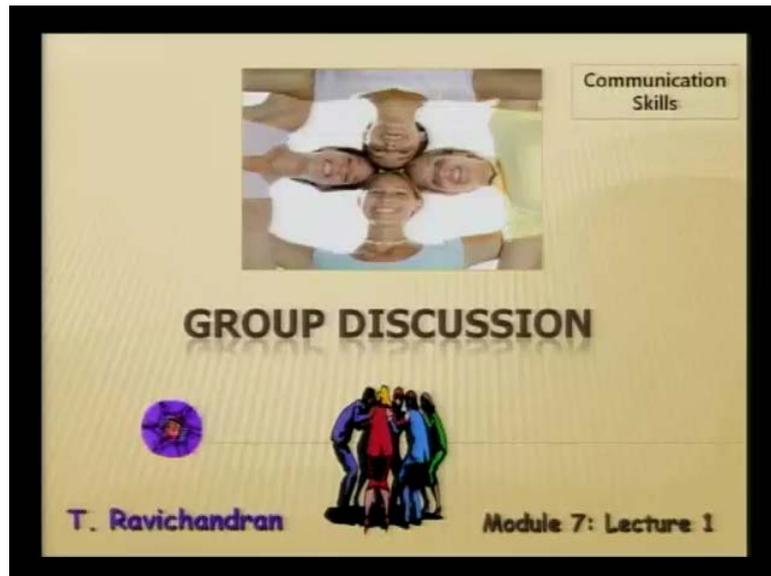**Communication Skills**
**Prof. T. Ravichandran**
**Department of Humanities and Social Sciences**
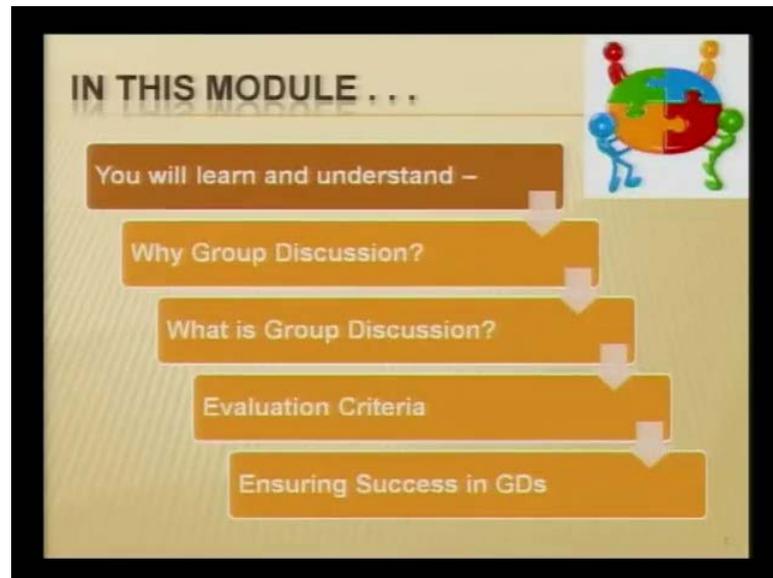**Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur**

**Lecture - 19**

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Hello and welcome to NPTEL's course on communication skills. We are now on module 7 and lecture 1. This is on group discussion. This is a very interesting topic. More than interesting, I should say that it is very relevant and professionally useful also.

In this module, you will learn and understand why group discussion. Now, why should you participate in a group discussion? Why should you at all know something about group discussion? And then in order to know why you should also know what is group discussion? How do we define it? How do we describe it? Is there a structure of group discussion? Can you really understand the structure? If you know the structure, does it have some components?

So, all these will contribute to what is a group discussion and then we will also discuss about some evaluation criteria. What are the norms by which a candidate is getting selected or rejected in a group discussion; you will all agree that even sometimes a 10 pointer somebody who is very excellent in academic credentials gets rejected in group discussion, what could be the reasons? What are the criteria that the examiners or the employers are actually looking for? What are the norms under which the panel sometimes hidden is actually using to assist the candidate?

Now, these norms are the ones we will discuss under evaluation criteria and then overall I would also like to discuss something about ensuring success in group discussions. Is there a sure way to ensure success, I would say that at least if you are able to follow some of the tips and suggestions which I am going to give under ensuring success, at

least 99 percent I can assure that you will be through. If you are not selected as the top ranker at least I can ensure that you will be through the GD part and then you will at least seek the next part that is the interview part. Now, with this brief introduction as what you are going to learn from this module let us start with the first topic why group discussion.

