



# GROUP DISCUSSIONS

# What is a GD?

- A "Group" is a collection of **individuals** who have **regular contact and frequent interaction** and who work together to achieve a common set of goals. "Discussion" is the **process** whereby two or more people **exchange information or ideas** in a face-to-face situation **to achieve a goal**. The goal, or end product, maybe increased knowledge, agreement leading to action, disagreement leading to competition or resolution.

# What is a GD?

- GDs, under the guidance of a facilitator/presenter, discuss issues to achieve understanding and consensus after much consideration of the viewpoints and ideas of others.

# Importance of GD

- GDs provides individuals with a comfortable space to share opinions and ideas with others. These isolated and individual thoughts and opinions synthesize into new and fresh ideas.
- It provides a platform to find answers to our questions or obtain feedback on our ideas.
- GDs reveal different attitudes, perspectives, viewpoints, and insights regarding different issues/topics.
- It offers a place to test and evaluate new ideas.
- It promotes open-mindedness.
- Its goals are to spark new thought and concept exploration, encourage analysis of factual information, and develop open-mindedness toward new attitudes and beliefs, as to accept the opinions of others.

# Advantages of GDs

Intellectual-awareness of diversity of opinions on an issue, realize the complexity of an issue, motivates deeper thinking

Emotional-validation, increased feelings of self-worth, self-confidence

Social-building a sense of cohesion, trust, building interpersonal skills

# Uses of GDs



# Where do GDs take place?

Special Interest Groups in Academia and Industry

Business  
Meetings

Study Groups

Assessment  
Tool

Forums in  
Public Arenas

# Elements of a good Group Discussion

Participants come prepared

Proper seating arrangement for interpersonal communication

Clear Agenda and purpose of the discussions

Active and critical listening

Clear expression of ideas with required elaboration

Thinking deeply

Good speech delivery



# Problems in a GD



# Preparing for a GD

- Active reading
- Take double-entry notes
- Note key-vocabulary
- Make a list of comments and discussion questions

# Preparing for a GD-Active reading

Reading Response	Symbol
Agreement	Tick mark
Disagreement	Cross
New/Surprising/Memorable Information	Exclamation Mark
Important ideas/information	Asterisk
Ideas that contradict your ideas	Dollar sign
Unclear ideas	Question Mark

# Preparing for a GD-Taking Double Entry Notes

Left margin	Text	Right Margin
Summarize the author's points, key ideas	<b>TEXT</b>	Write your personal reaction; these comments will give ideas/points/questions for discussion

# Preparing for a GD-Vocabulary

Academic Vocabulary (formal dignified English)

Academic Collocations and Sentence frames

Specific vocabulary of the field

# Preparing for a GD-Make a list of comments and discussion questions

## Make a list of

- Points you would like to discuss
- Points you want elaboration on
- Questions you want to discuss
- Ideas you want to explore
- Insights you would like to share

# Procedure of Group Discussion

- A facilitator is selected before the discussion.
- The facilitator provides the provides the topic for discussion (which may be already decided) and then shares the purpose of the discussion.
- Members are given time to prepare.
- The facilitator prepares an outline or discussion plan specifying key points/topics for discussion when the discussion actually starts. This can be done by consulting the participants.
- The facilitator can also collect questions from the members and include them in the discussion plan.

# Procedure of Group Discussion

Introduction	<p>The facilitator starts the discussion with greetings, group member introduction, socialization, stating the topic and objectives of the discussion.</p> <p>The facilitator then outlines how the discussion will proceed by sharing a plan with order of key topics/points.</p>
Main body	<p>The facilitator asks every member to share their points and questions for discussion.</p> <p>The members share their understanding and viewpoints and work together to answer the questions posed.</p>
Conclusion	<p>The Facilitator works towards summarizing the key points of the discussion.</p> <p>Based on consensus and agreement, key conclusions and made.</p>



# Ideal Seating Arrangement for GDs.



# Critical Thinking in GD.

- Critical thinking is essential to build meaningful conversation in GDs. Critical thinking involves the ability to
  - See patterns and connections
  - Identify problems and find solutions
  - Think of alternative possibilities
  - See different perspectives
  - Apply skills to new situations
  - Support an opinion with relevant evidence

Critical analysis of the comments of participants will help you build discussions and generate further points for discussion until a kind of consensus is reached and a conclusion drawn which would be acceptable to all group members.

# Critical Thinking in GDs

## Knowledge

- Repeating facts

## Comprehension

- Summarize information received with understanding

## Application

- Apply the knowledge to a situation

## Analysis

- Breaking down information into smaller parts to find the relationship between them

## Synthesis

- Putting parts together to form a whole

## Evaluation

- Making a judgment and supporting it with relevant evidence

# Critical Thinking in GDs

## Knowledge

- What is genetically modified food?

## Comprehension

- Summarize the reasons for creating GMOs.

## Application

- What would be the best approach to convincing the government to ensure labelling GMOs foods by sellers?

## Analysis

- What do you think are the main reasons behind the government not mandating sellers to label GMO foods?

## Synthesis

- What evidence is there that concludes that GMOs are dangerous?

## Evaluation

- Do you support the development of new GMO foods?

# Synthesis in GDs

Synthesis happens during the discussion and at the end of the discussion.

## **Synthesis During Discussion:**

- You may pull together ideas/information from different resources before the discussion.
- During the discussion, participants may adjust their understanding, change their minds, reject ideas, accept ideas, and pull them together to form a coherent and concise response to the discussion question. This process is called synthesis. Synthesis creates something new.

## **Synthesis After Discussion:**

- A lot is said, debated, recommended, and accepted during a discussion.
- The last step is to come to a consensus and develop a coherent and concise response. Consensus means that everyone agrees on the responses to the questions, and is satisfied with the end result/conclusion.