**GD JAM and Extempore – Reading Material**

**Overview:**

Generally, recruiters use many tools to assess the communication skills of candidates and screen them in the initial or later rounds. To clear these rounds of interviews successfully, one needs a few tips and a lot of practice to enhance his/her communication skills, particularly in a group scenario. This topic helps you to improve your ability to make short prepared speeches, participate in Group Discussions, and speak extemporaneously.

**Objectives:**

This reading material is designed to help you:

Use meaningful and effective techniques to apply in Group Discussions, Extempore and JAM

**Introduction:**

JAM or Just Minute sessions are the interview sessions where the interviewer asks you to speak on any given topic. For this session you will be given time to prepare.

Through JAM sessions, recruiters screen the candidates based on their communication, language and confidence.

The following are some important points about how to prepare for JAM sessions:

* Select a topic from newspaper or a magazine or from your course material.
* Read that aloud.
* Note down important points.
* Remember the points.
* Articulate them.
* Record the speech using voice recorder.
* Listen to it and identify gaps.
* Repeat above steps with various topics, til you gain confidence.
* Go prepared with some random topics for the JAM sessions, as sometimes interviewers may ask you to speak on any topic of your choice.

### BIKER ‘B’ Model

### 

Use the BIKER ‘B’ model to prepare for JAM and extempore:

**B**ang: A good way to start an extempore is to grab the attention of the audience by using any of the following: classical example, imaginative scenario, mysterious scene, calling for participation, dramatized incident.

**I**ntroduction: Define the scope of the topic. Give definitions, if necessary.

**K**ey Points: Give important points in support or against the topic.

**E**xample: Substantiate the important points spoken by giving examples.

**R**ecap: Summarise the key points spoken.

**B**ang: End with an appropriate bang – may be a quote.

### Bang Types:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Bang Type** | **Example** |
| **Classical Bang** | * “This presentation could save you four crore rupees…” * “This is one of the most exciting moments of my life…” |
| **Imagination Bang** | * “If x = y then… “ * “Once upon a time…” * “You may all remember when…”. * “Imagine that…” |
| **Mystery Bang** | *“There will be five takeaways from this session…”* |
| **Participation Bang** | *“What is your take on this…”*  *“So what do you feel about the increase in the number of work hours?””* |
| **Dramatic Bang** | *“Other day I bumped into apick-up truck…”* |

### Do’s and Don’ts in JAM sessions

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| DO’s | DON’Ts |
| * Do introduce your topic in first 5 seconds. * Make eye contact with most of the audience. * Speak confidently. * Conclude your speech properly | * Don’t start or stop your speech abruptly. * Don’t stammer or give long pauses. * Don’t use long or complex sentences. * Don’t use fillers. * Don’t cross the given time limit. |

An extempore is a kind of speech that is spoken without any preparation or planning. The topic would be assigned to you on the spot. Topics may vary from academic to social, like, women empowerment, child labour, illiteracy etc. All you need to do is to think about the topic. Unlike JAM, the topic is given spontaneously and you have to speak without any preparation.

So, to extempore, you need to visualise the current scenario and give your arguments against or in favour and provide possible solutions for the same if applicable.

Extempore is used  to assess your:

* Ability to think on the spot and your spontaneity
* Thought clarity
* Fluency in English
* Body language/ Confidence

What You should do in an Extempore:

* Speak with confidence.
* Use time to mind map your presentation before you speak.
* Structure your presentation as the following:

**Introduction:**

|  |
| --- |
| Say what you want to say |

**Body:**

|  |
| --- |
| Say it |

**Conclusion:**

|  |
| --- |
| Say what you have said. |

* Either begin or end with a quote.

**Sample Response:**

“Attitude is Everything”

**Bang** (Dramatic Bang): Begin with the humorous story of the newborn mosquito venturing out on his first day.

**Introduction:**  Define Attitude

**Key Points:**

* Positive & Negative Attitude
* Attitude change as a function of experience
* Emotion is an integral component in attitude change

**Example :**– Illustrate an instance where your attitude towards a particular situation or person affected your behavior either positively or negatively (or) relate to a recent instance wherein your immediate audience was involved.