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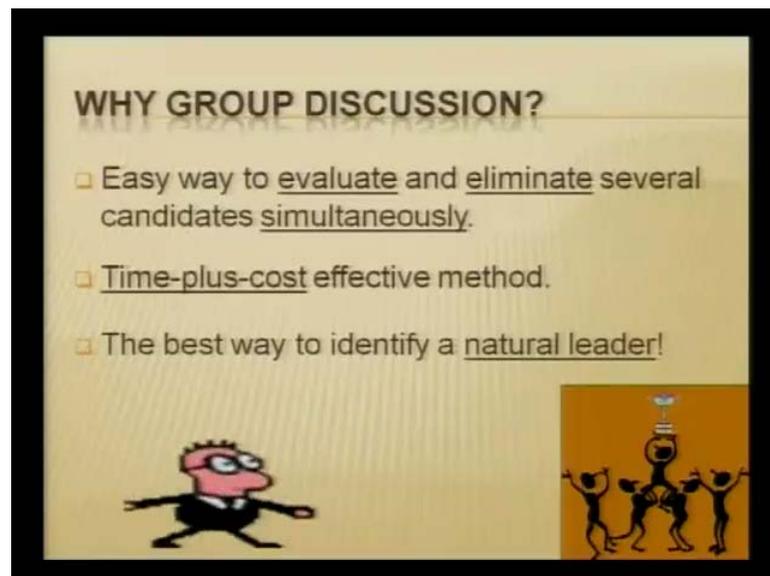


Now, before I actually go to why group discussion, think of the why of this why. Why did I put this question here? If you understand today whether a student wants to apply for higher education let us say a B Tech student is interested in appearing for MBA entrance in reputed institutions like IIMs or even in any other management institution you know that group discussion has become a very integral part of assessment, equal weightage is given to group discussion. I would rather say that sometimes more weightage is given to group discussion because the candidates are getting eliminated even before attending the interview.

So, in that regard even more weightage is given to group discussion by some of the institutions and the employers. Apart from going for higher education there are also would be employees, prospective candidates looking for lucrative jobs or at least good jobs. Now, today if you are going for a competitive environment whether it is private sector or public sector again in a job environment first they want the candidates to

undergo group discussion.

If it is a multinational corporation most of the times group discussion is used for so many other things other than even just selecting or eliminating a candidate. They also use the discussion for assessing some of the most pertinent personality traits which are very relevant for their organization. Now, having said this that group discussion is important for a candidate, who wants to go for higher studies such as management studies or a prospective candidate, who is interested in going for a job, just a job or for a promotion for a lucrative job, for a better job; in all these cases group, group discussion has become very mandatory. Now, once I said that this is why you need to know, why you should attend, why you should participate, why you should know more about group discussion?

Now, first of all, you understand that it is a very easy way to evaluate and eliminate several candidates simultaneously. What do I mean by this? Now, if I have to conduct a written test which of course, people do that. Now, in conducting the written test a question paper has to be set. So, many people such as an expert panel has to be constituted for this. They have to apply their mind, they have to think, they have to think that they do not repeat the questions, they have to maintain confidentiality and multiple papers are to be set and on the day of the exam one will be selected and then the written test is conducted let us say for about 50,000 candidates.

Now, again the paper has to be corrected, evaluated and then certain criteria should be used for short listing. The examiner should agree with those criteria. Now, apart from this look at some common entrance examinations. See, how many people travel all over the country to reach the exam venue and then sit in that stipulated time period and then give the paper. Now, if you look at group discussion what happens is you do not have to do lot of prior work, hardly the examiner thinks of a topic even in some of the professional environment, even that topic is left to the candidates. You will be surprised to know that in some cases they do not even tell the topic, they say that you are given certain stipulated amount of time and in the first five minutes you have to actually think about the topic.

So, they will all arrive at a consensus about the topic in the first five minutes. Once, the

topic is decided than actually the group discussion proceeds. In that sense even the examiners, the judges; the actual employers need not even think about the topic. This means there is almost no preparation or very less preparation compared to any other method of selecting or eliminating a candidate. Now, this is quite easy for the examiners, the employers to evaluate. Now, when I say evaluate it is not just thinking of selecting or rejecting, but also applying certain criteria which we are going to discuss in the coming slides.

But the criteria will also put some values, some of the values that the company has been nurturing, upholding may be for decades, they would like to see whether those values are overtly seen or at least covertly felt in some of the candidates. So, the evaluation in terms of values, in terms of certain personality traits, in terms of knowledge that the company is looking for, so that will be done in the group discussion. Apart from evaluation the second part of GD is in the evaluation either the candidate is selected or the candidate is rejected, the candidate is eliminated.

So, it is very, very easy to eliminate candidates in GD not only just to eliminate, I say to eliminate several candidates simultaneously at the same time. Assume a situation 5,000 candidates out of 50,000 candidates who wrote their written exam were selected and called for the group discussion. Now, out of this 5,000 candidates, 50 candidates in a big hall and out of this 50 candidates you can just give one topic just to eliminate let us say about 20 candidates. Now, the first way of eliminating is just identifying those who are not able to speak within those 20 minutes, those who are not able to even show any kind of initiative in that 20 minutes and very easily about 20 to 25 candidates can be just removed and the next 30 give another 20 minutes, another topic out of which you can again easily eliminate about 20 candidates and then come to the number 10.

