

Listening and speaking skills

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1. Introduction

Listening is an important component in the process of communication. In oral communication it is essential that the receiver must listen to what the speaker communicates and if the message is not properly listened to, it is natural that the meaning cannot be understood or it may be bewildering or misleading and it would definitely get lost. In fact, listening is an art which is important for both, the person and the organization. The correct meaning of a message can only be obtained if and when the listener absorbs the message as it is communicated by the speaker and it is possible only when the listener listens carefully to the speaker. Listening involves hearing, making someone understand and its remembering. As per different resources, to listen with an objective is a mixed process which includes listening, explaining or expounding, evaluating, concentrating and remembering etc. The listening process begins with the listening of message, understanding and evaluating and then responding to it.

2. Objectives

The objective of this lesson is to acquaint the students with the listening and speaking skills. It also prepares the students for the semester ending examinations by providing the questions and answers at the end of the lesson.

3. Listening and Speaking skills

Speaking Skill: It is a common desire for all of us to speak a second language well. To do this we need to know what skills are required to become a good speaker. Following are the things required for effective speaking skills

- i. **FLUENCY-** Fluency is about how comfortable and confident you are in speaking English. If you can speak for an extended period of time, that is an indicator of strong fluency. It is also about showing a clear connection between each point that you are trying to make. This skill means that the listener can follow what you are saying and do not get lost.

- ii. **VOCABULARY-** Being a good speaker means constantly growing your vocabulary. The more interesting words you know, the stronger your speaking skills. The best way to grow your vocabulary is to read in English and make a note of any new words that you encounter in a vocabulary notebook.
- iii. **GRAMMAR-** Grammar does matter and the fewer mistakes you make, the better your speaking skill will be. It is a good idea to make sure that you have mastered the major tenses.
- iv. **PRONUNCIATION-** Pronunciation is a complex area, with a lot of sub skills that can be practiced. The basic rule of thumb is that an average speaker can speak and be understood. A skilled speaker can use the sub skills of pronunciation to emphasize and make the communicative effect of their speech more impactful. The sub skills of pronunciation include: word and sentence stress, intonation, rhythm and the use of the individual sounds of a language. A good way to practice your pronunciation is to copy. Simply listen to how someone with good pronunciation speaks, and try to imitate them as closely as possible.

Listening Skill: One of the weaknesses of most human beings is that we love to listen to our own voice rather than listen to others. Listening is as important as speaking in a GD, unless you listen, you cannot contribute to the stated purpose of communication. It is extremely important to listen very carefully, only then you will be able to pick up the thread of discussion and continue. Only active participation as a listener in a group makes a person a good leader. A leader is identified by the panel.

Types of Listening:

- i. **Active Listening:** It is a listening which is required to listen to a message and react to it immediately. In this process, the listener accepts the message with interest and desire.
- ii. **Content Listening:** The purpose of content listening is to understand the message completely and to retain it in a safe custody. Thus, the listener has to concentrate on the main points of the message
- iii. **Emphatic Listening:** When a listener, in order to grasp the message, takes up physical, emotional and psychological exercise, his purpose lies in the evaluation of a message.
- iv. **Critical listening:** The audience makes varied appraisal of the message with an intent to find faults or errors in it. It includes credibility of validity, validity of facts and logic in argumentation.
- v. **Attentive Listening:** As the term implies, the audience listens to the speaker with rapt attention, focusing the mind on the message.

- vi. **Selective Listening:** According to this, the audience hears only important points and leaves the unimportant unheeded. The audience is very selective in this regard as what to choose and what to reject.
- vii. **Passive Listening:** when an audience takes no interest in the message, it is called an ineffective listening.

4. Developing effective listening skills

Effective communication is about more than just exchanging information. It's about understanding the emotion and intentions behind the information. As well as being able to clearly convey a message, you need to also listen in a way that gains the full meaning of what's being said and makes the other person feel heard and understood. Effective communication sounds like it should be instinctive. But all too often, when we try to communicate with others something goes astray. We say one thing, the other person hears something else, and misunderstandings, frustration, and conflicts ensue. This can cause problems in your home, school, and work relationships. For many of us, communicating more clearly and effectively requires learning some important skills. Whether you're trying to improve communication with your spouse, kids, boss, or co-workers, learning these skills can deepen your connections to others, build greater trust and respect, and improve teamwork, problem solving, and your overall social and emotional health.

