Communication Genius
9. Answers to difficult questions

- Lesson's goal
  - Learning to deal with uncomfortable questions
- Quiz: How to answer uncomfortable question?
  - 👍 make a joke
  - 👎 get angry
  - 👎 refuse to answer
- Uncomfortable question
  - When everyone is interested in what you will say (such questions are the most interesting for the public)
    - but it is difficult for you to answer
      - e.g.
        - questions about money are always uncomfortable
- You should always be ready
  - You can not remove all uncomfortable questions in advance
    - Even if it is a prepared public speech/press conference
      - 👎 If you remove them it will look fake
  - 👍 You must demonstrate the absence of fear in front of any question
- How to answer
  - 1. Acknowledge: The question is not to you
    - but to the function you perform
  - 2. Answer the question
- DO
  - Demonstrate
    - Confidence
    - Calmness
    - Respect for the opponent and his right to disagree with you
  - Refer the person by name
  - Write down the question on paper
    - To refer to its details/facts
- DO NOT
  - 👎 1. Do not comment on the words and actions of third parties
  - 👎 2. Don't answer without thinking / don't lose control
    - You have time:
      - to think
      - to remove emotions
      - to separate your function from your personality
      - 👍 You can write it down
      - 👍 You can ask clarifying question
      - 👍 You can clarify the source of information
  - 👎 3. Don't answer the question if you don't know the answer
    - 👍 Tell the truth that you don't know and promise to find out
      - "I hate to admit it, but I've never heard of it. I will definitely look into this and give you an answer. Here are my contacts. Please give me yours!"
        - ⚠️ It is better NOT to give your mobile phone to the author of provocative questions
          - Give your email or phone number of your assistant
    - 👍 Suggest a face-to-face meeting with the person later
    - 👍 Ask your assistant to solve the problem
  - 👎 4. Don't deny the obvious
  - 👎 5. Don't get personal
    - "You are a fool yourself"
    - "Who are you?"
- Answer options
  - 1. Refuse to answer the question
    - 👍 "Sorry, I fundamentally do not discuss three topics: religion, politics and my family - and this has long been known"
      - ⚠️ But it must be true (if you posted your family photos yesterday, you will be considered a liar!)
    - 👍 Take the hall to your support (if you have the support)
      - Ask if anyone else is interested in this question (if you are sure not)
  - 2. Avoid answering a question
    - There are common phrases that fit many difficult questions.
      - "If I tell you the truth, you won't believe me anyway!"
      - "You have known me for 10 years on real cases. I can only say one thing: I will not let you down."
      - "It is unlikely that you will like the answer to this question, so let's go to the next one."
      - "I was elected by the people, and I will answer to them."
      - "Thanks for the information. I will not comment, because there is nothing to comment on."
      - "I can answer this question only with your help: you clearly know the situation better than me."
      - "You say you need to do it faster, but we both know that it won't work out quickly and well."
      - 🙂 "Pass us by, and forgive us our happiness!" (from "The Idiot" by Fedor Dostoevsky)
      - it is unlikely that we will come to an agreement. And It is normal that people have different opinions
        - "I disagree with what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it" (by Voltaire)
    - 👍 See standups to find good examples
  - 3. Send to the source
    - "You can see this information on the website"
  - 4. Answer part of the question
    - Quite often, difficult questions contain many theses, conjectures, assumptions and sub-questions.
      - 👍 Choose one sub-question - the one that is easiest for you to answer
  - 5. Rephrase question and answer more convenient question
  - 6. Make a joke
    - The most efficient way!
    - A joke is always a break in logic
    - A joke is the most non-obvious option from all possible
    - Some suggestions
      - 👍 Play on the polysemy of words, on the variety of meanings
      - When public questions get boring
        - 👍 Use pre-prepared tricky questions on with the joke answers
      - Listen the question carefully
        - 👍 sometimes you can catch one word and base a joke on it
      - 👍 Study and memorize good aphorisms
        - "We thought about it ... and I decided"
        - "Here you need to think: I know, sometimes it helps ..."
        - "Better to remain silent and be thought a fool than to speak and to remove all doubt"
        - "First you look for justice, and then another job"
  - 7. Answer from specific to general and from general to specific
    - 👍 You demonstrate that you are in control of the situation, to a much greater extent than the one who asks the question.
    - if the question is about
      - the general
        - you answer about the general
        - and then give a specific example
      - the specific
        - you answer about the specific
        - and then give a general vision
  - 8. Answer sincerely
    - 👍 Show your feelings
      - 👎 Don't play sincerity!
      - 👍 You can show that the question offends you
        - To make people feel guilty and grateful
- 👍 Good format
  - 1. Give short answer
  - 2. Prove your answer