Now, out of 10 now a tough topic is given. The judges or the panelist rigorously look for the most important personality traits, the essential components that they are looking for and then they are quite careful with those 10 candidates in selecting may be just 1 candidate, 2 candidate, 3 candidate depending upon the need. Now, that is what I said it is easy to evaluate and eliminate several candidates, simultaneously at the same time, out of 5,000 candidates may be in about 3 hours if you can run simultaneous and parallel

sessions at the end of the day or even by afternoon if you start in the morning, we can just shortlist about 500 candidates and the 500 candidates can be called for the next day and out of 500 it is very easy to take 50 candidates. Even if you just want 10 candidates it is also easy to do.

So, the next point about why should we have group discussion follows this automatically. Group discussion is time efficient plus cost efficient. Time efficient it saves so much time for the examiners as I said they do not have to plan anything, they do not have to prepare anything, they do not have to print, photocopy, maintain confidentiality, they do not have to undergo all these things as they would do in a normal examination pattern. All they do have to do is just be present and most of the times they are present behind a screen that is actually a sort of invisible screen. The examiners are not seen whereas the candidates are given the illusion that they are in a room where nobody is observing, but they may be observed by a hidden camera.

Now, when it is observed by a hidden camera again the examiners need not be even present there. They can just tell so and so to get it recorded and even they can watch it at their leisure. Now, it is time efficient, even if the examiners flight is canceled, even if the examiner is not able to come in time the examiner can come at his own disposal and still look at the video and then watch it.

Nowadays technology has so advanced that even the video can be send to the computer or to the mobile of the examiner and the information can be sought even just by being online. That is why it is time efficient. It is also cost effective because instead of employing somebody to assess somebody individually here you are able to assess so many candidates simultaneously at the same time and sometimes as I said if you can make it even online the travel time is also saved plus the cost involved in travel is also saved.

So, it is a time plus cost effective method and then most important of all the first two points that I was telling you is actually from the employer side. The examiner side where it is time efficient, cost efficient, and then where it is easy for them to evaluate a candidate or eliminate a candidate. But the one that is important from both the candidates

as well as the employer side is the fact that in a group discussion it is used as perhaps the best possible way to identify a natural leader.

Now, what do I mean by this? I am not just saying leader, I am just saying a natural leader. A natural leader is somebody who will germinate, who will generate his initiative in a very chaotic environment, in a very natural environment otherwise where no artificiality, no dramatics is there. Take a simple example for instance; imagine you are old high school days when sometimes students go on strike. So, strike for sometimes some silly reason like the food is not good, suddenly there is strike in the mess. There are students who have thrown stones on the tube lights, lights have broken, they have thrown the vessels and then all the things have happened and suddenly the headmaster of the school has called for a meeting. In fact they wanted the attention of the headmaster, they wanted to bring it to his notice, suddenly they he has called it.

Now, there are about let us say 3000 students in the school and all the 3000 students have assembled and the headmaster is just standing before them. And then now he says I understand that there is a problem in the mess and do all of you think that it needs some rectification and we need a discussion. Now, all the 3,000 students say unanimously yes and do you want to talk to me, all of them say yes. Now, the headmaster says you know that I cannot talk to all the 3,000 of you. Can I just have 5 students who will represent you and to whom I will actually discuss and sort out this issue and suggest all remedial measures and I will accept their views also. I am open to their views, but I want just 5 representatives.

Now, out of 3000 they do not randomly pick some 5. Somebody says oh you picked that guy, why? You know he is very good in his communication skills and somebody says no this guy, why do you think he is good? No, he does not speak so well, but then he can logically argue. Now, what about that one? Yes, he appears to be quite passive, but then he is a very good listener. So, he will be able to respond to some suggestions and he will be able to initiate also sometimes the discussion. Now, what about this guy? Now, this guy is sometimes if required can be very aggressive, he can be very persuasive. So, you select this guy also.

Now, what about this he is very good in coordinating the whole team, take this guy also. Now, if you I am saying some of the norms of, some of the values that are used to assess a candidate also. But implicitly when out of 3,000 who are standing in a strike and only 5 students are to be selected the general values for which those students are being selected are the ones which are actually required for a natural leader.

Now, somebody who is able to initiate, somebody who is able to pioneer the task are the ones among this 3,000 all the students have realized these qualities and then they send them as representations. Now, it may be a different story, the head master if he is so strict and so unhappy and then if he played a double role, he would call those 5 students, he may accept all the views, he may even make modifications. But he may be very strict with the 5 students, he may even take some disciplinary action or he may suspend them. He may take some action that is a different thing, but the fact that these 5 students are selected by this 3,000 students is actually calling for some skills that these 5 students are having and then they have been nurturing very naturally which would not have come otherwise except for this chaotic situation.