**Recap:** Summarize the main ideas

**Bang**: Participation Bang – So, what is your attitude towards not clearing the interviews in the first attempt?

**Exercise**

Prepare points for the following topics:

1. Bungee jumping
2. Fear of the unexpected
3. Childhood
4. Most memorable moment
5. Funniest moment
6. Population explosion
7. Flyovers
8. Sachin Tendulkar
9. MBA education is a waste of money

Team work being an integral part of every work profile, it is important to ascertain group and interpersonal skills of an individual. Group Discussion (GD) is a useful tool to ascertain these qualities and many organizations use GDs as a selection tool.

A GD is an activity where:

* Groups of 8-10 candidates are formed into a leaderless group, and are given a specific situation to analyse and discuss within a given time limit, which may vary between twenty minutes and forty-five minutes, or
* They may be given a case study and asked to come out with a solution for a problem.

During the GD the candidates are evaluated for the following traits:

* Knowledge base
* Alertness and presence of mind
* Communication
* Confidence
* Leadership
* Listening Skills
* Team Skills
* Goal Orientation

### How to Approach a GD:

Always use time given for before discussion starts judiciously and efficiently:

* Step 1:   Read/ listen to the topic very carefully
* Step 2:   Identify the main ideas
* Step 3:   Write your points on the sheet provided and try to structure them.

### Four Point Evaluation of GD

The following are the main areas of evaluation in GDs:

* Content:
* Content is a combination of knowledge and the ability to create coherent, logical arguments on the basis of that knowledge.
* Merely memorising facts is pointless.
* We need an in-depth understanding of various issues as well as the ability to analyse the topic and build arguments.
* The depth of knowledge and logical analysis you show is critical.
* Communication Skills:
* Communication is a two-way process, and the role of the listener is critical.
* The listener has his own interpretation of what you say. Unless you listen to him, you cannot figure out whether he or she has understood you.
* Unless you listen, the points you make may not fit in with points made by others. It is easy for an experienced evaluator (moderator) to realise you aren't listening.
* Besides listening, you also need the ability to:
* Express your ideas in a clear and concise manner.
* Build on others' points.
* Sum up the discussion made by the entire group.
* Group Dynamics:
* Willingness to listen and discuss various points of view.
* Learn to disagree politely, if required.
* Show appreciation for good points made by others.
* Seize the opportunity to make a summary near the end or, even better, a part summary.
* Leadership:
* Leadership is about initiating the discussion and suggesting a path on which the group can continue the discussion.
* A good leader is one who allows others to express their views and channels the discussion to a probable decision or conclusion on the given topic.

### Types of GDs

The following are the types of GDs:

* **Topic-based (Knowledge Intensive):** Here, the background knowledge of a subject is required for effective participation. For example, Should India go in for full convertibility of the rupee?
* **Non-knowledge Intensive:** This requires structured thinking, but subject knowledge is not required. For example, Do women make better managers?
* **Abstract**: Requires out-of-the-box thinking, analogy and example-based discussion. For example, Money is sweeter than honey.

### Phases in a GD

The following are the phases in a typical GD:

**Initiation/ Introduction:** Initiating a GD is a double-edged sword. When a candidate initiates, apart from grabbing an opportunity to speak, he also grabs the attention of examiners and fellow candidates. So, if a candidate who initiates is able to make a favourable first impression through his content and communication skills, it will help him sail through the GD.

On the other hand, if a candidate stammers, stutters or quotes wrong facts and figures, the damage done is irreparable. The candidate who initiates also has the onus of giving the GD the right perspective or framework. So, initiate only if you have in-depth knowledge about the topic at hand.

