



# Conversation

## Course Book

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## GROUP DISCUSSION

**Group** is a collection of individuals who interact with each other and share a common identity as members of the group. Each individual holds responsibilities and may have differing expectations and opinions.

**Discussion** is a process of talking and discoursing on certain matter of interest. It comes from the Latin root word "*discutere*" which means "to shake or to strike". Hence discussion refers to shaking and scrutinizing the subject matter thoroughly to achieve the objective(s) set.

**Group Discussion** is the process whereby a collection of people talk, converse, and discourse about something of interest wherein the end result is to express ideas, make decision, or solve a problem.

### Purpose of having Group Discussion

1. Express ideas
2. Make decisions
3. Solve a problem

### Group Discussion Guidelines

#### A. Characteristics of a Good Group Discussion

1. Knowledge of the matter. Going into a discussion each members are expected to have previously researched, surveyed, and examined the topic(s) to be talked about.

2. Interaction and Participation. The success of a group discussion depends largely on to the extent at which each individual interacts and participates to attain the goal of the discussion. Interaction includes not only the expression of one's ideas but also involves non-verbal elements like eye

contact, engaging voice tone, and certain acceptable hand and body gestures.

3. Leader and Members. A smooth and fruitful completion of a group discussion are chiefly reliant on the dutiful action of the leader and members of their respective roles and responsibilities as members of the group.

4. Conformity. The pressure to conform to the ideals of the group/company is innate in a group discussion. The collective interest of the group comes before each individual interests. This is one of the reasons why setting up the objective(s) prior to the discussion is important. Group members will then be working on a common goal.

5. Conflict. Disagreement among members during the discussion is inevitable. However, having set the goal, conflict could stimulate members to work on a new solution to a problem.

## B. Steps in Conducting Discussion and Roles of Individuals

Step	Role
<b>1. Open the discussion</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt;Greetings</li><li>&gt;Set the objective(s) of the discussion</li><li>&gt;brief but concise explanation why there is a need to talk about the topic</li><li>&gt;attendance (or before the meeting)</li></ul>	Facilitator or Moderator
<b>2. Discussion proper</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Members at this point share their opinion(s), ask for other's opinion, express agreement, disagreement or partial</li></ul>	
	<i>*Note</i>

<p>agreement, ask or give explanation, ask or express clarification, and ask or give suggestion.</p> <p>&gt;Facilitator makes sure the discussion is geared towards the attainment of the goal.</p> <p>&gt;Asks relevant, thought-provoking questions.</p> <p>&gt;Make sure each member is able to express and contribute to the discussion</p>	<p><i>While the discussion is going on, minutes should be taken by a designated individual.</i></p>
<p><b>3. Close the discussion</b> Summarizes the discussion and mentions important and salient points from the discussion</p> <p>&gt;Review the goal(s) set prior to the discussion</p> <p>&gt;Enumerate the decision(s) reached</p> <p>&gt;Reminders if any</p> <p>&gt;Thanking and Goodbye</p>	<p>Facilitator or designated individual</p> <p><i>* Note</i> <i>This part of the discussion can be done by the facilitator or by a designated individual.</i></p>

### C. Tips in Conducting Group Discussions

1. The facilitator asks questions to kick start the discussion and questions to encourage further discussions.

PROBE QUESTIONS to kick start discussion.

- a. Why is it beneficial... Why do we.....?
- b. How can we... How to...?
- c. What are the best...? What are the types...?

FOLLOW-UP Questions to encourage further discussion.

- a. Who will ... Who can...?
- b. When is .... When can...?
- c. Where shall... Where might be ....?

2. The exchanges among members should resemble a web of opinions, ideas, and questions, answers that are being thrown around rather than a two-way traffic of question and answer just like an interview.

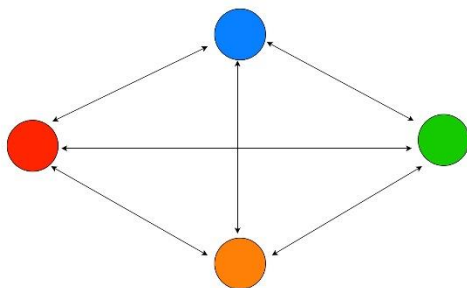


Illustration 1. Ideal discussion dynamics

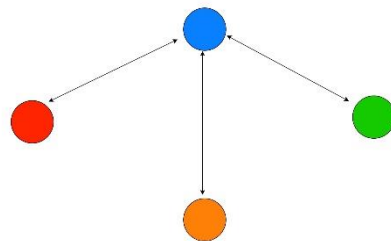


Illustration 2. Poor discussion dynamics

3. Topics to be discussed must be given ahead of the discussion to give each member time to think or make a quick research or read. This way, members may be able to delve into and substantially talk about the topic.

