

## INFORMATION

What we know about something is called information. Sometimes we get the information for ourselves and sometimes it is given to us. The information we get or are given tells us things we want to know but also leaves out things we would like to know.

### Information-in (FI):

The information that is included; the information that has been put in; the information that has been given; what we know.

### Information-out (FO):

The information that has been left out; the information that is missing; the information that we would like to know.

Doing an FI & FO means looking to see exactly what information has been put in and what has been left out.

### Example:

"I shall catch the 9 a.m. flight to Chicago on Monday. Please meet me at the airport."

Information-in (FI): The information that is actually given includes

1. The person will be travelling to Chicago on Monday.
2. The person will be outside of Chicago for at least some time on Monday.
3. There is a flight which that person can take to Chicago (the person can get to an airport).
4. There is a 9 a.m. flight.
5. The person expects the flight to be operating.
6. The person has decided to travel by plane.

Information-out (FO): The information that has been left out

1. Who the person is.
2. The date of the Monday.
3. Where the person will be travelling from.
4. The airline that will be used.
5. The actual time of arrival.
6. To whom the message is addressed.

## PRACTICE

- ★ 1. A driver is trying to find a town called Hartford. He does not know the way and when he gets to a 'Y' junction he finds that the sign indicating the road to Hartford is lying beside the road. Do an **FI & FO** on this and see if there is anything the driver can do.
- ★ 2. A hunter sets out from his home to shoot a bear. He walks three miles due South and then turns West and walks another mile before he sees a bear. He shoots at the bear and misses. By now he is a bit frustrated so he turns and walks due North again until he reaches home. What color was the bear he missed?
3. In a travel agent's advertisement you read the following: "An exclusive holiday in the Bahamas. The hotel is near the sea. You can sail and water-ski. Two weeks including travel." What information has been left out? What else would you like to know?
4. You see an advertisement for a job. "Wanted: men or women to train as assistant store managers. Age 16-40. Three weeks' vacation a year. Free lunches and free uniform. Competitive rates of pay with bonus." Do an **FI & FO** on this.

## OPERATION

1. Put down all the information that has been given (the information-in). Do an **FI**.
2. Put down all the information that has been left out and that you would like to have (the information-out). Do an **FO**.
3. Examine the information-in to see if you can find anything that will reduce the information-out.
4. Do an **FI & FO** every time you are given information or when you have to collect it for yourself.

## QUESTIONS

Asking a question is the best way of getting information. Sometimes you are just looking for information and do not know what answer you might get. At other times you want a yes or no answer.

### Fishing questions (FQ):

When you go fishing, you put some bait on a hook and throw the hook into the water. You do not know what you might catch. In a "fishing question" you do not know what the answer is going to be. You are "fishing" for information.

#### Examples:

"Who wants to play football?"

"What are sausages made out of?"

"Why do we have examinations every year?"

### Shooting questions (SQ):

When you go shooting, you only shoot when you have seen something you want to hit and have aimed at it very carefully. You may hit or you may miss, but you know what you are aiming at. In a "shooting" question you know what you are aiming at. You use shooting questions to check up on things. The answer is a "yes" or a "no."

#### Examples:

"Were you at school yesterday?"

"Do you like math?"

"Is that your bicycle?"

When asking a question, you should always try to get the greatest amount of information from each question. You should also know what sort of question you want to ask.

If you start by doing an **FI & FO**, you will know what questions need to be asked.

## PRACTICE

- Which of the following are fishing questions (**FQ**) and which are shooting questions (**SQ**)?
  - "Do you know who is the heavyweight boxing champion of the world?"
  - "Who is the heavyweight boxing champion of the world?"
  - "Who broke the window in the corridor?"
  - "If you saw someone breaking a window on purpose, would you report that person?"
  - "What were you doing yesterday evening?"
  - "Did you watch TV yesterday evening?"
  - "Would you like a holiday today?"
  - "What would you do if you had a holiday today?"
  - "How much money would I earn in that job?"
  - "Would I get an increase in wages each year?"
- The teacher is thinking of one of the following things. What questions could you ask to find out which thing it is? Try to find out in as few questions as you can.  
potato, rifle, soap, toothpaste, matchstick, football, cow, politician, pig, exam, ambulance, frog, betting, accident, cheese, ring, fog, police, hippopotamus, snail, rose, bee, screw, book, pencil, cornflakes, TV, teeth, bus.
- ★ 3. You are a boss and you are interviewing someone for a job (the job is as a driver, a teacher or a bank clerk – choose one). What questions would you ask? Think of four **FQs** and four **SQs**.
- ★ 4. Walking home in the evening after a visit to a friend, an elderly woman is mugged in the street. Someone attacks her and hits her on the head and then steals her handbag which has some money in it. From the woman's description, the police pick up a young man and find that he has on him almost exactly the same amount of money that has been stolen from the elderly woman. As a police officer you question both the woman and the suspect. What questions would you ask the woman? What questions would you ask the suspect?