So, how am I relating this to group discussion? In a group discussion again it is a kind of chaotic situation. Sometimes most of the management GD's are funnily called as fish market. Just like the way you go to a fish market you hear lot of noise, lot of commotion, people are negotiating arguing and then there are sellers, there are buyers. So, much of commotion and then you do not hear one voice clearly. Now, that is what people say happens in the typical management GD's. Now, even in that kind of fish market, chaotic situation if somebody is able to evolve as a natural leader that is what the employers are actually looking for, that is why group discussion is significant. Now, once you have understood why there is a need for group discussion it is imperative to know what is group discussion.
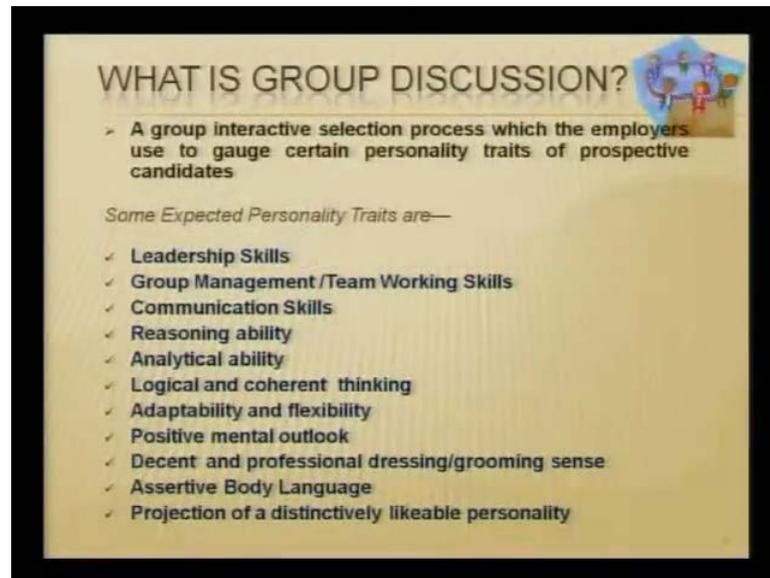
How do we define it? Having understood why you should go for a group discussion, now it is imperative to know what is group discussion. How do we define group discussion? How do we describe it? Now, as the name itself implies group discussion is a group interactive selection process. It is a interaction that is happening in a group which the employers use, sometimes the examiners use to gauge certain personality traits of prospective candidates. They gauge, they measure certain personality traits of prospective candidates, the would be employees in their company or the would be students in there institute.

So, these are the personality traits they are looking for in an interactive group selection process which we generally call it as group discussion. There is interaction, there is conversation among a group of people under a chosen topic either chosen by them or given by the examiners and then they are asked to respond to that within 15 to 20 minutes.

Now, sometimes it looks like anybody can qualify a group discussion if the person is given infinite time, but how somebody is actually qualifying is one's ability to use his or her presence of mind, that alacrity, that mental alertness, ability to apply knowledge within that stipulated time often its 10 minutes, 15 minutes, 20 minutes, in some rare

cases it can go up to 30 minutes. Now, what are the expected personality traits? When they are selecting a candidate what are the traits that they are looking for? First and the foremost would be leadership skills. In fact you can just say that group discussion is all about identifying a natural leader and looking for leadership skills. When we say leadership skills what are the skills that we actually imply, ability to take initiative.

Now, in a group how many of you would like to do this? If you ask a question or let us ask a simple question like how many of you would like to speak on this topic? In a group of 100 persons, just 5, 6, 7 would raise their hands. Now, that initiative, that ability to take risk combined with that initiative, followed by ability to manage a team and then have a kind of vision and then ability to lead the team. Now, these will all come under leadership skills. Needless to say a leader is also very good in management, particularly in this case its group management.

So, they also look for this group management skills and team working skills. What do I mean by this? Managing a group, now when you have some free time observe yourself how you will behave when you are alone and how will you behave when you are in a group. Actually, anybody including myself when I am alone I behave in a different manner, my thinking is different, but when I am in a group I again behave in a different manner. My thinking reflects the groups thinking. Most of the times inherently I may not feel like what the group is thinking, but just because the group is thinking in a particular manner my thinking is also shaped towards that direction, but as an individual I may not think so.

So, when an individual thinks independently it is not the same way he or she would think when the person is going to the group. Now, once you know this it is looking like rather easy, but actually it is difficult to control the group dynamics because the group itself will have a kind of power. And then as an individual when you stand up to the group and especially if you are trying to project a contrary view against the groups general consensus then it is very difficult to inject that idea. But a good leader makes the group feels that the leader is doing some favor or the leader is thinking alike the group and then knows how to take the group within.

So, group management skills followed by team working or working in a team. There are people who are very good as individuals, they will able to do wonderful tasks within stipulated times as individuals. But you put them in a group even with 2 or 3 people they will quarrel with them, they will be lot of conflicts, they will start complaining about others, may be this person is a perfectionist and he is able to finish his job in time. But he complaints about the other people, he is not happy with the other one. He rather feels that he should be left alone to do his own task.

