I teach research courses to Internationally educated healthcare professionals, Capstone preparation and Capstone Project, at the college. The main purpose of these courses is to teach students how to create a research question, types of research, how to conduct a literature review, draft a proposal, and create a research academic poster. The one part that is often misunderstood is how to come up with an idea for the research question and how to create a research question. I noticed that students had a hard time coming up with the topic and then needed to write a research question that should be clear, focused, and specific. I used to have a PowerPoint with different examples of topics and how, based on some specific topic, we could create a research question, and it turned out that having these examples only confuses them.

What I started doing, I got poster-size post-it notes and regular post-it notes. Students will be working in teams of four to brainstorm and come up with the research topic, and they will put the big post-it note on the wall and write down all their ideas; then they will eliminate the ideas and keep only one they are most interested in, and based on this idea they have to write down ten different research questions with a different approach to this research topic. After that, they will grab small post-it notes and walk around the class to provide feedback to their peers, such as how the research topic or questions could be improved, what is missing, and what should be added. During this activity, I work with teams individually, and after feedback is provided, we discuss what we have at the end as a class. Students find this hands-on activity helpful as brainstorming, critical thinking, and creativity skills are involved, and feedback was given that it is easier to understand how to create a proper research question with hands-on activity rather than just with examples.