

# Tips for Group discussion

[Note: This document contains a compiled set of general points about what is GD and important things to keep in your mind while appearing for a GD.]

## Do's

1. **Rich Content with good subject knowledge:** Having good subject knowledge and rich content is the first and foremost GD tip to enter the Group Discussion Round.  
In general the topics you'll be given in a GD will either be very general or something related to common sense so listen(or read) the question with extreme care and try to be clear about the question in hand at first.
2. **Organise your thoughts:** Now as you're sure with the question in hand, try to structure the problem a bit. What's the issue? Does this problem have any more subcomponents, approach for the problem, possible reasons for the situation and possible solutions for the same.
3. **Think before you start :** As the name of the drill indicates, discussion is the most crucial part of GD. Even if you've a full proof final solution to the problem just after giving it a first thought, you don't have to jump to the solution straight away.
  - Here you're supposed to **structure the discussion**(How the discussion will proceed), i.e., start with problem discussion, propose any subcomponents, try to deduce the most important factor and the least important one, etc.
4. **Introduction:** Many of the GD experts suggest that introduction is a crucial part to ace a GD. Many go as far as saying that a good introduction fixes your seat after the GD but that's partially true. A good introduction is always a good start to a GD but:
  - i. **It does not guarantee that you'll qualify for the GD.** You need to be constantly available during rest of the group discussion too
  - ii. **There's a big con associated too, i.e., if you're not able to give a great intro then it may not reflect good on your discussion skills.** So, it's a high risk thing. But again, a bad intro also doesn't ensure that you're out of contention.
  - iii. **NEVER re-introduce the discussion**, even if the other person introduced it in an extremely poor manner. Try to just build on that introduction and enhance the structure that the initial person provided so as to add branches to the structure you think are important too. For eg, 'I totally agree with whatever structure my friend \_\_\_\_ has proposed for the discussion, but I think that 'work ethics' could also be a topic to look at while considering the growth of a company.

**In short, 'Introduction' includes problem definition and a proposal of structure for Group Discussion.**

That's why the previous part of thinking and structuring becomes so important because the structure you propose should be exhaustive.

## 5. General Discussion

Now, after the general introduction and a discussion on the structure, you'll be having a structure to proceed your GD. Now, go to every sub point and discuss it in detail.

In this part of the discussion, innovative and out of the box points are given heavy weightage. Other than that, even if you don't have a lot of clues about the topic or any unique point, try to **'Build Upon'** the point the other person is stating. Here build upon refers to adding extra info or unique info about a point already stated.

Important things to take care during this part of GD:

- i. It's a discussion not a monologue so **speak less and precisely** rather than giving long monologues and let others express their opinions too.
- ii. **Try to be the moderator whenever needed.** Presence of mind during discussion is highly appreciated during the GD so wherever you feel like discussion is stretching too long at a particular sub point or is going in a non-fruitful direction, try to politely ask others to bring back the discussion to the main structure.
- iii. **Don't cut anyone's point.** This is the least appreciated thing during a GD and a very common error that occurs because we are unable to control our emotions and refute bluntly. You're there to have a fruitful discussion and not a fight. Even if someone is speaking totally nonsensical, first let that person complete and then politely refute their point by giving logical counter arguments.

For eg. After letting the person complete their point, raise your hand and when asked to speak say "Sir, I would like to disagree with what my friend \_\_\_\_\_ stated because looking at company's profits should be our priority but endangering our customers health should always be above that. Also, this will harm our reputation in the market and is also morally incorrect" **rather than** interrupting the other person in between and saying something rude like "Sir, I think my friend is talking totally non sensical and advocating wrong. Her point is not only morally incorrect but will also harm our company's reputation".

In both the points, the same points are put forward but the first way shows your patience, leadership skills and respect for other members participating in the discussion which are big positives for any person in a GD.

- iv. **Always be an active part of the discussion.** Don't just speak your point and start scribbling your notebook again, listening to others point and adding to their view(Building upon it) is given more weightage than proposing new and unique points because listening to others and discussing their points is an important component of discussion

- v. **Don't ever use stats that you're not very sure of.** It's better to not use them rather than saying wrong. A big negative impression is what it leads to.

## 6. Conclusion

You would be told about the time allocated for the discussion and as mentioned earlier a presence of mind is highly appreciated and so **always keep an eye on the watch.** Take note of the fact if GD is proceeding in a proper manner, i.e., all the points to be discussed would be discussed before the allocated time.