Common barriers to effective communication include:

- i. **Stress and out-of-control emotion.** When you're stressed or emotionally overwhelmed, you're more likely to misread other people, send confusing or off-putting nonverbal signals, and lapse into unhealthy knee-jerk patterns of behaviour. To avoid conflict and misunderstandings, you can learn how to quickly calm down before continuing a conversation.
- ii. **Lack of focus.** You can't communicate effectively when you're multitasking. If you're checking your phone, planning what you're going to say next, or daydreaming, you're almost certain to miss nonverbal cues in the conversation. To communicate effectively, you need to avoid distractions and stay focused.
- iii. **Inconsistent body language.** Nonverbal communication should reinforce what is being said, not contradict it. If you say one thing, but your body language says something else, your listener will likely feel that you're being dishonest. For example, you can't say "yes" while shaking your head no.
- iv. **Negative body language.** If you disagree with or dislike what's being said, you might use negative body language to rebuff the other person's message, such as crossing your arms, avoiding eye contact, or tapping your feet. You don't have to agree with, or even like what's being said, but to communicate effectively and not put the other person on the defensive, it's important to avoid sending negative signals.

5. Monologue, Dialogue, Group Discussion

A **monologue** is a speech in which a character expresses his thoughts and feelings to the other characters or the audience. Monologues are used in both dramatic works (dramas, films, etc.) as well as in non-dramatic work such as poetry. The main purpose of a monologue is to reveal the inner workings of a character and understand his or her motivations which might otherwise remain mostly internal. There are two types of monologues named interior monologue and dramatic monologue. An interior monologue involves the character expressing his thoughts to the audience whereas a dramatic monologue involves the character expressing his thoughts to other characters.

In literature, **dialogue** refers to a conversation between two or more characters. The term dialogue is derived from the Greek *dialogos* meaning conversation. Dialogue plays a very important role in all fiction. Many literary forms such as novels, short stories, dramas, and films use dialogue as a major technique. In fact, dramas are entirely made of dialogues. It is the dialogues that portray the way characters interact, make decisions and change. They reveal the thoughts and ideas of the characters which cannot be understood otherwise. Dialogues help the readers to understand the personalities of the characters create conflict in the plot and, move the storyline forward. Let us now see how some famous writers have used dialogues in their work.

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	<p>Pedica.com</p>

Monologues and Dialogue

- Monologues and dialogue reveal open actions and thoughts that are witnessed by all.
- Dialogue is a larger category, covering almost all kinds of interactions among characters. It may even contain monologues as part of a scene. Most people are familiar with dialogue as the typical construction of a play.
- Monologues and dialogue CAN be heard by the other characters onstage. Monologues and dialogue are spoken directly to other characters onstage.
- These two appear often in contemporary and modern plays. They are very familiar to most people who watch plays and movies.

Soliloquy: A soliloquy is a dramatic device which allows a character to reveal his thoughts to the audience but not to the other characters in the play. In Shakespeare's time soliloquies were widely used. A soliloquy is a longer speech that a character gives onstage that no one else can hear. No one except the audience, that is. Soliloquies may be spoken directly to the audience. When an actor was alone on the stage he could speak aloud his thoughts, thus giving the audience clear insights into his character and his intentions. Most often, a soliloquy is a character speaking to himself or herself. Even if other people are present, they cannot hear what the character says. Only the audience and that character can "hear" the words. In Shakespeare's tragedies, the soliloquy always reveals something about a conflict the character is facing. Usually this is a moral conflict, and it most often shows a darker side of the character.

Soliloquy vs. Monologue

A Soliloquy is Private- The soliloquy usually reveals moral struggles or internal secrets. A soliloquy is private, personal, and often very emotional. In contrast with the monologue, a soliloquy is not meant to communicate with other characters. It is entirely focused on internal struggle. A soliloquy is a longer speech, spoken to audience or to character's private self, meant to be personal- other characters onstage cannot hear the internal thoughts expressed.

A Monologue is Not Private- The monologue usually reveals events or personal opinions. While monologues may be emotional, they are more focused on external factors. In contrast with the soliloquy, a monologue is intended to communicate directly with other characters onstage. A monologue is a longer speech, spoken to other characters, meant to be interactive- other characters onstage CAN hear and respond to the thoughts expressed.

