Janet & Morgan
Bake A Cake

By Dan Ward

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LOCATION: Innovation HQ’s Kitchen

Janet & I just read a post about how to be helpful. So we thought we’d put it into practice... in the kitchen!

Janet wants some cake, but before she starts baking, she asks...

Mmm... cake.

Does anyone have plans for dessert tonight?

Because maybe someone is already making a cake...

Step 1: “Before launching a new effort, take some time to educate yourself about what activities are already under way.”
Or a pie...

Or brownies, or cookies, or... well, you get the idea.

Ok, research shows nobody has dessert plans. Can I start baking now?

Not yet. We need to ask the next question!

Right, what kind of cake should I make?

Close, but how about asking whether it would be helpful if you made a cake?

Step 2: “...check with the people around you to see if they also think it would be helpful.”
Um, it’s cake. How could it not be helpful? There could be plenty of reasons!

Maybe I made a cake **yesterday** and there’s still a bunch left!

Or maybe I’m in a boxing match tomorrow and have to make weight, so it’d better if you baked the cake **after** the match (especially if I win!).

Or maybe I’ve got dietary limits, so a cake would be great but **only** it’s gluten free or vegan or kosher...

Maybe someone is going to use the oven for dinner, so baking now would get in the way. I could buy a pre-made cake instead!
Hoo boy, good thing I asked!

Yes! Alright, let’s suppose we agree a cake would be lovely.

Now can I start baking?

Well, there’s another question we should ask.

Does anyone want to help?

Ooooh, I love having help!!

Answers may vary!

Step 3: “see whether anyone wants to do it with you.”
Some people might be glad to help right away!

Someone else might not be free now, but could help do dishes later...

I didn’t even think about the dishes!

And maybe I’m not a good baker, but I’m great at icing a cake.

Yay! I’m terrible at icing cakes!

I know...

Very funny.
Yup! But we’re not done with questions just yet. It’s time to bake!

OK, now that I know what’s already planned... and what’s helpful...

And who’s in it with you...

It’s time to bake!

Yup! But we’re not done with questions just yet.

Seriously, so many questions!

The next two are related & build on each other.

What did we learn so far?

What might we do next?
You don’t have to wait until the end to ask the question about learning. In fact, it’s a good question to ask at each step along the way!

I learned you’re a gluten-free boxer who is good at decorating cakes and volunteered to wash the dishes! I did not actually volunteer to do the dishes...

And maybe next time we can make macarons! They are delicious... and gluten free!

Mararons photo by Heather Barnes on Unsplash
If you want to learn more about these *five questions*...

And how they can help you be *more helpful*...

Click on over to *this post* on our blog to read the whole thing!

Feel free to leave a comment, and of course please *share* the link with your friends.

Speaking of sharing with your friends, how’s that cake coming along, Janet?

It’s not as hard as I thought it would be. In fact, this recipe is a piece of... cake.

Ah, I crack myself up!