### HERE ARE HELPFUL PHRASES TO USE FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

#### Asking for opinion

<i>Asking someone's opinion</i>		Youtube: ใจดี 369
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Can you give me your thoughts on ... ?</li><li>• Do you (dis)approve of ... ?</li><li>• Do you agree with the opinion that ... ?</li><li>• Do you have any views on ... ?</li><li>• Do you share the/my view that ... ?</li><li>• I'd like (to hear) your views on ...</li><li>• I'm sure you'd agree that ...</li><li>• What are your feelings about ... ?</li><li>• What are your views on ... ?</li><li>• What do you reckon?</li><li>• Any thoughts on ... ?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Are people right in thinking ... ?</li><li>• Are you in agreement with ... ?</li><li>• Do you have any particular views on ... ?</li><li>• Do you have any thoughts on ... ?</li><li>• From your point of view, ... ?</li><li>• I'd be (very) interested to hear your views on ...</li><li>• What are your (first) thoughts on ... ?</li><li>• What would be your reaction if I said ... ?</li><li>• What's your position on ... ?</li><li>• Would it be right to say ... ?</li><li>• Would you support the view that ... ?</li></ul>	

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#### Example

Since everything is crystal clear, let me move on to the next..... *Can you share with us your thoughts on this?*

I understand that this is generally accepted issue, however considering our culture and traditions, *do you have any particular views on this?*

## Voicing out/ Expressing doubt

**Voicing Out Opinion**

- As far as I'm concerned
- It seems to me
- I would say that...
- Speaking personally...
- As I see it...
- Well, if you ask me...
- The way I see it...
- I'm convinced that...
- I have a feeling that...
- You can take it from me that...

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**Expressing Doubt**

- ☐ I'm not sure if ...
- ☐ I'm not satisfied that ...
- ☐ I'm not convinced that
- ☐ I doubt that ...

**Stating Something as a Fact**

- ☐ Everyone knows that
- ☐ It is normally accepted that ...
- ☐ There can be no doubt that ...
- ☐ As everybody knows ...
- ☐ Nobody will deny that ...
- ☐ Nobody can deny the fact that...

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### Example

Well, as far as I'm concerned, the schedule is so tight. We might not be able to.....

I've looked into several statistics, and I'm pretty convinced that this the right brand for us.

You've all seen the reports, right. The situation is worst that we've expected. So I have reservations regarding this matter.

I understand that everyone has their own opinion on this. But looking at the statistics and from experiences of people we know, there can be no doubt on the effectiveness of this medicine.



### Express lack of understanding

- I'm sorry. I missed that.
- I'm sorry, I didn't quite hear what you said.
- I'm not sure I got your point.
- I'm not quite sure I follow you.
- I'm not quite sure I know what you mean.
- I'm sorry. What did you say?
- Sorry, I don't get it.
- I beg your pardon?
- I'm sorry, what?
- Excuse me, I can't understand what your saying.

### Ask for clarification

- Could you clarify that please?
- Could you give me/us an example?
- Do you mean...?
- Could you say that again, please?
- Could you say that again in a different way, please?
- Could you elaborate on that, please?
- Would you be more specific?
- Could you put your idea differently?

### Clarifying ideas

- Let me explain that...
- Let me explain that in more detail...
- Let me put it in another way...
- Sorry let me explain...
- In other words...
- To say this differently...
- To put it differently...

### Confirm Understanding

- I see. So, it means that .....
- Now I understand. Thanks.
- If I understand it right, you're saying that...
- Let me see if I understood it correctly. You're saying that...
- So, in other words....

### Example

Excuse me, did you say marijuana? Can you please explain how could this be medically beneficial?

Yes, marijuana. Let me explain this further...

If I understand it right, you're saying that marijuana has a chemical component that can safely reduce pain without the harmful side effects?