If, after initiating well, a candidate does not say much during the GD, it still gives the impression that he or she started the GD just for the sake of starting it, or to get those initial points earmarked for an initiator. The following are the different techniques to initiate a GD in order to make a remarkable first impression:

* **Quotes**: An effective way of initiating a GD. If the topic is 'Should the censor board be abolished?' a quote like 'Hidden apples are always sweet', is apt to capture attention and convey more than what is actually said. For a topic like 'Customer is King,' one can quote Sam Walton's famous saying, "There is only one boss:  The Customer. And he can fire everybody in the company from the Chairman down, simply by spending his money somewhere else.
* **Definition**: One can start a GD by defining the topic or an important term in the topic. For example, if the topic is, 'Advertising is a diplomatic way of telling a lie,' one can initiate by defining advertising as 'Any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods or services through mass media such as newspapers, magazines, television or radio by an identified sponsor.' Similarly, for a topic like 'The Malthusian Economic Prophecy is no longer relevant', a candidate could simply start by explaining the definition of the prophecy.
* **Question**: Asking a question at the start of a GD creates an impact. It does not signify asking a question to any of the candidates so as to hamper the flow, it implies asking a question and then answering it yourself. If a question is being asked to hamper the flow of a GD, insult a participant or to play devil's advocate, it should be discouraged. But, if a question is being asked to promote the flow of ideas, it is appreciated. If the GD topic is 'Should India go to war with Pakistan', for instance, you could start by asking, 'What does war bring to the people of a nation?'
* **Shock Statement**: Initiating a GD with a shocking statement is the best way to grab immediate attention and put forth your point. If a GD 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**: When a candidate decides to initiate a GD through facts, figure and statistics, he should quote them accurately. Approximation is allowed for macro level figures, but micro level figures need to be correct and accurate. For instance, we can say that approximately 70 per cent of the Indian population stays in rural areas (macro figures, approximation allowed) but we cannot list 30 states of India instead of 28 (micro figures, no approximations). If a person ends up stating wrong facts, it works to his or her disadvantage.

* **Short Story**: This can be used for a GD topic like 'Attitude is everything.' The topic can be initiated with the help of a short story as follows: 'A child once asked a balloon vendor, who was selling helium gas-filled balloons, if a blue-coloured balloon would go up as high as a green-coloured one. The vendor told the child that it was not the colour of the balloon but what was inside it that made it go high'
* **General Statement**: This can put the GD into proper perspective. For example, if the topic is 'Should Sonia Gandhi [ Images ] be the prime minister of India?' one could start by putting it into perspective with, "Friends, before jumping to any conclusion, let us first find out what qualities a good prime minister should possess. We can then compare these with the qualities possessed by Sonia Gandhi, which will help us reach a conclusion in a more objective and effective manner.'

**Body of the group discussion:** This is where your arguments and counter arguments lie. So, you need to carefully prepare your speaking points (content). One needs to know what one's objective in the group is: To be noticed by the panel or to contribute meaningfully in an attempt to help the group reach the right consensus.

**Summarisation/ Conclusion:** Most GDs are left without a conclusion, and it isn't even essential that a group reach one. Remember that a GD is about getting to know one's personality traits and it is the process, not the conclusion that reveals these traits. Even though not every GD is concluded, every one is still summarised. While a conclusion represents a final stage, where the entire group decides in favour or against a topic, in the case of a summarisation a candidate summarises in a nutshell what the group has discussed. The following points should be kept in mind while summarising a discussion:

* No new point should be taken up.
* A person should not share his or her own viewpoint alone.
* A summary should not dwell only on one side of the GD.
* It should be brief and concise.
* It should incorporate all the important points spoken.

If a candidate has been told by the examiner to summarise a GD, this means it has come to an end. It is not advisable to add anything once a GD has been summarised. A simple framework for a summary can be, *'We had a healthy group discussion and, as a group, evaluated this topic from different perspectives. Some of my friends spoke in favour of the topic and the reasons they gave were (elaborate), while some good points against the topic were (elaborate). In all, we had a very good discussion with everyone participating enthusiastically*.'

The initiation and summarisation techniques mentioned above will help you make an impact and succeed in a Group Discussion.