Group discussion is an important activity in academic, business and administrative spheres. It is a systematic and purposeful interactive oral process. Here the exchange of ideas, thoughts and feelings take place through oral communication. The exchange of ideas takes place in a systematic and structured way. The participants sit facing each other almost in a semi-circle and express their views on the given topic/issue/problem. **Debate** is competitive in nature while group discussion is a co-operative group process. In a debate, a speaker can speak either 'for' the topic or 'against' the topic whereas in a GD, the speaker can express both. The final decision or result in a debate depends on voting while in a GD, the group reaches group consensus.

There are four major areas of evaluation in selection GDs: subject knowledge, oral communication skills, leadership skills and team management.

Subject Knowledge: Participants must possess a thorough understanding of the topic on which they are supposed to speak. You must prepare yourself to talk on a wide range of subjects. Be abreast of the current events, national and international affairs, burning social and economic topics, scientific and environmental issues, key newspapers' controversial topics and any experience that may be expected of an educated person. As a member of the group, you are expected to contribute substantially to the discussion. The originality of your ideas, your knowledge and initiative and your approach to the topic or case contribute to your success in the group discussion. The best way to equip yourself is to read daily newspapers, good magazines, national and international journals and also watch new bulletins and informative programmes on the television. Internet is the greatest boon which provides you with everything you are looking for. The World Wide Web is a vast database of current authentic materials that present information in multimedia form and reacts instantly to a user's input. The greater your knowledge of the subject, the more enthusiastic and confident you will be during the discussion. Once you have understood the topic or issue, you should be able to generate ideas as well as organize them so that you present it well. You will have the ability to analyse facts or information in a systematic way. A person putting forward new ideas that may work will be accepted as the natural leader of the group. The panel will observe the ideas put forward, their originality, the depth of analysis and their relevance to the topic. Problem solving skills are essential and do not hesitate to give solutions. Your approach to the case study will be observed keenly by the evaluators.

Oral Communication Skills: If subject knowledge is important, communication skills is more important as without expression, the knowledge is of no use. As the exchange of ideas in a group discussion takes place through speech, one of the pre-requisites of success in a GD is the ability to speak confidently and convincingly. Good communication skills include **active listening, clarity of thought and expression, apt language and proper nonverbal clues.**

Advantages of a GD: Ideas can be generated, shared and tried out, Groups provide a support and growth for any endeavour, Combine talents to provide innovative solutions.

Roles in a Structured GD: Initiator, Information seeker and giver , Procedure facilitator, Opinion seeker/giver, Clarifier, Summarizer , Social supporter , Harmonizer, Tension reliever , Energizer , Attacker and Dominator

Expectations of the Panel: You should have the following qualities- Team player, Reasoning, Leadership, Flexible, Assertiveness, Initiative, Creativity (out of the box thinking), Inspiring ability, Listening and Awareness

Phases in a GD: (i) Initiation/introduction (ii) The central group discussion (iii) Summarization/conclusion

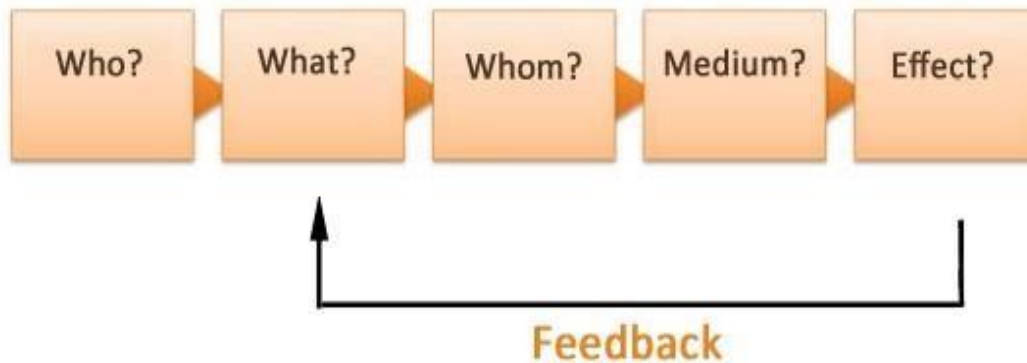
6. Interview, public Speech

PUBLIC SPEECH

Public speaking is the process and act of speaking or giving a lecture to a group of people in a structured, deliberate manner intended to inform, influence, or entertain a listening audience. Public speaking is commonly understood as face-to-face speaking between individuals and an audience for the purpose of communication. Public speaking has evolved from a skill reserved by a selected few to one of the most powerful marketing, educational and brand promotion tools in any business. It is safe to say that in the modern business world just about every well-paid position requires some form of public speaking, be it giving a group sales presentation, presenting your ideas to the board of directors, speaking to a committee or telling a group of potential clients about your company during a corporate event.

