

GROUP DISCUSSION (GD), A JOB SEEKER'S PREREQUISITE

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ABSTRACT

A job seeker should possess good communication skills and the ability to discuss issues within a group to emerge a winner in the GD. A Company for its employment recruitments or an Institute for its admissions, today, conducts Group Discussion (GD) as screening test. Thus the Group Discussion (GD) has become one of the most important tools of communication practice and a suggested prerequisite of a job seeker. This paper attempts to render a few tips to crack GD effectively.

KEYWORDS: GD, Job Seeker, Communication Skills, Communication and Etiquette

INTRODUCTION

Group Discussion is a crucial step in any selection process, be it for a course of study, or for campus recruitment. The selection committee conducts GD to assess whether the candidate has certain personality traits and/or skills that it desires in its members. The group discussion is not merely to impress the conductor but putting forth your firm beliefs.

Normally groups of 8-10 candidates are formed into a leaderless group, and are given a specific situation to analyze and discuss within a given time limit. The group may be given a Case Study and asked to come out with a solution for a problem.

MAJOR AREAS TESTED IN GROUP DISCUSSIONS

There are four main areas tested in a GD

- Content
- Communication Skills
- Group Dynamics
- Leadership

Content is a combination of knowledge and the ability to create logical ideas on the basis of that. Communication is a two-way process, and the role of the listener is critical and crucial. Unless one listens, the points one may make not fit in with points made by others. Besides listening, one also needs the ability to express one's ideas in a clear and concise manner build on others' points and sum up the discussion made by the entire group.

As a GD is a formal peer group situation it tests behavior of the candidate as well as his/her influence on the group which may assesses the dynamics of a candidate among group. One of the most common misconceptions about leadership is that it is all about controlling the group. However, for the GDs we are talking about, leadership is all about giving direction to the group in terms of content. It 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.

WHY GROUP DISCUSSIONS?

Those can't discuss, argue, those can't argue, quarrel, those can't quarrel, fight. Hence discussion always brings about positive conclusion and it is a process of incorporating views of different team members to reach a common goal. The following tell us how Group Discussion helps the candidate.....

- It helps to understand a subject more deeply
- It improves ability to think critically
- It helps in solving a particular problem
- It helps the group to make a particular decision
- It improves listening skills
- It increases confidence in speaking
- It can change attitudes

SKILLS THAT ARE JUDGED IN GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Ken Blanchard's saying "*None of us is as smart as all of us*"¹ enticingly convinces one that the group is always more powerful than that of each individual of the group though each one is having a unique ability. It also proclaims that an individual's well-being is always interrelated with group's well-being when one aspires to win the goals as a team. In most of the cases, the following skills of an individual, when he/she among the group, may be judged in order to prompt him/her to act as a team player.

- Ability of communication with others.
- Behavior and interaction with group.
- Open mindedness.
- Listening skill.
- Opining of the views.
- Leadership and Decision making skills.
- Analysis and subject knowledge.
- Problem solving and critical thinking skill.
- Attitude and confidence.

MOST IMPORTANT DO'S AND DON'TS OF GROUP DISCUSSIONS

1. **Keep Eye Contact While Speaking:** Do not look at the evaluators only. Keep eye contact with every team member while speaking.
2. **Initiating the GD:** Initiating the GD is a big bonus. But keep in mind – Initiate the group discussion only when you understood the GD topic clearly and have some topic knowledge. Speaking without proper subject knowledge is bad impression.

3. **Allow others to Speak:** Do not interrupt anyone while they are speaking. Even if you don't agree with his/her thoughts do not snatch their chance to speak. Instead make some notes and clear the points when it's your turn.
4. **Make Sure to Bring the Discussion on Track:** If by any means group is distracting from the topic or goal then simply take initiative to bring the discussion on the track. Make all group members aware that you all need to come to some conclusion at the end of the discussion. So stick to the topic.
5. **Positive Attitude:** Be confident. Do not try to dominate anyone. Keep positive body language. Show interest in discussion.
6. **No Need to go Into Much Detail:** Some basic subject analysis is sufficient. No need to mention exact figures while giving any reference. You have limited time so be precise and convey your thoughts in short and simple language.

10 BEST TIPS TO BE SUCCESSFUL AT GD²

1. Concentrate on the task
2. Take brief notes
3. Keep a mental record of events
4. Don not become excited since it is not a real-life situation
5. If in doubt ask questions
6. Remember the names of other members
7. Take up the leader's role if you can manage
8. Maintain a fair level of confidence and self discipline
9. Wait for your turn and do not interrupt
10. Take the opportunity to summarize the discussion

CONCLUSIONS

In any game, how we play like a team, passing the ball to each of the team members and aim for a common goal, GD is also based on team work, incorporating views of different team members to reach a common goal. It's like motor driving and we have the power to accelerate or brake according to the situation on the road and avoid any accident. One should be such a conscientious driver in a GD to seek a Job.

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