### GD Vocabulary:

**Speaker 1:** Good morning/afternoon everybody..// A very warm good morning to all of you.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Introduce with an opinion** | **Introduce with an opinion** |
| **To begin with (let me begin)**  I would like to say that smoking need not be and should not be banned. | **Let me commence by saying that…**  Smoking should be banned. |
| **Let me open the discussion (discussion) by saying that…**  Cigarettes give immense please and nobody can deny that. | **I wish to strongly assert that..**  Smoking kills more people than any other addiction. |
| **To add** | **To add** |
| **I’d like to add that (besides, apart from that)**  Everybody has the right to keep his or her habits. Smokers are no exception. | **Let me also mention that (moreover)**  Smoking not only effects the smoker but also his surroundings. |
| **Facts** | **Facts** |
| **Facts tell us that (According to WHO)**  Smoking is one of the cheapest forms of relaxation for the poor. | **Facts point out that…**  By smoking a pack a day for 20 years one would lose eight years of his life. |
| **The best part of it is..**  Nicotine can produce a calm effect during shock situations. | **To make matters worse (to rub salt)**  Smokers cause many fire accidents that kill people. |
| **Reasons** | **Reasons** |
| Smoking provides a good form of entertainment to people, **because** cigarettes are cheap and easily available. | Smoking should be banned immediately since it has become a serious health hazard. |
| **Give Opinion** | **Give Opinion** |
| **If you ask me, (I suspect)**  Smokers may not want to be accused. | **The way I see it is that (perhaps)**  Smoking is worse than drinking as it affects everyone around. |

**Speaker 2**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Agree** | **Disagree** |
| I totally agree with what **SPEAKER 1** has just said.. | I’m afraid I don’t quite agree with what is being said.. |
| I strongly support the idea that **SPEAKER 1** has proposed.. | I wish to strongly oppose what **SPEAKER 1** has said.. |
| But I feel that smoking should be done in private.. | I’d like to challenge the idea of what has been said.. |

**Introduce with a problem**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Serious problem** | **Sensitive problem** |
| Let us look at the core issue (smoking should be banned) | The problem is quite sensitive. In fact there are many dimensions to it…. |
| The crux of the matter is…. | The problem needs gentle handling.. |
| The topic (smoking should be banned) is a burning issue | There are two ways to look at the problem… |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Serious action needed** | **Blaming/not blaming someone/something** | **Cautious action needed** | **Compromise** |
| Let us not drag our feet | The govt. has to be blamed | Let us think twice before acting | We need to iron out our problems |
| We should not drag the issue | We cannot pass the buck | Let us look at the pros and cons | We need to bridge differences |
| We cannot afford to hesitate | No point in pointing fingers | Perhaps, we should discuss | We should hammer out the differences |
|  | Instead of blaming we should |  |  |
|  | | | |
| **Fight strongly** | **Praising someone/something** | **Can’t be weak** |  |
| We should stand firm against | One must appreciate | Plain words won’t help |  |
| We have to stick to our guns | We must be thankful to | We need action |  |
| The only way to root out | We should congratulate our | Let us act rather than talk |  |

**Communicating with your peers in a GD.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Interrupt** | **Don’t interrupt** |
| Excuse me, if you may allow me to interrupt. | Please allow me to finish. I am not over yet. |
| Please let me interrupt. | If you may permit me to finish. |
| **Some people are not speaking** | **Speak up please** |
| Let’s allow the others to contribute too | We haven’t heard from any of the members yet |
| Maybe the others should speak too | Anyone else got anything to contribute? |
| **Distractions** | **Getting stuck up** |
| We are deviating from the main issue | I am afraid we are not moving on.. |
| We’re losing sight of the main point | I suppose we are talking only about.. Why don’t we.. |
| Let us not sidetrack (stray from) the main issue |  |
| **Conclude** | **At the end of the day (When all’s said and done)** |
| I’m afraid we’ve run out of time. | Since people derive pleasure from smoking, it’s not fair to ban it. |
| I suppose one of us should summarize | A ban would certainly stop people from getting addicted. |
| I think we need to sum up. |  |

**Preparing Your Content for Discussion:**

Discussion body generally progress by generating the points from the points raised / discussed by other parties. So, to generate the points any of the following methods may be employed:

* **KWA – Keyword Approach**: You can  use the Key Word approach for abstract topics Say the topic is “Deep Blue is not Blue Enough”. Now we got to take each word and try to understand the significance of it. “Deep Blue” can symbolize the supercomputer with whom Garry Kasparov had a chess competition. So once you connect the word with the example that’s one point. Now try generalizing further into the debate about artificial intelligence over human intelligence, and say that artificial intelligence is not “ENOUGH”. So we are trying to use the key words in the topic itself to first understand the topic better and then to generate more points.
* **VAP – Viewpoint of Affected Parties**: You can  use VAP for**the** opinionbased GDs. Say the topic is “Dowry continues to haunt Indian brides”. So who are the parties involved with this topic: Bride, Bride’s family, Groom, Groom’s family, Society, Media (who shall bemakethe issue public), NGOs (for supporting the bride), Government & Panchayats (their role in dowryremoval), Law enforcers like courts & police. Now each of these parties’view-pointsand roles related to the topic becomes a valid point for the GD.
* **SPELT** – Social, Political, Economical, Legal, Technology: Use SPELT for Knowledge based topics. Say the topic is “*Retail boom spells doom for the local grocer*”. So from SPELT way the following points can be generated:
* **Social**: Should we support the small kiranas just on humanitarian grounds?
* **Political**: Role of Government
* **Economy**: Impact on Indian Economy because of Retail & Retail sectors contribution to GDP
* **Legal**: FDI issues, Labor laws, Taxation
* **Technology**: Cold Storage & Supply Chain, Efficient supply and availability will marginalize prices and reduce costs and wastages.

**Example of Topic Content Created Using SPELT:**

**Is coalition politics here to stay?**   
The following points could be discussed under this topic:

Nature of coalition politics. Indecisiveness of elections. No particular party is getting the peoples mandate. Advantage of coalition politics in enabling formation of government. The flip - side of coalition politics- a party with a handful of seats become powerful. The government falls before tenure. Fresh elections each time. Suggest a way out of this problem, for e.g.: once a party pledges support to a coalition, it will not withdraw its support until it has watched a government's performance for at least three years...etc. The future -will it only have coalitions ,emerging political trends...etc.

Now, start listing down different topics under each area or check out any GD book and start reading up under each category.

For Economic related topics look at fundamental concepts like FDI, Stock Markets, Liberalization, Employment scenario, Capital Convertibility, Rupee VS Dollar, Inflation, Export-Import, different kinds of economy in the world, Socialist versus Capitalist, etc. For Sector based topics start making a 1-2 page note on each important sector like IT, ITES, Banking, Insurance, Retail, Telecom, Healthcare, Infrastructure, Power, Agriculture, Logistics & transportation, Nuclear issues etc.

**Example of Topic Content Created Using Initiation technique and VAP:**

**Topic: Dowry continues to haunt Indian Brides**

Initiation Technique – Shock Statement - In India, though the payment of a dowry was prohibited in 1961 under Indian civil law, as per NCRB data, a total of 25250, 26009 & 27148 cases are pending trial under Section 304-B IPC (Dowry Death) in the years 2007, 2008 & 2009 respectively.

**Content generated using VAP** – “So, who are the parties involved with this topic: Bride, Bride’s family, Groom, Groom’s family, Society, Media (who shall  make the issue public), NGOs (for supporting the bride), Government & Panchayats (their role in dowryremoval), Law enforcers like courts & police.” Now each of these parties’ view-points and roles related to the topic becomes a valid point for the GD.

**Exercise:**

Develop the content for the following topics using VAP / SPELT:

* Is India moving away from a secularist state?
* Education in India-or the lack of it.
* What ails Indian sports?
* The Age of Information.
* Is Philosophy just arm chair theory?

Six Thinking Hats

The ‘Six Thinking Hats' is an important and powerful technique used for looking into decisions from a number of important perspectives. This forces you to move outside your habitual thinking style, and helps you to get a more rounded view of a situation. This tool was created by Edward de Bono in his book '**6 Thinking Hats**'.

The Six Thinking Hats can also be used in GDs to align your thought process with other members of the group.