So, individually fine, but in group no skills, in team it is very difficult for the person to cooperate. In a team he thinks that he should be the boss, but where as others are feeling that there is somebody else who knows things better than him and he better listens to this person. So, team working is actually sometimes giving up ones ego and then accepting other persons viewpoints openly and than if required letting the other person lead and being a follower occasionally most of the times instead of thinking that one should always takes the lead.

So, that is about team working skills, working in a team and then trying to maintain the harmony of that group. The next component that they will be looking for is communication skills. In fact the whole course is about communication skills and we have been discussing about communication skills under various topics, but overall when it comes to group discussion what kind of communication skills are they looking for, the individual's ability to present his or her ideas very clearly, very coherently and very effectively. They are also looking for persuasive skills, they are also looking for argumentative abilities, the person is not only a good speaker, but also a good debater. A very effective communicator and is able to work on, think on topics very impromptu without even having a very in depth knowledge about the subject the person is able to talk freely, spontaneously and overall the person is able to create a very pleasant impression once the person finishes his talk.

So, communication skills; apart from this certain level of pronunciation is also expected. Pronunciation in the sense they at least look for intelligible pronunciation, they do not expect that one should speak like an American or a Britisher, even when the person is in place like India, but at least they expect that the person speaks with such an accent, with

such a natural tone that the other person is able to understand. Now, in I remember in one of the meetings between some administrators and some heads of departments.

So, one head of the department was telling the administrator who has come to sanction certain commodities, certain equipment for the departments. So, he got up and said I need some laptops, I need some laptops. So, the administrator told him we will give you enough number of lab stuff. Let us advertise for the post. Now, again he said no I want laptops. Actually, he wanted laptops, the other person understood as lab stuff. Now, just peh and beh laptop and lab stuff. Now, this is what is suggested as intelligent pronunciation, if you are able to pronounce peh, beh, tuh, duh clearly the other person will be able to understand what the word exactly means and connotes.

Now, in communication skills they are looking for this. In communication skills they are also looking for your ability to use proper diction, the right word in the right place. Somebody, said words go like bullets if you use it rightly and effectively. Followed by this they also look for reasoning ability, your ability to reason out things. If somebody is saying something instead of vehemently saying no, but are you able to reason out that in a very logical manner and then are you able to categorically conclude your point of view and are you able to drag them to your point of view. Combined with this is analytical ability, your ability to analyze certain viewpoints that are put before you; followed by this logical and coherent thinking.

So, I need not say what do I mean by logical because absurd ideas do not get through. Although, it may evoke some fun and laughter among the audience, but it will not give any credit to the candidate, followed by this coherent thinking. There should be connection from what you are saying at one point and then what you are going to conclude at another point. It looks really embarrassing, you started saying something and in the middle you got digressed and towards the end you concluded something else and finally, there is no coherence in your own thoughts. Next, criteria or trait that they are looking for is adaptability and flexibility. Adaptability is one's ability to change, close to that is flexibility; it is not only just changing, but also modulating according to the views expressed by the group.

For example, let us say the person is a male chauvinist. So, he is male centered and then he is a misogynist, he hates women and then he is participating in a group discussion that is actually about emancipation of women. Now, you can understand the mindset of this candidate. So, he would be actually against any kind of emancipation of women, but if the person has adaptability, if the person has flexibility; what will happen is he participates in it, he understands that he has a different kind of mindset. But the general groups thinking is logically correct and if he is adaptable, he will adapt to their views, he will modify his self centered views according to the views that is evolving from the group and then he will change.

Now, this is seen as a good trait because change indicates growth, change indicate development as against being stagnant, closed, fixed, rigid and not changing ones opinion. Followed by this they also look for a very positive mental outlook. There is enough negativity in the world and then they are not looking for a candidate who is pessimistic, who is skeptical, who is doubtful of any good suggestion that is coming from anybody, who cuts, who interferes, if anybody is saying something good immediately the person stops him and is very pessimistic. So, there is no sense of hope that is emanating from the talk of the person. They actually do not need such a candidate because as I said about 90 percent of the people generally have negative thinking. It is a 10 percent that has positive thinking that is actually helping the world move on.

So, they actually look for the positive mental outlook people. Followed by this they also would like to see a very decent and professional dressing with the professional grooming sense also. What do I mean by this? Sometimes, when students are called for GD, they just come and sit with some bermudas, some shorts, some weird kind of t shirts, but actually in a professional environment if the kind of job that you are applying for, they actually look for the grooming that is demanded for the job. Now, if you are going for an executive job, obviously they would like you to be dressed in full suit with proper tie and if it is for the lady either it is saree or it will be this salwar kameez, but then any other kind of dress that would be actually distractive, that is capturing the attention for the right or the wrong reasons. So, that against, it is going against the candidates selection procedure especially in terms of dressing.

Now, followed by this when I talked about dressing actually I am also talking about body language. They also look for assertive body language. They do not want a candidate who is very nervous, who lacks in confidence, who is not able to speak clearly and very withdrawn, mumbling and overall the body language itself is indicating the person is very nervous. So, they do not want this kind of candidate and last, but not the least overall they would like to project a candidate or they want a candidate who is able to project a distinctively likeable personality. What do I mean by this? Even if you do not look at qualities that I have been talking separately such as leadership qualities, communication skills, logical ability, ability to cohere ideas, group management skills and all that.

