

The Mountaineer Method

A portable way to run a conversation on any complex problem. Six questions, asked in order, before anyone proposes a solution.

1 What are we assuming?

Name the beliefs everyone in the room is quietly relying on, and write them where all can see them.

2 What evidence challenges those assumptions?

Look for what doesn't fit before collecting more of what does.

3 Who is missing from this conversation?

Name the people who see this problem from a desk no one here sits at, and decide how to get their view.

4 What second-order effects are we overlooking?

Follow each proposed action one step further. Who adapts, who pays, and where does the problem move?

5 What indicators would tell us our assumptions are wrong?

Agree now on the signs that would change your mind, so the room notices them when they appear.

6 What small experiment could we try before making a large commitment?

Find the cheapest test that would teach everyone something real.

The Method produces clearer thinking. Agreement is welcome when it comes, but it isn't the goal. Once the questions become habit, people start saying it on their own: *run it through the Mountaineer Method.*