Most public speeches can be broken down into five basic elements, usually expressed as

“Who is saying What to Whom using what Medium with what Effects?”



CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD SPEECH

It is clear.

It is like an informal talk.

It is vivid and concrete.

It is brief.

It is interesting.

It is audience-oriented.

THREE STYLES OF SPEECH

The three most common styles of speeches that you encounter in today's business and social world are - impromptu, manuscript and extemporaneous. To become a great public speaker, you will have to learn and ace each one of them, as it will allow you to speak confidently and effectively in front of any number of listeners and in any given situation.

1. **Impromptu speech** Impromptu speech is prompted by the occasion rather than being planned in advance. While famous public speakers often joke that best impromptu speeches should be prepared weeks in advance, usually in real life we have very little or no time to prepare before we speak in front of the audience. Some examples of impromptu speech could be your boss asking you to bring the rest of your team up to date, or a group of friends urging you to say a few words at a non-profit event.
2. **Manuscript speech** This type of speech is written like a manuscript and is meant to be delivered word for word. Manuscript speeches are used on many political and social occasions, when every word carries a lot of weight and should not be misquoted. One of the most common examples of a manuscript speech is a political figure delivering a speech that has been written by another person
3. **Extemporaneous speech** Extemporaneous speech is the most commonly used type of speech that helps to establish emotional connection with the audience. It is built around key points, but the material can be presented freely, allowing the speaker to make changes in their speech based on the listeners' reaction.

Benefits of public speech:

Public speaking is listed as one of these core skills. This is not particularly surprising given that communication skills are critical for intellectual development, career trajectory, and civic engagement. Public speaking is universally applicable to all types of majors and occupations and is seen by U.S. employers as a critical employability skill for job seekers (Rockler-Gladen,2009; U.S. Department of Labor,2000).

No matter what your ambitions and interests are, developing speaking skills will benefit your personal, professional, and public life.

Personal

- People don't just give presentations on the job and in classes. At times we are called upon to give speeches in our personal lives. It may be for a special event, such as a toast at a wedding. We may be asked to give a eulogy at a funeral for a friend or loved one. As a part of volunteer work, one may have to introduce a guest speaker at an event or present or accept an award for service.
- Developing the skill to give these types of speeches can help us to fulfil essential roles in our family and community. Another great personal benefit of public speaking is that it builds self-confidence.

It's no surprise that speaking in public is scary, but by engaging in the activity you will build self-confidence through the experience.

- Action is a great restorer and builder of confidence. Inaction is not only the result, but the cause, of fear. Perhaps the action you take will be successful; perhaps different action or adjustments will have to follow. But any action is better than no action at all. ~ Norman Vincent Peale **Professional**
- TV announcers, teachers, lawyers, and entertainers must be able to speak well, but most other professions require or at the very least can benefit from the skills found in public speaking.
- It is believed 70% of jobs today involve some form of public speaking (Aras, 2012). With the recent economic shift from manufacturing to service careers, the ability to communicate with others has become crucial.
- Top CEOs advise that great leaders must be able to communicate ideas effectively, they must be able to persuade, build support, negotiate and speak effectively in public (Farrell, 2011).
- The chapters on "Informative Speaking" and "Persuasive Speaking" can help readers understand how to write presentations that enhance their leadership skills.
- But before you even start a career, you have to get a job. Effective speaking skills make you more attractive to employers, enhancing your chances of securing employment and later advancing within your career.
- Employers, career counsellors, and the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) all list good communication skills at the top of the list of qualities sought in potential employees.
- According to NACE's executive director, Marilyn Mackes, the Job Outlook 2013 Report found that employers are looking for people who can communicate effectively (Koncz & Allen, 2012).
- Monster.com advises, "articulating thoughts clearly and concisely will make a difference in both a job interview and subsequent job performance" (McKay, 2005).

Public

- Learning about public speaking will allow you to participate in democracy at its most basic level.
- Public speaking is important in creating and sustaining a society, which includes informed, active participants. Even if you do not plan to run for office, learning about public speaking helps you to listen more carefully to and critically evaluate other's speeches.
- Listening and critical thinking allow you to understand public dilemmas, form an opinion about them, and participate in resolving them.
- The progress of the past century involving segregation, women's rights and environmental protection is the result of people advancing new ideas and speaking out to others to persuade them to adopt changes.