At the end of it they want to see even if you are a good leader, even if you are very good in dealing with group skills at the end of it when you leave your talk or when you are leaving the GD have you left a very likeable image, have you created a overall likeable personality with that I also say distinctively likeable personality. What do I mean by this? The judges perhaps do not know why they like the person? Is it for the communication skills, is it for the way the person argued, is it for the subject knowledge, is it just for the way the person has dressed, what for the judges liked? You do not know. Although, they have given some points, but overall it has created a powerful non verbal as well as verbal image of a very likeable personality and I also say again it is distinctively likeable. What do I mean by this? There are about 20 candidates, but then you are the one who is most liked. Again as I said it may be for all the traits that we are talking about or it may be for some reason which even I have not covered under this personality traits.

There are some invisible traits, some invisible non verbal communicative traits which are also appealing to the judges, which are also making a person's behavior, demeanour very likeable and it is distinctively likeable in the sense there are 20 candidates. What is it that is making you unique, what is it that is making you separate, what is it that is making you make the judges select you with top ranking? So, there is something that they like in you. So, that is something that you should think about when you think about group discussion.

Now, this is about what is group discussion and I will just continue with what is group

discussion in the next slide also. Just to continue with the question what is group discussion, generally group discussion elicits the views of all participants.
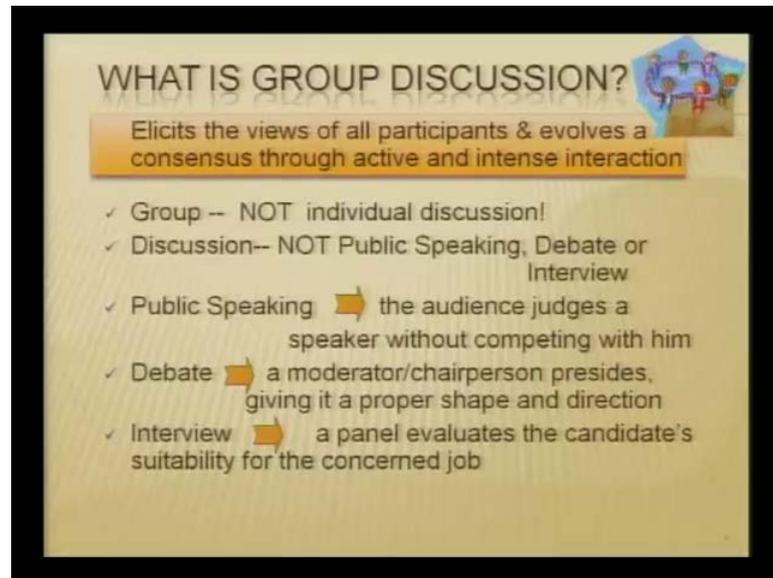
The purpose, the aim is to get the views of all participants and after getting the views the group should be able to evolve a consensus and that consensus is done through active and intense interaction. So, even if a person is passive, a person is indifferent, it is a responsibility of one of the participants to provoke that person, make the person say something, even elicit the views of that person also before arriving at a conclusion. I will tell about some strategies at a later stage, but at this point just to quickly interject something. Suppose a person is sitting silently it, if one of the other participants will actually put it in this manner instead of actually provoking him, if he says to others for example, he says friends I think our other friend is reflecting on this issue, instead of saying he is sitting quietly reflecting on this issue quite seriously for sometime probably he has very good ideas on this topic. Why not we listen to him?

So, there is a gentle persuasion and then it is put in very euphemistic, very sophisticated, very polished manner that this person is quiet, but we should also get some views from him. So, group discussion the purpose and aim is to elicit views from all and then arrive at a consensus. Consensus is the collective agreement on an issue after agreement,

disagreement, negotiation, reconciliation and then you arrive at that consensus and then you just leave it for the judges. And this is done through a very intense interactive process. Sometimes as I said it can even sound like a fish market, but it is very intense, very active, very enjoyable also if you are able to use some of the traits that we are going to talk about in detail.

Now, once again before we get into more of the components, structure of a group discussion, more on what is group discussion. Understand group discussion is essentially about group not individual discussion. In fact an individual cannot have a discussion with himself; even for a conversation you need 2 or 3 people. It is group not individual in the sense one should not assume at any point of the given time in a group discussion that he is sitting there as an individual, and then he is talking for himself, he is self centered, he is ignoring the fact that so many other people are sitting and there are other participants who are equally interested in sharing their views.

So, group not individual discussion. Once this thought is there in the mind it needs a change in mindset also to understand that it is a group not individual discussion. So, individual thinking can be there, but group views should be elicited. Now, once you understand that it is a group not an individual discussion. One should also realize the second part of it, discussion part. It is a discussion, it is not public speaking, it is neither debate nor an interview situation. Now, how do we differentiate discussion from public speaking?

