



New

# Group Discussion

Edition 2017

Study Material  
For  
**Group Discussion**



Regd. Office :- A-202, Shanti Enclave, Opp.Railway Station, Mira Road(E), Mumbai.  
[www.bankpo.laqshya.in](http://www.bankpo.laqshya.in) | [bankpo@laqshya.in](mailto:bankpo@laqshya.in)

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## Group Discussion Tips For all kind of Competitive Exams

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## **1. INTRODUCTION – GROUP DISCUSSIONS**

Group Discussions (GD) and Personal Interviews (PI) are standard selection processes for IBPS Interviews, State Bank of India Interviews and many of the Job Selections and also for admissions in many B-Schools. It's an integral part of the selection procedures for various recruiters in India. Especially when it comes to a bank job, Group Discussion plays a pivotal role in getting the final appointment letter in hand. It doesn't matter what is your academic record, work experience (if any) and scores in the entrance test to qualify you for an interview call, your final selection depends only on your performance in the 'last test – Group Discussion and Personal Interview.'

However this section covers most of the important parts to know and learn more about Group Discussion, still you can click the link for Personal Interview section to learn more about Personal Interview Tips and Tricks.

Now coming back to the point about: - The biggest reason why IBPS or State bank of India put you through a Group discussion and an interview, after testing your analytical, aptitude, mathematical and English Language skills in a common written exam, is that to know you as a person and understand how well you will fit in their organization. The Group discussion tests how you behave or act as a part of a team. As a manager, you will always be working in teams, as a member or as a leader. Therefore how you interact in a team becomes an important criteria for your selection in various Banks or even other institutions. Managers have to work in a team and get best results out of teamwork. That is the reason why management institutes include GD as a compulsory component of the selection procedure.

This article comprises of various points and guidelines about Group Discussion which are mainly given by our experts which is focused to help all the Bank PO or Bank Clerical applicants and who dream to fly high in career choosing Banking as their full time career and needs to crack the common written examination which is due in coming few months. We wish you all the best for the preparations.

## **2. WHAT EXACTLY IS A GROUP DISCUSSION ?**

- Group Discussion is a most effective method to judge an applicant's personality.
- It is a technique to judge the leadership and team member capabilities of a candidate for the job.
- As the name suggest “ Group Discussion” means a discussion among a group of persons.
- The group will have 6 to 10 members who will express their views in a general manner on a topic of current issue assigned to the group by the inveigler.
- The abilities of the members of the group is measured within a time frame of 30-40 Minutes.

In today's context, the Banking Industry and / or any organizations are interested in team players rather than individual members. During the Group Discussion, the panel closely evaluates the applicants' potential to be a leader and also his/her ability to work in a team. Generally the organizations are mostly interested in such candidates who will inspire to lead and succeed and hence, one has to be a good team player.

Mostly the organization will divide the candidates into groups of 6 to 10 members and conduct a group discussion among them, followed by a personal interview with each candidate separately. In general group discussion, a situation or issue – for eg. From a business-related or a more general topic – like any of the current affair or any of the social cause, ( List of Most Likely Topics is added at the end of this article ) is provided to the group as a short write-up, and each candidate is given five or ten minutes to read the situation and formulate his/her thoughts or views. Then, the group is asked to discuss the issue for a time frame of 15 to 30 minutes, depending on the size of the group, and preferably come to some conclusions. In some cases each of the candidates is asked to sum up his / her views within a minute at the end of the discussion.

We had observed that most of the Group Discussions end up resembling a fish market and lots of chaos. The credit goes to many coaching institutes which gives away the “so called TIPS” to their students. The candidates are often propagated by some MYTHS about Group Discussions.

### 3. COMMON MYTHS ( अफवाह / गलतफहमी )

Lets us discuss some common myth ( अफवाह / गलतफहमी ) and their remedies / solutions to understand this more clearly

#### **Myth No 1 - Demonstrate leadership qualities :**

The very first myth is that the person who initiates the discussion is really demonstrating his/her leadership qualities.

#### **NOT TRUE**

If this was so simple then everyone in the group would like to initiate the discussion and the result of which will end in a big chaos. The leadership qualities actually come from a patient and sensible participation during a group discussion. Not just by starting first, but by the way a candidate with leadership potential is able to bring the group together, often to his/her views and inspire the group's confidence in him or her.

