

ASK A COACH

Welcome to Ask a Coach, where Ingomu coaches answer your questions about life, work, wellness, or matters of the soul. Share your question with us at coaches@ingomu.com, and we'll answer them here.

My team at work is quite diverse age-wise. I am adopting new pronouns. A few team members have accused me of being "woke." I want to be a team player but also be respected. What should I do?

- Jessica B. (they/them)

Congratulations on adopting your pronouns! The question that you should perhaps need to address with your team members is the importance of why you are adopting new pronouns. This will show it isn't to be "woke" and highlight the importance of how we need to respect people's gender identities. In turn, invite them to do the same. This could be an opportunity for you to show up as an example of affecting positive change in your workplace. Who knows, maybe even the adoption will be across the board. It starts with you. Go and make a difference.

- Coach Karen Erasmus (she, her, hers, neurodivergent)

Stand your ground, and respect others for who they are, where they are at. Hurt people hurt people. Don't make what they are saying mean anything about you. Before communicating with anyone, let go of any charge or judgment you are feeling. Don't take it personally. What they said says more about them than it does about you.

It's important to communicate from a neutral space, even a compassionate space if you can. If you feel to share, then share that this is a personal decision that feels right to you. And, sometimes it's best to let things slide and simply carry on being kind, compassionate, and generous.

In other words, wrap your loving arms around the kids inside of you that are fearful, and drop any negative feelings about yourself and the team members who made these comments. The only person we can change is ourselves. If you don't give their comments any energy, they have nowhere to go. There's nothing to keep the conversation going

if there's nothing in you that's afraid or upset. We can't make everyone happy, but we can honor and respect where they are coming from as we give the same courtesy to ourselves.

- Coach Arlene Cohen Miller, JD, PCC

I've been asked what my "why" is in a few job interviews as of late, and I don't have an answer. How do I define my "why" authentically?

- Matthew F.

Imagine you can hear everything being said about you at your funeral. Out of everything being said, what's the one thing that makes you feel best about yourself? If you can answer that honestly, you'll have a good understanding of your "why." If you want more help, ask a friend (or friends) to tell you all the things they like about you, and notice which one feels best to hear.

- Coach Christopher Weals

If you're still figuring out your "why," a good workaround is to dig deeply into your values and identify how they serve others. If you haven't fully connected your values to your job or career, that's OK. Knowing what really motivates you with more clarity might send you in a surprising new direction!

Take three slow, deep breaths to calm your nerves. Forget about your career for a minute. In life, what lights you up? Ask what about it is meaningful. You love hiking. Why? Because you love being in nature. What does that give you? A sense of harmony and peace. What's important about harmony and peace? It's restorative and clears your head. Why is that important? Because you value wellbeing. What does that bring? People tell you they feel calm around you and you like being that kind of resource.

To translate that to a job interview answer, you could say, "I value wellbeing, and friends and colleagues tell me they feel more grounded around me, which positively impacts office culture." Iden-

tify what you love; see how it serves others; then translate that to your professionalism! See how that worked?

- Coach Jacqueline Delibes

We are understaffed, and I have to add more tasks to my to-do list to get the job done, but never feel the job is done. What is the best way to prioritize my to-do list?

- Hannah P.

You are not alone! I often feel this way and work with others who do as well. It can be helpful to know that you aren't the only one dealing with something. Now to answer your question, the first thing I recommend is to narrow down your list by eliminating items you know you won't get to (and don't need to get to) in the next two to three weeks. Place those items on a separate list, and pull from it when you have more time and/or when they become more urgent.

Next, look at what's left on your list, and jot down your deadline for getting each thing done. Items with a fast-approaching due date should be prioritized higher. For tasks that you have more time to complete, I suggest breaking them down into smaller chunks and working a bit on them daily. Lastly, prioritize things on your list that you don't want to do over things you find more enjoyable. That way at the end of the day when we're usually more tired, the tasks you have left will be ones you like to do.

- Coach Sara Morenc

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