Now, when we say discussion it is involving so many people, conversing or interacting with each other and generally trying to brainstorm a view or discuss on a topic and then try to arrive at some kind of conclusion. In a public speaking scenario which is very different from discussion as such the audience judges a speaker without competing with him. In public speaking the audience judges a speaker without competing with him. In group discussion there are judges who are competing one of the participants, who are judging one of the participants with whom the other persons are competing with equal interest.

Now, in this case in public speaking it is the audience who judge a speaker, but they do

not compete with him. What do I mean by this the audience have already given the public speaker the role of a leader. So, they have just given it, they have endowed him with leadership qualities, they have presumed that this person will organize his speech, they need not compete, they need not interfere and it is in a sense one sided unless they interact they show some response with him. And the person who is delivering the talk is the one who is dominating; there is no competitor whereas in group discussion there is competition at peer group level. One is competing with another. So, ones selection sometimes it has the cost of eliminating so many other participants.

So, there is competition. So, that one should remember and realize while participating in group discussion. Then it is very much different from debate. Now, in debate minimum let us say there are 2, maximum it can go up to 10 persons, there are two sides, there is a view and a counter view or you can say point, counter point there is one who is in favor of the motion, there is another or another team that is against the motion. There is a chairperson or there is a moderator and the debate is presided by this moderator or the chairperson and it is this person who decides, who will speak for how much time, which team starts, which team ends. And if there is a cross fire session where both teams are allowed to ask question and then counter the arguments against the other person's views.

Now, that crossfire is also decided by this moderator or the so called chairperson who does everything. This chairperson decides even the topic, plans the team, the number of the persons, executes a time management plan as who will speak first, who will speak in the middle, last etcetera and then he calls out the names sometimes, presses the bell or arranges somebody to press the bell, just a minute before gives a warning signal. He or she decides to give negative marks if there are unparliamentary words.

Now, everything is done by this moderator. Everything is done by this chairperson in a debate. Now, in an interview or before we go to the interview you may be thinking of what about GD? In a GD there is no moderator present in the group, there is no chairperson present in the group, it is somebody who is going to emerge as the natural leader or responsibility of some of the participants to decide a time plan, to execute a plan of discussion like somebody gets up and says friends we have about 20 minutes time. I think we can take about three rounds and I think we can take about 5 minutes for

each of the rounds and in the first 5 minutes there are 10 of us.

So, I think we should be able to speak half minute each very quickly on this topic; and in the next 5 minutes if there are some disagreements, we will try to resolve them; and in the third 5 minutes, we will try to arrive at a consensus by bringing forth some more ideas on this topic; and then in the last 5, we will make it open, and then we will negotiate and then we will quickly conclude. Now, somebody is giving this and then this person also says let us ensure that we will not exceed the time limit given to each of us, this person also may even suggest let us start with so and so.

Let us end with so and so. Let us start with number 10 and come to number 1 or the way suggested by others he may also accept it, but then it is coming from the participants, there is no moderator, there is no chairperson who is actually deciding this time plan, this sequence nobody is planning. So, this is important because the group discussion participant should know that it is not like a debate that there is a prompter, that there is somebody to guide and govern their actions.
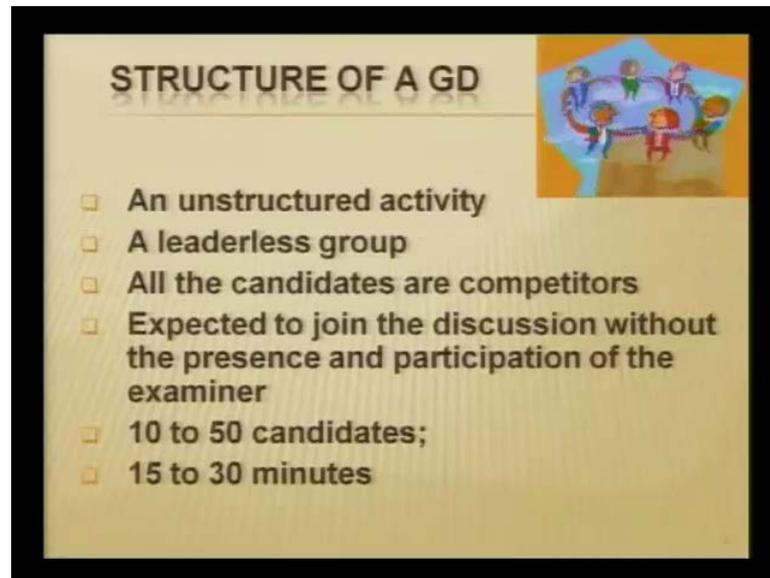
So, in the absence of such a moderator who will take the role of moderator, chairperson? Who will initiate that becomes more important. Then coming to interview, interview constitutes of a panel, there are many subject experts, sometimes the administrators such as the vice chancellor, the CEO of the company, the manager, the head of the department, the principal, the correspondent who are having general knowledge about the subject, but they are not experts, but then there are also experts in the subject and they constitute a panel.