INTERVIEW:

The word interview comes from Latin and middle French words meaning to “see between” or “see each other”. Generally, an interview means a private meeting between people when questions are asked and answered. The person who answers the questions of an interview is called the interviewee. The person who asks the questions of our interview is called an interviewer. It suggests a meeting between two persons for the purpose of getting a view of each other or for knowing each other. When we normally think of an interview, we think a setting in which an employer tries to size up an applicant for a job.

Types of interviews:

- 1. Panel interviews:** in panel interview each member of the panel is closely observing the interviewee. Hence, the interviewee’s body language and eye contact are especially important. The interviewee should give an impression of speaking to all the members of the panel, not just a single individual, by making eye contact with all the panel members.
- 2. Telephone interviews:** the interviewee should consider this a face to face interview and use proper modulation of voice to reflect his/her thoughts. The interviewee’s voice should be clear, steady, and audible.
- 3. Lunch/dinner interviews:** This type of interview is conducted in an informal environment, but still requires that the interviewee be careful about his/her body language and manners. The interviewee should never drink alcohol at an interview even if the interviewer does.
- 4. Preliminary interview:** as the preliminary interview is a first stage screening test the interviewee should pay full attention to it. This stage must be cleared before moving to the final interview. The interviewee’s communication skills express his or her confidence and ease.
- 5. Sequential interviews:** in this form of interview the interviewee has to report to several people successively. He or she should be very careful about his/her behavior, speech, and manners in each interview, as each interviewer is a prospective employer.
- 6. Skill based interview:** such interviews require the interviewee to demonstrate skills that are relevant to the jobs. For instance, someone seeking to be an actor or a sales person can be asked to act or read a script or demonstrate his or her pitch and skills of persuasive oral communication.
- 7. Academic interviews:** An academic interview is conducted in a question and answer format. The interviewee should be able to demonstrate attentive listening, eye contact, clarity of ideas and depth of knowledge.
- 8. Personality interviews:** this form of interview evaluates the interviewee as an individual in terms of his / her response to certain situations. The emphasis is not on the answers themselves, but on how they are delivered. The entire range of nonverbal communication skills are brought into play to demonstrate a well-rounded personality.

Strategies required for the success at interviews.

1. **Study the company** One of the best job interview strategies that most candidates ignore is to study the current events of the company. Knowing what the current events of the company is important so that you can ask pertinent questions. Doing so will show the interviewer that you have done your homework, and also have a genuine interest in the company. This strategy will definitely help your job interview.
2. **Know your resume** As a candidate, you should be very familiar with your resume. In any job interview, anything on your resume is at the interviewer's disposal. Implementing this job interview strategy will help build credibility with your interviewer. It is your responsibility to convince the interviewer that you can come in and do the job. Speaking intelligently about each of your previous positions will help do this, and is one of the best job interview strategies to follow
3. **Prepare an interview emergency kit** Many candidates don't properly prepare for a job interview. Getting together a "job interview kit" is a great job interview strategy to follow. Suggested items for the kit include extra copies of your resume, directions to the office, a bottle of water, eye drops, pens, and notepad. But you should only bring the extra copies of your resume into the office with you, preferably in a portfolio.
4. **Study the job description** After landing an interview, you need to study the job description to truly understand what the interviewer is looking for. If the description calls for attentiveness to detail, you will want to tailor the discussion accordingly. Knowing this, you can navigate the interview and discuss examples from previous jobs that will exemplify this trait. Do this for all significant traits or qualities that you identify in the job description. This is one of the best job interview strategies I have used, and know that it can bring you success.
5. **Build rapport** You know the saying, "There's never a second chance to make a first impression?" That holds very true in the case of job interviews. That is why building rapport is such an important job interview strategy. Shake hands, make eye contact, and smile. Put those three together when you first meet your interviewer and it will set a positive tone for the rest of the interview.
6. **Make eye contact**
 - Making positive eye contact is one of the best job interview strategies to follow.

