have?'
- 4 Q2 specific: 'Specifically who, where, when?'
- 5 Q3 evidence: 'What will you see, hear and feel when you have it?'
- 6 Write it back in one sentence and confirm.

Script. 'Sam, thank you, that matters. Let me ask something. What would you rather have? [wait] Specifically where and with whom? [wait] What will you see, hear and feel?'

Common mistakes

- Saying 'let's get back on track.' It tells them they're off it.
- Taking their negative goal ('stop losing clients') as the goal.
- Skipping evidence. Without it the goal can't be tested.

5-MINUTE DRILL. Take one rambling story from your week. Write the three questions you'd ask. Say them aloud twice.

Questions steer. The next step is making your whole delivery hold their attention. Next: Tue 20 Oct 2026, "NLP: Word Patterns That Hold a Room for an Hour".