Also if you're planning to conclude the discussion it's pretty much similar to Introduction, i.e., has a lot of brownie points but is very risky. For giving a good conclusion:

- i) Keep a track of the whole discussion, i.e., points discussed and important conclusions after discussion of every subpoint.
- ii) Conclusion should also follow the structure devised and how the discussion proceeded to land on the conclusion for the problem.

## Other points to be kept in mind for Group Discussion:

### 1. Be a Leader

There is no doubt that to emerge a winner in GD round you should speak after getting a grasp on the given topic. But it also gives you an opportunity to take the lead. So be a leader to begin the Group Discussion. Key tips are:

- Usually when the moderator announces the GD topic, for a minute there is silence all round.
- If possible, gather your thoughts in a few seconds and start the Group discussion with positive impact and be a leader.
- If you find that it is taking time to gather ideas, let others begin, and then enter the GD round by agreeing/disagreeing with previous speakers
- Beginning the Group Discussion gives the opportunity to make an impact but if you are not able to make your point well, it will create negative effect
- Therefore, it is not necessary to speak first but it is necessary that when you speak you are heard and are able to make your point well

- If you are able to speak out the name of your previous speaker and then present your views, it will mark a good impact.

### **3. Be relevant**

- When you speak you should speak to the point without any ambiguity of thought
- Express your ideas at length. If you simply follow the other speaker or his ideas, remember your elimination is imminent
- Wherever possible, emphasize your point with facts and figures

### **4. Be a good Listener**

- Learn to be a good listener. Listening Skills are Essential for GD round, so carefully listen to what others have to say.
- Just speaking throughout the discussion doesn't make you better. You should learn to give others a chance to speak. Try and listen to others.
- If the speaker is making eye-contact with you, remember to acknowledge him by nodding your head, so that the speaker is aware that his listeners are listening to him and paying full attention. This will also show that you are vigilant and are an active participant in the discussion.
- Unless you listen well, it will not be possible for you to add value to your content and communication
- Listening offers you the opportunity to summarise the Group Discussion on each and every aspect.

### **5. Improve your Communication Skills**

You may have good and rich content with a lot of ideas but if you are not able to communicate well your thoughts and opinions, all is useless. The need is now to improve your communication skills with following GD tips:

- Be well versed in your communication skills.
- Much before your actual group discussion, rehearse well.
- **You can sit with a group of friends and choose a topic and indulge in a friendly GD.**

#### **[PRO TIP]**

- Not only will this increase your knowledge, you will be a better speaker by the time it is time for your GD.
- In case you are not sure about something, you can use phrases such as: "I think" or **"Probably/Approximately" or "If I remember correctly"**

### **6. Body gestures: Very important tool for Group Discussion**

The panelists observe the way you sit and react in the course of the discussion. Body gestures are very important, because your body language says a lot about you. In a GD, sit straight, avoid leaning back on to the chair or knocking the table with a pen or your fingers. Also, do not get distracted easily. Nervous body movements, folding your hands across your chest, having skeptical expressions, constantly moving, evading eye movements are the indicators of a negative personality and should be avoided at all costs.

## **Don'ts**

### **7. No Aggressive Move**

It is expected during the Group Discussion that you are firm on your ideas and are audible enough to make an impact on the group. But being aggressive, shouting and not allowing others in the group to speak, is not appreciated. So be careful and don't be a bully.

### **8. Don't Crisscross on your Ideas(Also very relevant point)**

Don't crisscross your ideas. The topics given in Group Discussion are debatable, you might like to speak for or against the topic and while speaking don't forget that you may be crossing your own lines. It gives a bad impact and you are judged as a person who has no stand for his own thoughts.

### **9. Don't be a part of fish market**

As a team player, your ability to lead and play in a team is measured in the GD. During the Group Discussion there are many instances where you will find everyone is saying something and no one is heard. It is better to be quiet for a while and then after gathering your thoughts, raise your voice initially and make your point.

### **10. Don't give up: Make multiple entries**

Don't be content with one round of one minute or half a minute speaking in the group. Focus on key points, form the ideas and opinions to enter again based on the views presented by others to further strengthen your view point.

The Group Discussion round passes through highs and lows. So it is a good opportunity to re-enter the Group Discussion after gathering more ideas coming out of others' view and make an entry when the noise level is low in Group Discussion.

**Value-Additions:** You can add value to a discussion keeping the following in mind:

- Provide a structure that enables the discussion to carry on
- Provide analysis that helps in distilling the discussion
- Provide new facts and details
- Examples should be rational and clear
- Avoid flimsy repetition of thought
- Do not lose focus and discuss trivial issues
- Try to provide a summary to the discussion