

Group Discussion (GD)

Group Discussion in SSB interview comes in group tests, 3rd day. GD is first test of the GTO series. In this test, two topics of common interest : social issues and current events are discussed. It is an informal discussion and not a debate. Each topic is allotted for 20 minutes for each candidate. No definite conclusion is required to be deduced.

Objectives of GD

The Group Discussion is conducted to know the candidate's knowledge of current affairs, history and social awareness as well as his/her grouping skills like group coordination, listening power, concentration, communication, speaking skills, body language, patience etc. Core of the GTO is knowledge and communication skills which can be achieved by practising well.

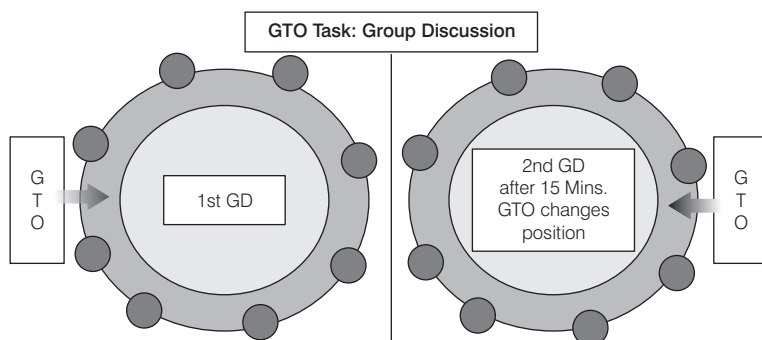
Following qualities are seen by GTO :

- Candidate's awareness on the current topics that are covered by the newspapers.
- Candidate's ability to logically organise the knowledge he has, regarding current events.
- The way candidate interacts with others i.e. how impressively he can talk and influence others in the group.
- It is seen that whether the candidate is having confidence to face the group by bouncing back with better points, if he is countered by others.

Importance of GD

Verbal and intellectual communication is the key factor to selection. Expression is an important requirement, whether administered, visually, orally, written or practically. So, through group discussion, candidates get a chance to show their communication skills. In the armed forces, effective communication skill is very important as you have to live in the company of equals, superiors or subordinates, you do not live in isolation. You have to show teamwork, sense of responsibility, cooperation every time so, it is very important to test the individual behaviour on these scale.

Way of Conducting GD



The GD is conducted in two rounds. The candidates are made to sit in a circle according to their chest numbers. Generally, the GTO asks the candidates to introduce themselves before the GD begins, this happens specially in AFSB's, he asks you to cover your name, family occupation, your hobbies/interests, your marks upto graduation, so be prepared for such an introduction.

Highlights of the GD are :

- In the first round, the GTO gives two topics to the group.
- Group has to choose one topic of their choice and report to the GTO.
- Then GTO reads out loudly so that everyone in the group becomes aware and clear about the topic of discussion.
- Then 20 minutes is given to preparation.
- Thus, in the first round, the topic of current event covered by newspaper is given.
- In the second round, the GTO give the topic of social importance, again 20 minutes is given for preparation.
- When the first discussion ends, the group has to carry out a discussion of about the same duration. There is no choice in second round, but select the topic given by GTO.

➡ Do's and Don't for GD

Do's

- ♦ Prepare for the topics from newspapers; have the **habit of reading newspapers**.
- ♦ Be aware about the **current events** and equally about social topics.
- ♦ Initiate the discussion, if you could not start first, atleast join the discussion as early as possible.
- ♦ **Be humble** when you are asserting your point and feel it is valid and also do not get discouraged by the opposite view that gets for your point.
- ♦ Be gracious to accept if your point is proved not valid, but ready with better point.
- ♦ Avoid generalising the views and keep logical and real reasons for your argument.
- ♦ Just be calm and think like you are discussing something with your friends.