The Candidates, who work with the group, accommodate diverse viewpoints from the group members and assert themselves without aggression score high. The GD panel is testing

- whether you understand the topic well,
- are able to present your point of view in a logical manner,
- are interested in understanding what others feel about the same subject and
- are able to conduct yourself with grace in a group situation.

Points to remember :

- Think analytically
- Respect other people's views
- Listen to others carefully
- Keep patience

#### **Myth No 2 - Speak More**

The second myth is that the person who speaks more during a group discussion is the one who would score the highest.

#### **NOT TRUE**

"Speaking just for the sake of speaking is noise". So, don't create noise in the GD, instead make some useful and resourceful contributions to get noticed in the discussion.

It is this mentality about speaking more and most in a group that will fetch you good marks, which certainly will lead the group discussion into a hopeless fish market. In the worst scenarios, two or three candidates end up speaking simultaneously without listening or paying attention to each other.

Communication or discussion is necessarily a two-way process that involves both speaking and listening, in fact more of the latter. Speaking without paying attention to the views of others often shows up the candidate in a very bad light and badly affects his/her chances. You

can perform better if you do sensible talk and there is sufficient meat in what you say. Excellent communication skills are the essential qualities of the modern day manager. He/she should have listening and articulation skills. This is exactly what the GD panel is looking for. Train yourself to be a good listener. Practice the habit of structuring your thoughts and presenting them logically. Writing essays on a variety of topics can help in developing thought process.

Points to remember :

- Speak smoothly
- Talk sensibly
- Listen well
- Have a two-way communication
- Have patience and let the other member show his viewpoints to the group

### **Myth No. 3 - Showing Oratory Skills / Public speaking skills**

The third myth is that group discussion primarily evaluates the oratory skills / Public speaking skills of candidates.

#### **NOT TRUE**

Just because of this belief, some candidates even launch into mini speeches during the group discussion to impress panel members. While the invigilators are looking out for good articulation from aspirants, they are not actually looking forward to their public speaking skills. To understand how to do well in a group discussion, one should keep in mind the basic purpose of the group discussion in the evaluation process.

Through a group discussion, panelists assess if a candidate can

- really think on his/her own,
- present his views on an issue in a short time,
- express himself/ herself clearly, and
- argue his/ her points persuasively in a group.

The evaluators will also try and observe how each of the candidates behaves in a group - whether the person is willing to listen and take into account others' view points, his/her body language, and whether the candidate is reasonably considerate and tolerant of others.

### **Myth No. 4. - Dominate other group members**

Many candidates think that dominating other group members will attract more attention from the Group Discussion panelists.

#### **NOT TRUE**

Actually the reality is the candidates who work with the group and accommodate diverse viewpoints and assert themselves score high.

Never forget the Bank Organization is expecting you to be a part of a team and also manage it if needed. GD is probably the ideal situation to judge your team skills and how well you work with the team. Do you listen to others? If you are a good team player, the other members of the team will be able to connect with you. This will be evident to a moderator even amidst the chaos that marks a typical GD.

### **Myth No.5 - Candidates who scored less in academics will score less in Group Discussion**

#### **NOT TRUE**

Many examples are there which proved that low or average scoring candidates have scored much better than high scoring candidates. This all depends upon the candidates analytical and communicational skills.

The Banking organization is looking for candidates who have

- analytical skills,
- team skills,
- communication skills,
- decision-making skills and
- ability to handle stress.

Students should learn to apply their analytical skills to solve problems and make logical arguments. Start thinking of getting to the how and why of issues.

Generally in a GD, the students participating demonstrate their characters as Scientist, Salesmen or Tailor. Scientist is the one who has new ideas and tries to say it but is not able to present it properly across table. Salesmen are the one who take the ideas of scientist and present it as their own. Their presentation of content is good but knowledge is not that good. Tailors are the one who have no clue about the topic but they speak about it by combining 2-3 people's ideas.

