

## **Tips to improve in GD updated on Jan 2025**

### **Tips to improve your participation in the GD**

To ensure good participation from your side, there are number of issues that you need to address. These issues are listed below and discussed in detail.

#### **If you have a soft voice**

Those who have softer voice will necessarily have to speak louder in a GD than they normally do. In addition to raising your voice level, you should also look for opportune moments to enter into the discussion.

#### **If you are interrupted when you are discussing**

Participants interrupting each other is a common occurrence in GDs. The group members will obviously try to grab every possible opportunity to speak. But if that happens when you are speaking, you would definitely like to try and prevent others from grabbing your chance. When somebody tries to interrupt you while you are speaking, you should tell him in clear and unambiguous terms that you should be allowed to speak. You can do it in your style. You can say "Excuse me, please let me complete," or you can say just a minute - let me finish my point. Don't wait for him/her to get into the flow of his/her speech.

#### **How to get into discussion**

For getting into discussion there are different ways

1. Start the discussion - be the first member to start the discussion as soon as the moderator gives the group the go-ahead.
2. The moment the noise level is low, get into the discussion. Remember that other members who are not actively participating will also be waiting for the same moments. That is the reason why you have to be very attentive, of course, without looking and sounding desperate.
3. By interrupting a speaker. At the earliest possible, identify the strong speakers and the soft speakers in the group. You can try getting into the group by interrupting when a soft voiced speaker is speaking. Get in forcefully with your points and most of the times you will be successful. See, you should interrupt in a natural manner but not as if you are bulldozing.
4. Do not try to interrupt when a strong speaker is speaking. Your attempt may not be successful. If a strong speaker has spoken for a long time, interrupt when he seems to be running out of content. If he doesn't seem to yield to this also, then try getting into discussion by supporting him or by speaking in a manner that you seem to be supporting him. Get used to using expression like, "Yes, what you say is true - be sure that the strong speaker you are interrupting has stopped, thinking that you are stopping him, and then immediately continue thus: " .... but there is something more that we should look at....., or and there is another reason to support what you say....."

#### **If you are not noticed when you are speaking**

In GD if you're not noticed or ignored - you may feel miserable and lost. Some students ask whether they should stand up and speak in such situations. The answer to such a question is a firm 'no'. Do not do that. Do not raise your hand to speak. Do not thump on the table. Situation of this sort would only prove the observation of a

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philosopher that *civilization is nothing but cannibals eating with forks.*

### **If you do not know much/anything about the topic -What to do if one has no idea about the GD topic?**

This is the most undesirable situation to be in. In case you ever get into such a situation, you should certainly not be the one to speak first. Let the other members start the GD and speak for some time. Listen carefully to the point introduced by the other members who are into GD. Make a note of those points and apply your commonsense to elaborate upon them and, finding a suitable moment, get into the GD. If you good at your communication skill this becomes much easier.

You should ensure that you have developed knowledge with as many topics as possible. Reading newspaper and magazines and special articles on various current affairs will be helpful to you.

### **supporting somebody else whose ideas are similar to yours**

A GD is a discussion among peers to find a solution to a problem or reach a consensus on an issue. As you can easily see, it is not possible to have ten different opinions on an issue. If you disagree with a fellow member, he/she may try to prove his/her point and may try harder to do that. That may not serve basic purpose in this case. In fact, you should make it habit to use expressions like, "*yes you are right*" or "*I agree with you*". Such expression make your entry into the discussions smooth and easy. This may be called '*the art of verbal pampering*'. You should avoid negative expressions like "*you are wrong*" or "*I don't agree with you*".

While there is no fear of your losing marks by agreeing with what another member of the group has just said, there is also a word of caution. Do not keep quite after repeating or rephrasing what some other member has said. You should continue with your elaboration of the issue by adding your own points.

### **What if you know a lot about the topic and the others relatively ignorant**

If such situation arises, use it to your full advantage. You can start the GD. But donot present all the points you have at the beginning itself. Just let one or more points out and let the others take up them for discussion. As the discussion progresses, keep introducing point after point.

### **The first to start the discussion**

If you are the first person to speak in the GD, you may gain a small advantage but you will not get any additional marks. Your overall performance is that what matters. You may have heard of one of the popular sayings that first impression is the best impression. But equally true is the case with the last impression. A last impression that lingers on the minds of others including the moderator is certainly better than a first impression that haunts them. Act accordingly, ie, depending on the presentation habit of other members.

### **Questioning other members on points made by them**

For example, when a member says "*Introducing mid-day meals scheme in schools is going to improve attendance levels in schools*" you're asking "*how does it improve?*" shall not serve any purpose. But you may say "*How could that be possible?*" *Don't you think that there is another side to it which actually works against it like.....*" and continue the discussion. But be sure that you can effectively present the "other side" and you have talked about.

### **Language to be used in a group discussion**

A GD is a formal situation and it is an unspoken but unanimously accepted practice to use English as the medium of communication. Hence, do not switch over to Hindi or vernacular languages even if you feel more comfortable with languages other than English. You should avoid using slang while speaking in a group discussion.

### **Using statistics in your discussion**

In case you feel like talking in terms of ratios, proportions and percentages, use expressions like a "*lot of people, a great majority of the population of the country, a great numbers of experts*", etc. This will reduce the risk and will still serve the purpose you have in mind.

There is another issue when using statistics in GD - If some other member quotes wrong statistics, should you point out the mistake? . Remember that you will not get any additional marks for pointing out at the mistake of others.

### **Role of body language in a group discussion**

Body language is just a part of non-verbal communication. Try speaking even one sentence without moving any body parts except your mouth- and you will find how unnatural and ridiculous the effort looks. Thus, we can say that body language is an integral part of our communication in every walk of life. Common movements that all of us indulge in while we are speaking are movement of head, maintaining eye contact with various members of the group, moving eye lids and eye brows, gesticulating with our hands, leaning forward from sitting-straight posture and vice-versa, etc. Let these movements happen naturally - do not focus on or worry about going through with these movements consciously.