Don'ts

- ◆ Never in any chance join hands with one candidate and start backing up each other, a real leader considers everybody equal hence **give everybody a fair chance**. Give chance to others also who are not able to talk much.
- ◆ Maintain **good posture** while sitting and also have good body language.
- ◆ Communication skills like pausing, eye contact etc must be well maintained.
- ◆ **Do not be argumentative** or exited and get up from the chair. The GTO explicitly mentions that you do not have to conclude the discussion, hence do not over rule his wish by trying to conclude the discussion.
- ◆ Do not look at the GTO, **speak confidently** and maintain an audible and nice voice level, not too loud.

Sample GD 1

Topic : Demonetisation (Is it the Correct Step for Eradication of Black Money, Corruption and Fake Currency?)

Total no. of members in the Group : 8
(The members are identified by the numbers on their chests.)

Scene at the Start of GD

As soon as the examiner retires to the background after apprising the participants the rules of the GD and declaring the topic of the GD, there is silence for sometime; then the candidates start talking and murmuring among themselves. Some speak to their neighbours and others indulge in talking with those sitting across the table. The noise becomes louder, leading to utter confusion.

At this stage, No. 7, who was so far been sitting silently, as if collecting his thoughts, raises his voice over the din so that he could be heard clearly by all the participants.

The GD in Progress

No. 7 Friends, kindly pardon me for the interruption and please listen to me attentively for a few minutes, as I am going to make an important submission that you all will find interesting and beneficial for all of us. This will help to conduct the GD smoothly, for which all are gathered here.

- (Candidates who were busy in talking and murmuring are taken by surprise. They start listening to No. 7. There was silence again and No. 7 got the opportunity to speak further.)

No. 7 Thank you very much for responding to my appeal. As you all know, the examiner has allotted us only 30 minutes to complete the GD and we have already consumed 5 precious minutes so far. So, unless we begin the discussion immediately, we may run short of time and won't be able to complete the task within the prescribed time limit. The topic is a current one and everyone will like to say quite a bit on the topic. All of us should get equal opportunity to present

our ideas or express our valuable views on the subject. Hence it is important that we must begin the exercise straight away without wasting any more time.

- *(No. 7 takes the initiative and directs the group to the goal in a convincing manner. He also grasps the opportunity to speak and commands the group with least friction.)*

No. 6 No. 7 is right to point out the necessity of starting the GD, but don't worry, we have plenty of time. The time limit prescribed is 30 minutes and it is never adhered to. If we are not able to complete the GD within 30 minutes, we will be allotted more time and nobody will stop us in between. Don't make such haste and don't be worried at all.

- *(Supports the initiative taken by No. 7, but unwarrantedly believes in delaying things for no substantial reason.)*

No. 3 Hey, No. 6, don't try to misguide us. We are here to discuss a burning topic and whatever time limit is prescribed will not be changed.

- *(Use of offensive language shows lack of the quality of taking others along.)*

No. 6 No. 3, are you a representative of the employer or are you a judge? Your mental abilities also are not more than that of a child.

No. 4 Nos. 3 and 6, keep shut! You are wasting our time in irrelevant fighting. I shall not allow you to disturb the whole GD. You can settle your personal scores after this GD or if you are more enthusiastic, you may withdraw immediately.

- *(Using offensive and despotic language is a minus point of your personality.)*

No. 7 Friends, friends, please. It is not necessary to fight, as we have to complete this GD within 30 minutes and 6 minutes have already been wasted. So, I request you all to start the GD without any delay. We have limited time to complete the GD, so it will be good if we start clockwise and let No. 1 speak first. In this manner we all can get a chance to present our views on the topic.

- *(The initiative of No. 7 to solve problems amicably and carrying out the task in the desired direction shows his keenness to achieve the target in spite of hurdles that come in the way.)*

No. 7 Yes, No. 1, please start the discussion.

No. 1 In my opinion, demonetisation is not the only correct step for eradication of black money, corruption and fake currency. Other steps should also be taken for this. Demonetisation is only one step which will help the economy. Indians are smart enough to counter it soon if the government does not take other follow up actions simultaneously. That's all. Thank you very much for hearing me peacefully.

