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Kiss My Aster

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40 Open Questions to Ask Customers

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The rules for customer service are changing rapidly, but open-ended questions never go out of style. Open-ended questions are sentences composed in such a way that the customer cannot or could only incredibly awkwardly answer with a “yes” or “no.” You want to always ask questions that give you detailed information or that at least lead you closer to knowing what question you’ll ask next.

Here’s a list of 40 questions, some of them are a good way to interact with customers and some are truly terrible, ill-conceived ideas. Can you figure out which is which? You can use a red marker to circle the really awful ones if you wish.

1. You look familiar, what brings you in today?
2. What flowers were used at your wedding?
3. I’m sorry, what did you just say?
4. I’m sorry, what did I just say?
5. What did you plant last year that worked out well for you?
6. What’s the best gardening advice you’ve been given?
7. You know those shelf stable packages of tuna? I left one in my glove compartment for over a year. What do you think I should do with it?
8. How is your soil?
9. How far away do you live?
10. What kinds of fertilizer do you use?
11. Do you get along well with the nature spirits in your yard?
12. Would you call this magenta or fuchsia and what makes you so sure about that?
13. What would you grow if you knew you couldn’t fail?
14. How often do you water?
15. How much time do you spend in your yard?
16. What colors do you like?
17. What vegetables do you grow?
18. What would you do if I rammed you with this golf cart?
19. How do you feel about bees?
20. What would happen if you did your best bee impersonation right now?
21. What if I brought you a wagon?
22. Can you think of a reason you shouldn’t come back in autumn?

23. How many houseplants did you kill last year?
24. What do you think of our garden center?
25. Aliens—what's up with that?
26. What's your biggest backyard problem or complaint?
27. Did you drive here or apparate?
28. What does your compost setup look like?
29. What's your favorite memory from our nursery restroom?
30. I like your sunglasses. Where did you get them?
31. What do you expect to happen after you plant this?
32. How many containers did you do last year?
33. When you have bird visitors, do you feed and bathe them or try to scare them away?
34. What if I didn't have an answer for that?
35. What spring bulbs have you planted?
36. When do you plan on planting these?
37. What's your current relationship status with local butterflies?
38. How would you feel about a wheelbarrow ride?
39. What are you doing about this planet's food waste issues?
40. What if you woke up one morning and there were 300 massive rabbits in your backyard and they ate your whole garden and lawn and even your patio furniture and just looked at you like, "WUT." What would you do? And when you had to start over, would you replace it just as it is right now or do it all different? **GP**

Amanda Thomsen is a regular columnist in Green Profit *magazine. You can find her funky, punky blog planted at KissMyAster.com and you can follow her on Facebook, Twitter AND Instagram @KissMyAster.*