

You already got your answer, why are you re-asking the question?

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Today's rant is a blend of two earlier rants: People didn't answer your first email for a reason and If you didn't like the answer, asking the same question again is unlikely to help. A customer submitted a list of questions (via their customer liaison) to the Widgets discussion list, and somebody wrote up a reply, which was sent back to the customer. So far so good. A few days later, the same list of questions was submitted to the Gizmo discussion list via a different customer liaison. Since the question was about Widgets, the question was forwarded to the Widgets discussion list, at which point the same answer was forwarded back. Okay, so now we have a fishing expedition. Three weeks later, the same list of question was submitted to the Gizmo discussion list via yet another customer liaison. The fishing expedition continues. The question was once again forwarded to the Widgets discussion list, where the same answer was forwarded back. When I asked why the same set of questions was being asked three times, the third customer liaison explained, "The customer is looking for more detail." Asking the same question over and over again is not a way to get more detail. "By what mechanism does SetWidgetColor inform the widget that its color state has changed?" — *The widget receives an OnColorChanged event*. "By what mechanism does SetWidgetColor inform the widget that its color state has changed?" — *The widget receives an OnColorChanged event*. "By what mechanism does SetWidgetColor inform the widget that its color state has changed?" — *The widget receives an OnColorChanged event*. *Why do you keep asking?* "I want more details." If you want more details, you have to say that you're asking for more details, and you have to say what kind of details you're looking for.

It turns out that this customer didn't even know what kind of details they wanted. They just wanted to know "everything" about widget color changes.

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