- *(Although he has some idea about the topic, he is too vague, as he does not give details of 'other follow up actions'. Thus, he shows no originality of ideas.)*

No. 2 I agree with No. 1 to the extent that demonetisation is one of the steps to eradicate black money, but eradicating corruption and removing fake currency will involve more actions to be taken. As No. 1 has not spelled out what he means by 'other follow up actions', his words are meaningless. He should have given specific details of what actions government must take.

- *(Shows nature of finding faults, a negative trait of personality. He also is not giving details of 'more actions', which displays lack of detailed knowledge about the topic of the GD.)*

No. 3 Instead of talking to the point, No. 2 has involved himself in telling us that the government action is not sufficient. I request you all not to indulge in irrelevant details and keep to the point.

- *(Shows nature of finding faults, a negative trait of personality.)*

No. 2 No. 3, you are not to comment upon my views. I have got the right to speak whatever I wish.

- *(Quarrelsome and easily offended.)*

No. 7 Please.... please, No. 2 and No. 3, don't use aggressive language please. We are being judged by the examiner. Nothing is personal here. I request everyone not to comment upon the views expressed by other participants. Take your time and be positive, so that the GD can be completed smoothly and within the prescribed time limit. I think No. 3, now you should start with your views, please.

- *(He never loses grip over the group, taking everyone together. Shows concern for achieving the target and with co-ordination of all members. He reflects leadership qualities and team spirit.)*

No. 3 Thank you No. 7. I actually want to tell you that the Central Government has taken a number of steps to curb black money earlier than the demonetisation move. It has introduced the Income Declaration Scheme (IDS) which opened on 1st June, 2016, giving a chance to black money holders to come clean by declaring the assets by 30th September, 2016 and paying tax and penalty of 45 per cent on it.

Earlier to this, in 2015, the government passed a law to declare undisclosed foreign income and assets. This was done to bring back black money stashed in foreign countries and tax havens. The scheme ended on 30th September, 2015. Thank you.

- *(Has good knowledge of events, but has covered only one aspect of the topic. He lost some marks for finding fault with others.)*

No. 4 I agree with No. 3 that the government has taken actions earlier also to curb black money, both within the country and that lying outside. However, he has failed to explain the reason why the government was then forced to take the step of demonetisation, which is causing a lot of hardship to the honest citizens of the country.

Probably he does not know that both the schemes were only partially successful, due to which more than three-quarters of the black money was not unearthed by them. People like Vijay Mallya, a proclaimed offender, are enjoying themselves in other countries by employing their black money stashed abroad. That is all I have to say.

- *(Has some original ideas but loses some marks for criticising another participant.)*

No. 5 I feel that No. 3 and No. 4 have not covered the GD topic adequately, as they have only discussed about black money. The topic also includes corruption and fake currency. Here I would like to add that eradicating corruption requires many steps, as it is very deep-rooted; in fact it was widely prevalent even during British times, i.e. prior to independence.

The Indians who served the rulers in those days were well-known for corruption. Now that politicians are ruling the country, almost anybody who wants something done must 'grease their palms' for it. Demonetisation will definitely reduce corruption on a large scale, but will not reduce cash bribery below ₹ 500, nor any other form of bribery like 'freebies', i.e. gifts. Regarding fake currency, demonetisation may only marginally reduce it, and that also for a few months, as the people who were printing fake currency notes earlier will soon learn how to print fake new currency notes. This is due to the fact that they are advised by technical experts from foreign countries. That's all I have to say. Thank you.

- *(Has some original ideas. Further training could groom the candidate to achieve the goal.)*

No. 6 Whatever I wanted to speak has already been spoken by No. 3, 4 and 5, so I have nothing new to say. I totally agree with them, and in my opinion demonetisation is a good step, but it alone is not enough.

- *(Does not have any original ideas. Does not make any contribution to the discussion.)*

No. 7 Thank you friends, for all the co-operation extended in carrying out this exercise smoothly. To sum up my views, we may conclude that the demonetisation carried out by the government recently has definitely adversely affected illegal activities like generating black money, indulging in corruption and circulating fake currency.

