



# 10 Next-Level Questions to Build Relationships with Entrepreneurs

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As an entrepreneur or business owner, you know partnerships are key to success. The reason economies work is that people specialize, allowing them to do their jobs at an expert level. Well, the same goes for individual businesses, and the way to thrive is to engage with the right partners for your business, model, and industry.

Here at VALO Holdings Group, we consider it our mission to give entrepreneurs and medium/small business owners what it takes to thrive. So, knowing that every business needs good partners to deliver value to customers and grow, we got our team of private equity experts together to brainstorm some of the best questions you can ask potential partners and build relationships.

What we came up with is, we believe, and up to date list that is in tune with the current state of the economy and business community across industries. To that end, we placed our focus on talking with entrepreneurs, start-ups, and the like. The reason for this is that innovation is so important today. Partnering up with thinkers and teams that are delivering value in a new way is a key way to become and remain competitive!



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One thing we think you'll notice these questions have in common is their focus on the individual being questioned. The reason for this is we want to strike a personal chord with them, appeal to their sense of themselves as someone on a journey and show them that we are interested in helping them on their journey- rather than just onboarding a new process capability.

## Questions About Their Journey

The first set of questions is designed to establish a sense of the person and get them to open up about who they are and what values they hold.

### 1. When did you know you wanted to be an entrepreneur?

Sparking a connection to their earliest ideations about starting a business is a good way to get them thinking about what inspires them.

### 2. What were the key takeaways from your college education?

Chances are there will be many important takeaways from college, but what we might be most interested in is how they make business connections, how they collaborate, and how they communicate ideas.

### 3. What skills do you consider to be most important for new entrepreneurs?

Being an entrepreneur is a creative endeavor. So, we want to know how they transition from creative thinking to the kind of thinking that sustains a functioning business model.

### 4. Where do you go, who do you look to, for advice and mentorship?

Every successful person needs role models. You can learn a lot about someone by learning who they admire most and what those people have achieved with their insight and experience.

## Questions About Their Business

The second set of questions is about searching out the merits of their business model and the insights that make it special.

### 5. What is your value proposition?

It is critical to understand what their business model will do that the competition in this niche does not do.

### 6. What attracted you to this niche?

If their value proposition is truly unique, how did they come about it when few or none have arrived at their value proposition before?

### 7. How can we support your work?

A truly unique value proposition will face challenges. They will lack support, infrastructure, and peers who understand what they are doing. Asking how you can help them might be a way to transform their business model into a truly powerful partner for you.

## Questions About Giving Back

Every good businessperson wants to encourage others to succeed, share wisdom, and give back to the community.

### 8. What does the word “philanthropy” bring to mind for you?

Understanding what dearths of wellbeing the person believes are most important may give you an insight into their process.

### 9. How do charitable endeavors obtain sustainability?

Charities are essentially not sustainable, from a technical standpoint. Getting a fulsome answer to this question is an indication that they have a functional education in finance.

### 10. Do you believe your vision of philanthropy is common and supported?

Entrepreneurs must have a unique value proposition, and a person with a mind to find such a thing may have a unique perspective on what it is that people in need truly require.