

### Group Discussion Tips

- 1) Adequate matter/ Subject matter are essential:** You should have subject knowledge and be well aware of the latest happenings around you. Subject knowledge is a pre-requisite while because you will then have the power to steer the conversation to whichever direction you want to. If you can memorize some relevant data, it will be an added advantage.
- 2) Make sure you Read Widely:** Being an avid reader will help you in group discussions. Reading not only adds to your knowledge database, but enhances your vocabulary skills as well.
- 3) Choose Magazines that are rich in Content:** Always opt for magazines that are content rich and not just full of advertisements. Often magazines have columns which are promoting a particular institute etc. Avoid such magazines.
- 4) Know the topics that are repeated:** Often, there are topics which re-appear with minute changes and minor variations. For example the issues of terrorism, gender inequality, poverty, Ayodhya conflict, liberalization and privatization, reservations in educational institutions etc. often appear as GD topics. Make sure you know these topics well and can come up with some unique, insightful points along with dates, stating facts.
- 5) Work on your Communication Skills:** You should be well versed in your communication skills. You should have a good vocabulary and a decent command over English. Much before your actual group discussion, rehearse well. You can sit with a group of friends and choose a topic and indulge in a friendly banter.
- 6) Listen to the Topic carefully:** Listen to the topic carefully and understand it. Be alert and vigilant. Sometimes, the topic may be really simple but the manner, in which it is presented to you, can be baffling. The first thing that you should do after hearing the topic is by structuring it on the sheet that is given to you to make notes. You will be at an advantage if you open the discussion, but then beware of what you speak. Deviating from the main topic or passing strong statements like 'I agree/ or disagree ...' should be avoided. If you can, back it up by relevant data.
- 7) Try and Maintain a Balance in your Tone:** Besides what you are saying, remember that the panelists are observing your body language as well. If you do not agree with the other student's point of view, do not raise your tone in objection. Listen to his point of view and instead of dismissing it upfront, try and draw a common ground. .
- 8) Listening Skills are Essential:** Carefully listen to what others say. Just speaking throughout the discussion doesn't make you smart; you should also give others a chance to speak. Try and listen to him/her, respect their view point too. If the speaker is making an eye-contact with you remember to acknowledge him by saying "yes, you agree" or just by nodding your head. This will show that you are vigilant and are an active participant in the discussion.
- 9) Body Gestures are very important:** The panelists observe the way you sit and react in the course of the discussion. In a GD, sit straight; avoid leaning back on to the chair or knocking the table with pen or your fingers. Also, do not get distracted easily. For example, if the door in room you are sitting in opens, do not look back to see

who it is, this will show how distracted you are.

**10) Be the first and also the Last to Speak:** As mentioned earlier, initiating a GD is an advantage. Closing it too also adds brownie points. If you can grab the opportunity to close the discussion, then you should summarize it. If the group has not reached a conclusion try concluding it. Imagine you are driving and you have the power to accelerate or brake. Try to be that conscientious driver in a GD. Take the initiative, know when to apply your brakes and when to seize the opportunity and accelerate the conversation to reach to a desired destination; conclusion in your case.

