



GROUP DISCUSSION SKILLS

THE GD IS INTENDED TO TEST THE CANDIDATE'S IN-DEPTH UNDERSTANDING ABOUT THE TOPIC, ABILITY TO PRESENT THEIR VIEWS IN AN EFFECTIVE MANNER AND THEIR CAPACITY TO CO ORDINATE THE TEAM TO ARRIVE AT A CONCLUSION.

ROLE OF COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN GD

The first aspect is one's power of expression. In a group discussion, a candidate has to talk effectively so that he is able to convince others. For convincing, one has to speak forcefully and at the same time create an impact by his knowledge of the subject. A candidate who is successful in holding the attention of the audience creates a positive impact.

It is necessary that you should be precise and clear. As a rule evaluators do not look for the wordage produced. Your knowledge on a given subject, your precision and clarity of thought are the things that are evaluated. Irrelevant talks lead you nowhere. You should speak as much as necessary, neither more nor less. Group discussions are not debating stages.

Ability to listen is also what evaluator's judge. They look for your ability to react on what other participants say. Hence, it is necessary that you listen carefully to others and then react or proceed to add some more points. Your behavior in the group is also put to test to judge whether you are a loner or can work in a group.

You should be able to convey your thoughts satisfactorily and convincingly before a group of people. Confidence and level headedness in doing so is necessary. These add value to your presentation.

INITIATION TECHNIQUES

DEFINITION

Start a Group Discussion by defining the topic or an important term in the topic. For example, if the topic of the Group Discussion is Advertising is a Diplomatic Way of Telling a Lie, why not start the Group Discussion by defining advertising as, 'Any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods or services through mass media like newspapers, magazines, television or radio by an identified sponsor'? For a topic like GST, you could start by explaining the term GST.

QUESTION

Asking a question is an impactful way of starting a Group Discussion. It does not signify asking a question to any of the candidates in a Group Discussion so as to hamper the flow. It implies asking a question, and answering it yourself. Any question that might hamper the flow of a Group Discussion or insult a participant or play devil's advocate must be discouraged. Questions that promote a flow of ideas are always appreciated. For a topic like, Should India go to war with Pakistan, you could start by asking, 'What does war bring to the people of a nation? We have had four clashes with Pakistan. The pertinent question is: what have we achieved?'

SHOCK STATEMENT

Initiating a Group Discussion with a shocking statement is the best way to grab immediate attention and put forth your point. If a Group Discussion topic is, The Impact of Population on the Indian Economy, you could start with, 'At the centre of the Indian capital stands a population clock that ticks away relentlessly. It tracks 33 births a minute, 2,000 an hour, 48,000 a day. Which calculates to about 12 million every year? That is roughly the size of Australia. As a current political slogan puts it, 'Nothing's impossible when 1 billion Indians work together.'



FACTS, FIGURES AND STATISTICS

If you decide to initiate your Group Discussion with facts, figure and statistics, make sure to quote them accurately. Approximation is allowed in macro level figures, but micro level figures need to be correct and accurate. For example, you can say, approximately 70 per cent of the Indian population stays in rural areas (macro figures, approximation allowed). But you cannot say 30 states of India instead of 28 (micro figures, no approximations). Stating wrong facts works to your disadvantage.

SHORT STORY

Use a short story in a Group Discussion topic like, Attitude is Everything. This can be initiated with, 'A child once asked a balloon vendor, who was selling helium gas-filled balloons, whether a blue-colored balloon will go as high in the sky as a green-coloured balloon. The balloon vendor told the child, it is not the colour of the balloon but what is inside it that makes it go high.'

GENERAL STATEMENT

Use a general statement to put the Group Discussion in proper perspective. For example, if the topic is, Should Sonia Gandhi be the prime minister of India?, you could start by saying, 'Before jumping to conclusions like, 'Yes, Sonia Gandhi should be,' or 'No, Sonia Gandhi should not be,' let's first find out the qualities one needs to be a good prime minister of India. Then we can compare these qualities with those that Mrs. Gandhi possesses. This will help us reach the conclusion in a more objective and effective manner.'

SUMMARISATION TECHNIQUES

Most Group Discussions do not really have conclusions. A conclusion is where the whole group decides in favour or against the topic. But every Group Discussion is summarised. You can summarise what the group has discussed in the Group Discussion in a nutshell.

Keep the following points in mind while summarising a discussion: Avoid raising new points. Avoid stating only your viewpoint. Avoid dwelling only on one aspect of the Group Discussion. Keep it brief and concise. It must incorporate all the important points that came out during the Group Discussion. If the examiner asks you to summarise a Group Discussion, it means the Group Discussion has come to an end. Do not add anything once the Group Discussion has been summarised.

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BEST SCORING POINTS ARE

1. Initiation of discussion
2. Always keeping/trying to keep discussion on track
3. Conclusion on time
4. Your capability to keenly listen as well as respecting everyone's ideas and add valid points.
5. In a GD, one is expected to play the role of the leader to co ordinate and lead the discussion
6. Last and the important scoring part in GD is keeping yourself updated through newspaper reading. More than all the above points, recruiter will look for the valuable information that are presented. Especially for MBA course, business and general news awareness are very essential.

FURTHER HELP @ CAREER GUIDANCE CENTER

1. Book a Mock GD Session
2. Find out more about interactive workshops, sessions and Company Specific Training which is run regularly throughout term time.

CONTACT DETAILS

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