#### **4. IMPORTANT POINTS TO A SUCCESSFUL GROUP DISCUSSION :**

- 1) **Be updated with the current affairs and general awareness:** Make a habit of reading newspapers like Times of India (TOI) and Economic Times and general interest and business magazines like Frontline, Outlook and Business India. Brushing up with the current affairs is a must. Being aware of general awareness, current issues, current happenings and latest news is an essential part of a personality of a person who aspires to become a bank manager. Only when he is well informed about the current facts he is able to take correct decisions. At the same time being aware of only current happenings is not enough. One must also form opinions on those happenings and issues that arise. Think about what you feel about different issues, say, terrorism. Write down your thoughts. Ask yourself why you feel that way, what are the premises underlying your thoughts and beliefs. Also question whether your point of view is based on facts, or on opinions only.
- 2) **Read Widely:** Being an avid reader will help you in group discussions. Reading not just adds to your knowledge database, but enhances your vocabulary skills as well. Choose magazines which 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. Make a habit of reading voraciously on every subject. This will keep you ready for any topic for a discussion in GD. Your knowledge is your most important weapon in a discussion. 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.
- 3) **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. As you speak make sure that you do not talk at the top of your voice. You should be audible and clear. Remember that you are participating in a discussion which is different from a speech given out by the leaders in their rallies. Even if you disagree with the other's point of view, disagree politely. Use phrases like, 'I would like to disagree a bit here' or 'I am sorry, but I think I have a slightly different point of view'.
- 4) **Be precise:** Abstain from using irrelevant information and data from your talks during a GD. Speak precisely so that others also get a chance to put across their point of view. You have to put your point precise and to the point with a clear indication of your viewpoint which is clearly understandable by the group members and the GD Panelists as well.
- 5) **Acquire knowledge:** Stay attentive to the ideas put forward by other group members and keep writing the important points discussed during the GD. As you get a chance to speak, put forward your views about the topic. You can also agree or disagree with other's ideas, based on your knowledge about the subject. This will help you not to

miss the important points when its your turn to put forth your viewpoint to the group members or the GD Panelists.

- 6) **Support the right:** Don't take a stand on either extreme when the discussion begins. It might happen that you get convinced by other's argument and want to change your stand. Respect another's opinion as well and agree with what is right, even if you initially had a different opinion. This brings out the optimistic part of your personality and help you fetch good score.
- 7) **Speak confidently:** Maintain your confidence as you speak. Establish eye contact with other members of the group and do not let your voice tremble. The pitch of the voice should be well maintained and the body language has to be controlled while speaking to the group members in a discussion. Try to moderate the discussion if any arguments arise. This is necessary to ensure that the group doesn't wander from the goal of the GD.
- 8) **Positive body language:** Your body language should not demonstrate dominance or low self confidence. Show your interest in the discussion through your gestures like bending forward a bit, nodding your head. A firm and confident body language shows ones real personality and in a group discussion positive and confident body language plays a very crucial role.
- 9) **Opinion Formation:** The process of opinion formation is incomplete without getting inputs from others. Get into the habit of discussing issues with your friends and family. Hear multiple points of view. Listen, question and argue. Express your opinion. If you are proven wrong, accept it with good grace. Modify your opinions as you go along. This will help you clear your own thought process plus it will get you into the habit of discussion.
- 10) **Welcome others views :** While discussing, learn to check your temper. Maybe you'll find others holding view which are abhorrent to you. But remember that they have a right to their opinions. Everyone does. Learn to respect their points of views even if you don't accept them. It shows maturity on your part. This will be a good training for controlling your emotions, which is of utmost importance in a GD.
- 11) **Involve other members :** Try and mobilize other people who are interested in GDs and simulate GDs. Get someone who has been through GDs before to observe it and give you feedback on your performance. It is better if the group consists of people who you don't know too well.
- 12) **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. 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.

- 13) 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.
- 14) 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.
- 15) Try to end and summarize the Group Discussion in the end:** 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.



## 5. SUMMARY

### Group Discussion – Process and Preparation

#### Prerequisites of a Group Discussion

- ✓ Topics given by panelists
- ✓ Planning and preparation
- ✓ Knowledge with self-confidence
- ✓ Communication skills/ power of speech
- ✓ Presentation
- ✓ Body Language and personal appearance
- ✓ Being calm and cool
- ✓ Listening skills
- ✓ Co-operation.

