

Positions and Interests

Positions are often voiced with passion. Positions are said as “this is my stand.”

When two or more people are positioning, they will often “dig in” on what appears to be drastically opposing sides.

Once a discussion or interaction gets stuck on positions, no deeper understanding or resolution occurs.

Interests, on the other hand, are the myriad of beliefs and values that underlie positions.

When interests are explored and communicated, similarities can be noticed and built upon to acknowledge or create some common ground.

Here are some helpful questions in getting to the interests that underlie a position:

- * What’s important to you about _____?
- * What would you need for _____?
- * What does that mean for you?
- * What would _____ look like?
- * It seems like _____, is that true?
- * It sounds like _____, is that true?
- * Tell me more about _____.
- * I’ve heard you say some words that I’d like for you to describe a little more....What does _____ mean to you?
- * What would you like me (or someone else?) to understand about that?
- * How would you know that I (or someone else?) _____ understands?

These are just some... The idea is to get underneath of the position. Find out what is really important.