No. 1 was correct in mentioning that demonetisation was an important step in curbing these illegal activities. Nos. 2, 3 and 4 have also mentioned details of how such activities have been curbed by actions of government. No. 5 has covered extensively the other illegal activities in the topic besides black money. To all this, I want to add a few more points, which will complete the discussion.

First, the method by which government has handled the circulation of fake currency notes issue was not clearly explained by other participants. Actually, the only fake currency notes in circulation were those of the demonetised values. These had unnecessarily fuelled inflation due to luxurious spending by the users of these notes. Even the terrorists used these notes for buying illegal arms and ammunition in India for their disruptive activities. By demonetisation, the business of the corrupt people who sold illegal arms and ammunition was suddenly stopped. Thus, some corruption has been reduced. As No. 5 correctly pointed out, corruption on a small scale will continue and this will have to be reduced by the government through other measures like transparency in transactions, reducing cash dealings etc. Thus we can conclude that demonetisation and other steps carried out earlier by the government, all taken together, will reduce drastically these illegal activities, but may not stop them totally.

Thank you friends for hearing me so peacefully and patiently. Thanks again.

- *(His knowledge of the topic, possesses leadership qualities, has a balanced approach and gets the task completed in a submissive way by taking everybody with him. Deserves to be selected.)*

No. 8 In my opinion, as pointed out by No. 7 also, the illegal activities indulged in by corrupt people will be reduced by demonetisation. In fact, corruption is a general term which signifies many activities besides black money generation and circulation of fake currency notes. One form of corruption indulged in by people in higher positions is obliging their friends or relatives by giving their family members jobs, either in government or elsewhere. This form of corruption does not involve any financial transaction. As the idiom goes, 'You pat my back, I'll pat yours'. This means that in future they can expect an obligation in return. That's all. Thank you.

- *(He was the last speaker so that he could not add much to the discussion. However, he has some original thoughts. He may be groomed as per the requirement of the job with some training.)*

Summary

Out of the eight candidates, No. 7 emerges as a leader and shows original thinking and positive approach to achieve the goal. So he will be selected without any doubt. Nos. 5 and 8 can also be selected, but they have to be groomed to achieve the goal.

No. 1 had started the discussion, but was too vague and could not convince other participants about his knowledge. Nos. 2, 3 and 4 have not been selected as they are either aggressive or do not respect other participants, as they are critical of others. In addition Nos. 3 and 4 have used offensive language. No. 6 is not selected as he has given no meaningful contribution to the discussion.

Sample GD 2

Topic : Bullet Train Project in India

Candidates are divided into the group of 8-10. In this discussion the candidates with chest numbers 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14 and 16 are participating.

- No. 4** The Bullet train project is considered as a dream project of Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi and entire country feels proud of having its first ever bullet train.
- No. 8** The train is scheduled to run between Mumbai and Ahmedabad thus a key to connect the financial capital with the manchester of India.
- No. 2** (agreeing with previous comments) I too believe and agree with what No. 4 said. The project will provide pace to development. Along with new technology it will also bring results faster.