#### The skills on which you will be judged are:

- Communication with others.
- Your behavior and interaction with group.
- Open mindedness.
- Your listening skill.
- How you put forward your views.
- Your leadership and decision making skills.
- Your analysis skill and subject knowledge.
- Problem solving and critical thinking skill.
- Your attitude and confidence.

#### Salient features

- ✓ Topic may be given to judge your public speaking talent.
- ✓ Discussion revolves around a specific subject.
- ✓ The examiner does not interfere once he announced the topic.
- ✓ Maintain cordiality and for free expression of thought and opinion.

#### Benefits in Group discussion

1. Shed your shyness, nervousness & inhibition.
2. Stimulation of thinking in a new way.
3. Expansion of knowledge
4. Understanding of your strength and weakness.
5. Your true personality is revealed and qualities of leadership crystallize.

**Evaluation parameters**

- ✓ Language skills
- ✓ Academic knowledge
- ✓ Leadership skills
- ✓ People handling skills
- ✓ Team work
- ✓ General knowledge.

**Three requisites for group discussion**

- ✓ Extensive knowledge base related to state, country and globe.
- ✓ Areas are politics, sports, science & trade commerce, Industry and Technology, MNC, etc.
- ✓ Analyze the social, economical issues logistically .



## 6. DO`S IN GROUP DISCUSSION

- ✓ Appropriate to the issue .
- ✓ Make original points & support them by substantial reasoning .
- ✓ Listen to the other participants actively &carefully.
- ✓ Whatever you say must be with a logical flow,& validate it with an example as far as possible.
- ✓ Make only accurate statements.
- ✓ SPEAK - very important
- ✓ Be a good listener
- ✓ Address the whole group, not a single person
- ✓ Initiate & Begin - BUT only if u have a good point
- ✓ Utilize the lull - speak when others r quite
- ✓ Be Involved
- ✓ BE Coherent
- ✓ Modulate the volume, pitch and tone.
- ✓ Be considerate to the feelings of the others.
- ✓ Try to get your turn.
- ✓ Be an active and dynamic participant by listening.
- ✓ Talk with confidence and self-assurance.

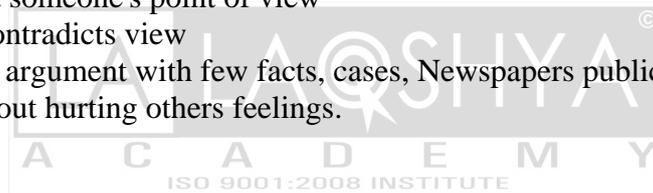


## 7. DON'TS DURING GROUP DISCUSSION

- ✓ Being shy or nervous
- ✓ Interrupting another participant before his arguments are over
- ✓ Speak in favour example: Establish your position and stand by it
- ✓ Changed opinions
- ✓ Don't make fun of any participant even if his arguments are funny.
- ✓ Don't be INERT
- ✓ Don't be too AGGRESSIVE either
- ✓ Avoid one to one discussions
- ✓ Don't Rush
- ✓ Avoid Hindi
- ✓ Don't Interrupt Abruptly
- ✓ Don't engage yourself sub-group conversation.
- ✓ Don't repeat and use irrelevant materials.
- ✓ Addressing yourself to the examiner.

### Suggestions

- ✓ Never try to bluff.
- ✓ Practice group discussion with friends on different subjects.
- ✓ Remember! Speech is a powerful weapon.
- ✓ To contradict someone's point of view
- ✓ Accept the contradicts view
- ✓ Express your argument with few facts, cases, Newspapers publications etc.
- ✓ Express without hurting others feelings.



## 8. GROUP DISCUSSION TYPES

1. Factual: Disinvestment, India's GDP, Software scenario
2. Controversial: Foreign Indian, Prime Minister ?
3. Abstract: Indian Society, now and then ?
4. Case Study: 1> a situation is given, we have to find a solution to the problem existing  
2> order things according to priority and give reasons
5. Group Task: Important for EVERY ORGANIZATION

**Different parts of a GD:** - (considering a 15 minutes GD).

1. Chaos period. (1-2 minutes).
2. Generating ideas. (7-8 minutes).
3. Building on ideas. (5-6 minutes).
4. Conclusion. (rarely comes; ½ - 1 minutes)

