

## Initial Question

Yes you're in the right place  
*"Yes I can help you with that"*

Watch out  
for **NOUN-**  
based  
questions

What  
**exactly /**  
**specifically**  
are you  
looking for?

## Bridge-to-neutral questions

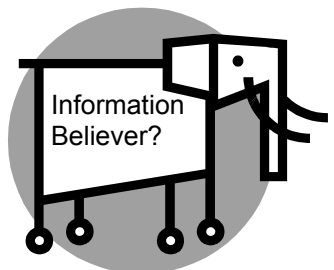
*"It would help me think of the best way to help you if you could tell me..."*  
*"Can you back me up a little bit and tell me ..."*  
*"Can I ask you a few questions so that I can help you better?"*

## Neutral questions – situation, use, gap

*"What are you trying to do?"*  
*"What will you use this information for when you get it?"*  
*What seems to be missing?"*

## Learn about the user's problem

Present ideas that might help



## Execute the information-seeking agreement

**Give the User Control**  
**THEIR problem, THEIR solution**

Selected Articles:

Dervin, B. (1976) Strategies for dealing with human information needs: information or communication? *Journal of Broadcasting* 20: 324-333.

Hernon, P., and McClure, C. R. (1986). Unobtrusive reference testing: the 55 percent rule. *Library Journal*, 111(April 15) 37-41.

Dervin, B, and Dewdney, P.. (1986) "Neutral Questioning: A New Approach to the Reference Interview." *RQ* 25 (4): 506-13

Dewdney, Patricia & Catherine Sheldrick Ross (1994), "Flying a Light Aircraft:Reference Service evaluation from a User's Viewpoint," *RQ*, Winter 1994, 34(2): 217-230.

Stover, M. (2004) "The reference librarian as non-expert: a postmodern approach to expertise." *The Reference Librarian* 87/88: 273-300.

Durrance, J. and Fisher, K.E. (2003) "Determining how libraries and librarians help." *Library Trends* 51(4): 305-334.

Dervin, B. (2005) Libraries reaching out with health information to vulnerable populations: Guidance from research on information seeking and use. *Journal of the Medical Library Association*, 93 (4: October, 2005 supplement), S74-S80.