- No. 6** (visibly irritated) Japan will only be providing the technology to India after the span of 15 years till then they are going to provide the trains to India making us dependent. By then, the technology would have become totally unfeasible, given the inflation, and redundant.
- No. 2** (Taking it calmly) I would like to state here that even though Japan is investing about 80% of the money, it is charging a nominal interest rate of 0.1% which ultimately benefits both the countries and serves to strengthen the bond between the two.
- No. 14** (feeling annoyed) I don't understand one point that why are we focusing on a new project when the already existing railway network is in darkness. How can we even think about development without looking at the present scenario?
- No. 12** (He was sitting quite, as if collecting his thoughts now gives his views) It is not like we are not considering the present situation. Many reforms have been initiated to look into the Railway sector.
- No. 16** 90% of railway passengers of India travel through sleeper class or lower class who will travel in such a heavy fare train?
- No. 4** We must think on a point that Bullet trains could prove to be an important means of transportation for long duration journey for the middle class population of the country.
- No. 10** Can I give my view on this burning issue?
- No. 12** Yes, please, we all must listen to each and every member of the group.
- No. 10** As we know that the project is considered to be completed by 2023. In between if there is a change in government and then the project could face the consequences.
- No. 6** (Laughs) There are many examples of changes brought by every new government.
- No. 8** Please let me remind you that Bullet train project is not a dream of a single person or a government. It is a dream project of a single nation. Hence to discuss on such a trivia point is of no use.
- No. 12** An interesting point to be noted here is that the project is eco-friendly as they do not require deforestations to set tracks.
- No. 14** And what about the safety, even the present railway network is facing accidents these days.
- No. 12** (trying to convince) I already mentioned that reforms have been initiated to look into the safety measures of railway.
- No. 2** We should understand that High-speed Railways in India is going to be a new step towards a technologically advanced nation.

No. 10 Oh! come on, only a few high income countries have High Speed Railways while others have failed in their efforts or abandoned after debating about it.

No. 8 Ok, so friends we are rather short of time and it is better to conclude the topic. Bullet train has sets of pros and cons under India's present situations hence they need to be handled properly. It is important to remember that it is India's dream project. Thus it must be properly handled so that it brings prosperity and development in the country and not disaster.

Topics for GD (Current Affairs)

Below are some topics given for GD purpose. Candidates are advised to use these topics and practise with your friends.

1. Beef Ban : A Debate
2. How can we stop criminality of politics in India
3. Merger of Banks : Is bigger always better
4. Inclusion of Women in Armed Force
5. Right to Privacy : Intrinsic to Life and Liberty
6. Palestine or Israel : A dilemma for India
7. India- China relations- An approach for 21st century developments
8. India and Pakistan : How to resolve the conflict
9. Need of Lokpal to make India corruption free
10. Triple Talaq : A way towards Uniform Civil Code
11. Black Money : How can we stop its generation
12. Kashmir: A bone of contention for India
13. Farmer Suicide : An Epidemic
14. The Rising Menace of Intolerance
15. What really is Nationalism for you
16. Digital Economy : A reform or a Burden
17. Reservation Policy in India : Does it Need Review?
18. Necessity of Censorship in the Age of Internet
19. Naxalism is bigger threat than terrorism.
20. Image of Parliament has been diminished in recent years?
21. Is the debate on singing Vande Matram is relevant?
22. How does 'paid media' affect the election process?

Topics for GD (Social Issues)

Below are some topics given for GD purpose. Candidates are advised to use these topics and practise with your friends.

1. How social media is affecting our lives or need of politics in universities.
2. Increasing Violence in Universities.
3. Transgenders : can they ever be free of discrimination
4. Internet/Mobile Phones : A Boon or Nuisance.
5. Skilled manpower shortage in India.
6. Child Labour in India.
7. Degradation of moral values in India
8. Brain-Drain Needs to be stopped.
9. Gender Discrimination in India.
10. Increasing Population : A threat to Development in India.
11. Should the Public Sector be Privatised?
12. Religion should not be mixed with Politics.
13. Collapse of joint family system in India
14. How westernization is affecting our lives
15. Women entry in temples : should it be banned
16. Surrogacy : To what extent it should be allowed
17. Flaws in the education System of India
18. Why India can't provide good health services to its Citizens
19. Lack of Civic sense in Indian Citizens
20. Role of Caste in Indian Politics
21. Growing problems of old age people in India
22. Role of primary education in nation building.
23. National anthem : should we compulsorily sing/stand or not
24. Need of sex education in Schools and Colleges
25. Why India is prone to so many accidents
26. Indian Cities : Unplanned and Overpopulated
27. Rights of the Differently Abled Persons.
28. Superstition in India
29. Lack of Civic sense in Indian Citizens
30. Education is for life or for livelihood.
31. Why social welfare schemes of government are not so effective as they should be?
32. Juvenile Delinquency : how to deal with it