Asking Questions

Q: How can I effectively answer my own questions?   If I am a registered developer (in US or Canada), what information should I send to ask_next ?

A: Before asking a question of anyone,   it's helpful to follow these steps:

1. Search for an answer in Digital Librarian.   You probably already have NeXT Developer and NeXT User in your default bookshelf, as well as the release notes and UNIX man pages.   Other targets you'll probably want to add to your Librarian are:
   · system administration documents: /NextLibrary/Documentation/NextAdmin
   · NextAnswers (perhaps in /LocalLibrary/NextAnswers; ask locally)
   · /usr/include (you need to have permission to index this)

· /NextDeveloper/Examples (you need to have permission to index this)

2. Produce a small example of your problem.   If it's a programming question,   it's often helpful to make a tiny application that exhibits the behavior you have a question about.   Often breaking the problem down help you see what the cause is.   If it's a bug,   narrow it down to a small reproducible test case.

3. When asking a question, mention the problem that you're trying to solve.   Often you get wrapped up in a particular solution,   and there is a simpler alternative that you hadn't thought of.

4. When communicating by email, include your simple example directory,   or an explanation of how to reproduce your problem.   NeXT Mail attachments help a lot.

Once you obtain the answer to your question, if you feel the information would be generally useful, you are welcome to send in a submission to NextAnswers! See "How to submit a NextAnswer".