Eye contact is one of the strongest forms of nonverbal communication. A person's qualities and personality can be detected simply based on eye contact. Making direct eye contact communicates confidence and high self-esteem, two key qualities employers look for in candidates.
 - Thus, it is very important that you make eye contact when you first meet interviewer and shake hands. And during the interview, it is important to make eye contact, not only when you talk, but also as you listen. Simply doing this job interview strategy will greatly help your chances of success in an interview.

7. **Body language** Just as eye contact speaks volumes about you, so does your body language. Proper body language conveys confidence and high self-esteem. During the interview, things like sitting up straight with your chest out and keeping a pleasant demeanour on your face will project confidence. The interviewer will be aware of this, and it will help you stand out in his/her mind.
8. **Display your skills with concrete examples** When it comes to discussing their skills, many candidates make the mistake of “telling” instead of “showing.” One of the best job interview strategies is to use concrete examples to demonstrate their skills to the interviewer. For example, if one of your skills is successfully handling multiple tasks at once, providing an example of how you do that will help paint a picture for the interviewer. It also gives the interviewer something to “hold on to” once the interview is over, and helps him/her remember you when it comes to decision time.
9. **Be yourself** A common mistake that many candidates make is not being themselves. Some feel that they need to fit a certain mould and act accordingly. This will only end up hurting both parties in the end when your “true” personality comes out. You will be surprised how easy it is to detect insincerity during an interview. Thus, it is important to be professional, but also maintain your true essence. When you do this, your sincerity and genuineness will be picked up by the interviewer. This is one of the best job interview strategies to implement, and will go a long way in determining your success.
10. **Follow up quickly** After the job interview, send a thank you note to the interview. These days, an email is fine, but traditionally a handwritten card is sent. Whatever method you choose, do it promptly after the interview. The correspondence should be sent the next day after the interview. Many hiring decisions are made quickly these days, so timeliness is very important. You now have 10 of the best job interview tactics to follow. There are many aspects of a successful job interview, but if you implement these 10 best job interview tactics listed above, your chances of success will skyrocket.

7. Important Questions and Answers

i. **What is the difference between Monologue and Dialogue**

Ans. Monologue refers to a speech delivered by a character in order to express his thoughts and feelings to other characters or the audience. Dialogue refers to a conversation between two or more characters in a work of literature. Monologue involves only one character. Dialogue involves two or more characters. Monologue is a speech given by a character. Dialogue is a conversation between characters. Monologues are less commonly used than dialogues. Dialogues are more commonly used than monologues.

ii. **Why is a group discussion an important activity at college level?**

Ans. As a student, it helps you to train yourself to discuss and argue about the topic given, it helps you to express your views on serious subjects and in formal situations. It improves your thinking, listening and speaking skills. It also promotes your confidence level. It is an effective tool in problem solving, decision making and personality assessment. GD skills may ensure academic success, popularity and good admission or job offer. Thus, it is important to be able to take part in a GD effectively and confidently. Participants should know how to speak with confidence, how to exhibit leadership skills and how to make the group achieve the goals. The panel which normally comprises of the technical and HR (Human Resource) experts of the company will observe and evaluate the members of the team. The rules of the GD – the time limit, panel's expectations etc are explained after the initial introduction by the panel, soon after the topic or case to be discussed is given to the group members. The panel does not interfere during the discussion, it only observes. The panel at its discretion may provide some time to think over the topic or may ask them to start immediately. Each candidate is supposed to express their opinion either supporting or against the topic. The discussion carries on till the panel signals termination. It is left to the discretion of the panel to extend or cut short the given time. The objective of a selection in GD is mainly to check your team playing skills. You have to understand the other persons' point of view, while making your point and ensure that your team as a whole reaches a solution or agreement that is both feasible and accepted by all team members.

iii. What are the things to do in a Group Discussion?

Ans. Followings are the things which should be kept in mind in a GD:

- i Speaking is important; do not sit silently. Speak freely.
- ii Do not monopolize the conversation or talk too much.
- iii Give everyone a chance to speak.
- iv Maintain eye contact with everyone in the group.
- v Show active listening skills.
- vi Do not interrupt anyone while they are speaking.
- vii Keep the topic on track and don't be irrelevant.
- viii Encourage someone who is silent to talk.
- ix Do not argue with anyone.
- x Do not debate with anyone, while the group looks on.
- xi Do not repeat what has been said; be attentive; try to develop on ideas expressed or give out new ideas.
- xii Clarify your doubts and then proceed.
- xiii Be brief.
- xiv Do not commit grammatical errors while talking.