### What are these Hats and How to Use them:

You can use Six Thinking Hats in GDs. In GDs it has the benefit of blocking the confrontations that happen when people with different thinking styles discuss the same problem. Each 'Thinking Hat' is a different style of thinking. These are explained below:

* White Hat for Available Data
* Red Hat for Trust Intuition, Gut and emotion to address problems
* Black Hat to eliminate, alter and prepare contingency plans to counter weak points
* Yellow Hat for an optimistic viewpoint
* Green Hat to develop creative solutions to a problem
* Blue Hat for process control

Hats may be used in some structured sequence depending on the nature of the issue. Here is an example agenda for a typical 6 hats workshop:

* Step 1: Present facts of the case (White Hat)
* Step 2: Generate ideas on how the case could be handled (Green Hat)
* Step 3: Evaluate the merits of the ideas – list the benefits (Yellow Hat)
* Step 4: List the drawbacks (Black Hat)
* Step 5: Get everybody’s gut feelings about the alternatives (Red Hat)
* Step 6: Summarise and conclude (Blue Hat)

### How to Use the Six Thinking Hats to Speak in GDs

Say the topic for the discussion is ‘**Career Decision Making’:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Hat Colour** | **Thinking Lines** |
| **White**  **hats2.png** | Educational qualifications, professional training, work experience, current job market, etc. |
| **Redhats2.png** | * Which occupational field to enter? * Which paid/volunteer experience would be most satisfying? * Will I be able to meet my expenses? * 2-3 years from now, will I be in a successful position? * Geographic location (e.g., are jobs relating to your vision typically located in an undesirable or inaccessible location?) |
| **Blackhats2.png** | Analyse threats like recession, laying off, etc. (short term & long term consequences)   * Whether to change occupations and/or fields? * Whether to start a small business? |
| **Yellowhats2.png** | Future trends in the job field, pay scale, opportunities to upgrade skills, chances for promotion, perks, etc. |
| **Greenhats2.png** | Consider personal goals and career goals that are SMART.  To ensure that you achieve your goal, it should meet the following criteria:   * Specific: a goal is specific when you know exactly what is to be achieved and accomplished * Measurable: measurable goals are quantifiable (e.g., numbers, dollars, percentages) * Achievable: an achievable goal is within your reach (perhaps a stretch) based on your skills and level of motivation * Realistic: a realistic goal is one for which you have the resources (e.g., time for training, money for education, support from significant others) * Time specific: a time-specific goal is finite; it has a deadline (e.g., "by June 30, 2XXX" is much more specific than "soon")   For example, a decision to work in human resources might lead to the following goal statement: "attain a management-level position leading to corporate training in the technology sector within the next five years." |
| **Bluehats2.png** | Take control. You will:   * Work very hard and be determined and persistent. * Constantly improve your skills and knowledge, which will improve your product/service quality. * Have a smile on your face, and your enthusiasm will transfer to staff, customers, suppliers, supporters, etc. * Quickly build a strong reputation - especially for reliability and quality * Treat mistakes and failures as lessons learned and challenges to be met - instead of obstacles and problems * Keep up to date with trends, and you will increasingly lead new trends * Build competitive advantage - especially in quality, customer service and value * Be efficient and so make profits easier * Be happy in your work - which helps sustain success and life-balance |

### The Benefits of Six Thinking Hats

The following are the benefits of the Six Thinking Hats:

* Allow to say things without risk
* Create awareness that there are multiple perspectives on the issue at hand
* Convenient mechanism for “switching gears”
* Rules for the game of thinking
* Focus Thinking
* Lead to more creating thinking
* Improve communication
* Improve decision making

**Using the Six hats**

Hats may be used in some structured sequence depending on the nature of the issue. Here is an example of how to use the group discussions in a GD:

* Step 1: Present facts of the case (White Hat)
* Step 2: Generate ideas on how the case could be handled (Green Hat)
* Step 3: Evaluate the merits of the ideas – list the benefits (Yellow Hat)
* Step 4: List the drawbacks (Black Hat)
* Step 5: Get everybody’s gut feelings about the alternatives (Red Hat)
* Step 6: Summarise the GD topic (Blue Hat)