### Expressing Agreement

- I agree with you 100 percent.
- I couldn't agree with you more.
- That's so true.
- That's for sure.
- You're absolutely right.
- Absolutely.
- That's exactly how I feel.
- Exactly my point
- I'm afraid I agree with James.
- I have to side with Dad on this one.
- No doubt about it.
- Me neither./ Me either.
- You have a point there.
- I was just going to say that.

### Expressing Disagreement

- I don't think so.
- (strong) No way.
- I'm afraid I disagree.
- (strong) I totally disagree.
- I beg to differ.
- (strong) I'd say the exact opposite.
- Not necessarily.
- That's not always true.
- That's not always the case.
- No, I'm not so sure about that.

### Expressing Partial Agreement

- It is only partly true that...
- That's true, but...
- I can agree with that only with reservations.
- That seems obvious, but...
- That is not necessarily so.
- It is not as simple as it seems.
- I agree with you in principle, but...
- I agree with you in part, but...
- Well, you could be right.
- We don't seem to be in complete agreement...
- Well, I don't quite agree with you...

### Example


That's exactly what I'm thinking. Now is the time to launch otherwise it would be too late. Strike while the iron is hot as what they say.

That's not always the case. I'm afraid if we are too careless about this, we might end up at the losing end.

That's true, but if we have a contingency plan then either way, we could successfully pull this off.

## Summing up points

Summing  
up  
your  
points



☐ Finally ...

☐ The obvious conclusion is ...

☐ Summing up, I must say that ...

☐ In conclusion, we can say that ...

☐ To cut a long story short, ...

☐ To sum up...

☐ All things considered, ...

☐ Taking everything into consideration...

☐ The advantages of ... outweigh the disadvantages

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## Example

Thank you all for the brilliant ideas you've shared. Taking everything into consideration, we all agreed to .....

Good job everyone. We've finally able to come up with ways on how to go about with the event next month. First, we determined that .....Second,....

Conversation fillers are words or phrases used to fill in conversation gaps, say when one is thinking of what say next, or thinking of how to re-phrase/ re-explain some things. This is a signal to the person you are talking to that you are still in on the matter of discussion.

Conversation Fillers		
<p>*Um...</p> <p>*hmm...</p> <p>*well...</p> <p>*Er...</p>	<p>Really...</p> <p>I see...</p> <p>Gotcha...</p> <p>Whatever...</p>	<p>Ok...</p> <p>Alright...</p> <p>Yeah, so...</p> <p>I mean...</p> <p>You know...</p>
<p>Anyway, ...</p> <p>Basically...</p> <p>Actually, ...</p> <p>Sort of...</p> <p>Frankly...</p> <p>To be honest...</p> <p>Youtube: ใจดี369</p>	<p>Let me think...</p> <p>It's like...</p> <p>Like I said ...</p> <p>The thing is...</p> <p>... you see...</p> <p>If you see what I mean...</p>  <p>Sp Adobe Spark</p>	

### Suggested Topics

1. What is the best film series of all time – Harry Potter, Lord of the Rings, John Wick, Pirates of the Caribbean, or The Avengers? – What makes these film series the best?

2. The 10 cheapest vacation places in Thailand. (What are the 10 cheapest vacation places in Thailand? Why are they the best?)

3. The pros and cons of having a credit card. (How to make the use of credit card safe?)

4. Is digital payment safe?

5. The most reliable online shop(s) in Thailand. (why are they reliable?  
What are the advantages of using or buying from them?
6. Plastic bag ban, how can it be effectively implemented. (Decide  
whether the plastic bag ban is effective or not. If so, why? If not, why?
7. Passive smoking is equally harmful. (Define passive smoking. Why is  
it equally harmful?)
8. The advantages and disadvantages of city curfews. (Enumerate the  
advantages and disadvantages of city curfews)
9. How can we reduce the wealth gap between the rich and the poor?
10. Public schools are not safe. (Decide whether public schools are safe.  
If so, why? If not, why?)
11. Internet Wi-Fi should be free for everyone. (why should internet be  
free for everyone)
12. Marijuana has a medical value, and should be legalized.
13. The most effective lifestyle for healthy and sound living. (Suggest  
ways considered as the most effective lifestyle for healthy and  
sound living)
14. What is the right age for children to have mobile phones and social  
media accounts? Decide at what age children must own a mobile  
phone and create social media accounts. Justify your decision
15. What is the best social media at present for university students?  
(Identify/ list down different types of social media, and decide which  
are the best for university students.
16. Money is evil?