### **GD - Points Marked on:**

1. Audibility: Communication skills, Sell your self
2. Analysis: supported by facts & examples
3. Content: Obtain by good reading
4. Team Work
5. Demeanour: Body Language counts, For e.g. Don't sit cross-legged



## **9. GENERAL TOPICS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION**

**Topic 1** - FDI in Retail.

**Topic 2** - Role of FII's in Capital Market.

**Topic 3** - Present state of Indian cricket team

**Topic 4** - How to deal with advance terrorism?

**Topic 5** - Is peace and violence outdated concept

**Topic 6** - Should we pursue our policy of dialogue with Pakistan

**Topic 7** - India should go for the presidential form of democracy

**Topic 8** - Corruption is a necessary evil for success in any sphere

**Topic 9** - Is male or female good in all aspect?

**Topic 10** - Education is only business in these days

**Topic 11** - Love marriage v/s arranged marriage

**Topic 12** - Marriage v/s live in relationship

**Topic 13** - Are all women safe in India?

**Topic 14** - Science is a boon or a curse?

**Topic 15** - Bollywood v/s Hollywood

**Topic 16** - Should a child leave his/her house after 16?

**Topic 17** - Professional Degrees vs. Technical trainings

**Topic 18** - Gender Difference in leadership style and its Impact

**Topic 19** - How first time voter has changed the current scenario of Indian politics.

**Topic 20** - Impact of Social Media in electing current Government.

**Topic 21** - Education is fundamental right of every child. A historical step has taken by commencing Right to Education act(RTEA) .How much potential this act has and its contribution in shaping progressive India.

**Topic 22** - Importance of SAARC Countries on Indian economy

**Topic 23** - Importance of retail investor /domestic investment in Indian stock market.

**Topic 24** - Retail Investors could be the Game changers-Indian Capital market.

**Topic 25** - Pros and Cons of using marketing strategies in Politics.

**Topic 26** - In India there is no strong regulations/standards/implementation over advertising as compare to strict regulations in other developed countries. Agree or disagree, give your comments.

**Topic 27** - Effectiveness of National Revenue distribution system

**Topic 28** - Value of Indian ethos and ethics in business culture and its success.

**Topic 29** - As earning capacity increasing, life style diseases like Diabetes, Hypertension, and Obesity also increasing in India. Is India ignoring the importance of health, How would you relate its impact with national development in mid-term.

**Topic 30** - Co-education is good or bad

**Topic 31** - Inflation

**Topic 32** - Politician ruler

**Topic 33** - Railway system

**Topic 34** - Girls education

**Topic 35** - Should the rapist be hanged or sentenced to life?

**Topic 36** - Should the pocket money be given to children?

**Topic 37** - Whether Walmart should be allowed in India?

**Topic 38** - Growing population is curse or blessing

**Topic 39** - Employment & unemployment

**Topic 40** - How to save wildlife?

**Topic 41** - Stop deforestation

**Topic 42** - Is metro rails better than local train

**Topic 43** - Difference b/n city life & village life



- Topic 44** - Contribution of agriculture
- Topic 45** - Whether job is better than business
- Topic 46** - Growing competition for government jobs
- Topic 47** - Should some reservations be given to the people who are below poverty line
- Topic 48** - Is women reservation important or not?
- Topic 49** - Should school going children be given mobile phones?
- Topic 50** - Position of women in India compared to other nations
- Topic 51** - How to prevent environment
- Topic 52** - Is China better than India in software
- Topic 53** - Government contribution to IT
- Topic 54** - Will punch lines rule the advertise?
- Topic 55** - Is China threat to Indian industry
- Topic 56** - India or Western countries, which is land of opportunity?
- Topic 57** - Water resources
- Topic 58** - Balance b/n professionalism & family
- Topic 59** - Effect of Cinema on youth
- Topic 60** - Education in India compared to other nation
- Topic 61** - Is it necessary to ban coco cola in India
- Topic 62** - Are studies more beneficial in India or in abroad
- Topic 63** - Environment whose responsibility?
- Topic 64** - Government jobs v/s private jobs
- Topic 65** - Books v/s computer
- Topic 66** - Is television an 'idiot box' or not?
- Topic 67** - Working wife v/s house wife