The panel has been sought for approval long before, they were aware of this interview at a particular time. Once, the panel is constituted then the candidates were given sufficient time for the interview and all that, but it is this panel together which will evaluate the candidates suitability for the concerned job. Here they will have so many criteria and the basic one is about testing the candidate's subject knowledge. They may also think of the psychological outlook, the positive framework and all that, but they would like to assess this through group discussion and havinGDone that through group discussion they will focus more on the subject knowledge in this interview.

So, in an interview again the individual is assessed by a panel and mostly the subject knowledge, the expertise in that particular discipline, in which the candidate has spent about 4 or 5 years of his time that is checked apart from certain other personality traits, but in the GD the person is not sitting as an individual, he is sitting with so many other people. There is no panel, which is overtly seeing. The panel is not asking any questions. In fact the panel if at all is totally invisible, the group discussion participants will not see any panel at all.

Now, once you understand that it is group not individual discussion, it is a discussion not a public speaking scenario, where the person is given the leadership quality by virtue of the person being a good speaker and it is not a debate, where the moderator or chairperson are actually guiding the time plan, sequence and all that or it is not an interview, where there is a panel to decide everything. Once, the person understands that group discussion is different from all these things the person is in the right frame of mind to attend this GD.

Now, let us briefly look at the structure of a group discussion. In fact I would say that it is ironic that I have put structure on the title because GD is generally visualized as a structureless activity. In fact there is no structure. Now, just for the sake of convenience I have just put the word structure to give an idea as how a GD functions, there should be some kind of arrangement. So, how is that done? Just to indicate that I am calling that as the structure of a GD.

Now, as I said it is an unstructured activity, there is no moderator, there is no panel, there is nobody telling you that time is up, there is I mean time is up in the sense nobody is giving a warning signal. They will only say let us say once 20 minutes are given they will just come and stop it saying that time is over, but nobody will tell you just 5 minutes are there, 3 minutes are there, nobody is there to give a warning. There is nobody to tell you adjust your dress, there is nobody to tell you why are you playing with that pen.

So, why are you shaking your legs? So, there is nobody to suggest these things. There is nobody to tell you just now you used an unparliamentary word I am giving you negative marks for that, mind you. Nobody will tell you that. So, and then nobody will also tell you unless they give you number and designated chairs. Sometimes, they will just leave even the chairs open. Nobody will tell where you will go and sit, which position will you

occupy.

So, so many things are not told. You just go and sit there and as a group you start structuring yourself. Once again they want you to evolve a natural structure that is why I said it is basically an unstructured activity, but they just want to see whether you are able to give a structure or not. Then another interesting thing about group discussion is it is a leaderless group, generally or at least to begin with it is a leaderless group. In the sense there is no designated leader.

Nobody is assigned a job of a leader and nobody is told you are the one who will start and you are the one who will finish, you will be the one who will moderate who will, you will be the one who will take care of time management and so on. Nobody is given this leadership as a kind of endowed designated job in a group discussion. It is something that they are actually looking for, just like the way the structure will evolve, the leader will also evolve in a very natural manner and all the candidates are competitors whereas, as I said in public speaking the candidates are not competitors. In interview the panel is no way competing with the candidate and so on.

So, in GD all are competitors, all are trying to be selected and all are thinking that some of the other should be eliminated, all are competing and nobody will tell somebody to start the conversation, nobody will say your turn will come now; unless there is some disciplined kind of natural leader, nobody is going to tell this. Everybody is expected to join the discussion without the presence and participation of the examiner. So, there is no prompter, no moderator to tell you, you join the discussion, why are you keeping quiet?

No initiation, no prompting, you do it. How many candidates? It can be 10, it can go up to 50 as I said I know one institution, where out of 15,000 in the first round they will come to 5000 in the second round and from 5000 they will come to 500 in the third round, from 500 they will come to 50 in the last round and from 50 they will send them for interview. So, for 50 GD marks are given, for 50 interview marks are given and both are accumulated for the final selection whereas, for the remaining 1450 GD is used only as an elimination tool, they are not even given marks.

They are just eliminated just like that. So, 10 to 50 candidates it can be used. It, they can be allowed to participate and the time generally given is 15 to 30 minutes. Nowadays, I even see GD's being conducted just for 10 minutes, 8 minutes because of the time constraint, they do not even give full 10 minutes, but often to do justice at least 15 minutes will be good for giving justice. So, 15 to 30 minutes depending on the number of candidates the time is given.

Again nobody will come and tell that the time is up. Only the concerned person has to keep an eye on the timing and then do it. So, we will continue more about this in the next lecture on the same module on group discussion. The more interesting components that I want to discuss about this and then I also want to tell you how you can ensure success. Finally, when you go for a GD how can you do that? So, we will discuss all these things in the coming lecture in the lecture 2 that is on the same module on group discussion.

Till then, Thank you so much.