

**Developing Soft Skills and Personality**  
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**Lecture - 42**  
**Body Language: For Group Discussions**

Hello, hi welcome back to NPTEL mooc course on Developing Soft Skills and Personality. I am Ravichandran from IIT Kanpur the Department of humanities and Social Sciences. This is week 7 module 6 and lecture number 42. This is the last lecture of this week and we just have one more week. Now in this week I am going to conclude this module about Body Language and particularly I will be focusing on how it will be relevant for group discussions. Before I start let me give a brief review of what I did in the previous lecture.

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**Highlights**

**Highlights of the Last Lecture**

**Body Language for Interviews:**  
Preparation at mental, emotional and spiritual levels is required much before the interview to remain calm and confident.

**Employers are clearly looking for soft skills which comprise many body language traits such as**  
✓ Appearance, attitude, personality & positive outlook.

In order to make the first best impression, one has to keep in mind:  
Punctuality, Dress, Handshake, Body Language, Enthusiasm

**Do's and Don'ts**  
Dress Code  
Appearance & use of accessories

Emphasised on firm handshake, eye contact, appropriate posture, showing enthusiasm throughout, smiling radiating confidence, remaining calm and collected, leaving with a good feeling.

In the previous lecture I focused on Body Language for interviews. We started with, telling you that preparation for Body Language does not start just a day before. it is a mental, emotional and spiritual preparation and then the preparation is required much before the interview and then you need to remind calm and confident.

What do employers generally look for? Employers are clearly looking for soft skills which comprise many Body Language traits such as Appearance, attitude, personality and positive outlook. And it is very important to make that first best impression which

very often becomes the last impression also. In order to make that first best impression one has to keep in mind Punctuality, Dress, Handshake which has to be very firm, Body Language all aspects of it including Posture and Gestures and then overall enthusiasm from the beginning till the end which should come from the facial expressions. I also discussed about some dos and do not's, particularly with regard to dress code in terms of appearance in terms of use of accessories. So, I said what you should do and what you should be doing.

Towards the conclusion I emphasized on certain important aspects of Body Language such as giving a firm handshake, maintaining good eye contact, appropriate posture. So, slight leaning forward, but not leaning backward showing enthusiasm throughout, smiling, radiating confidence, remaining calm and collected and at the end of it leaving with a good feeling.

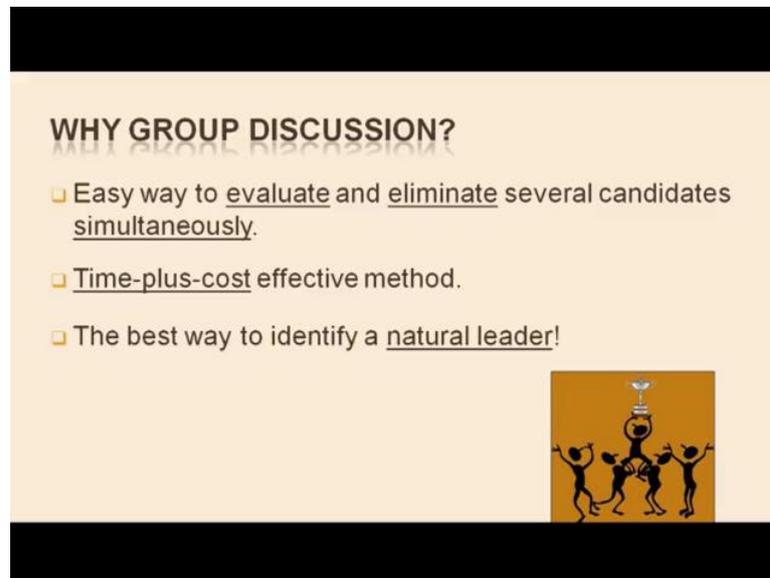
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Now when you ask how different this is from say group discussion. The first thing I want to tell you is that Body Language of interview is similar to the Body Language of group discussion more or less. So, most of the traits which I said in terms of projecting a very positive and confident personality, in terms of interview go with group discussion also, but there are some certain differences you need to keep in mind. Let see what are those differences, the differences basically lie the fact that here you will be in a group and in an interview you are alone and a group is trying to judge you here you are the part of the

group. So, you need to have more of group dynamics and then you can be examined by so many people and then from different angles you can be seen in terms of group discussion.

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**WHY GROUP DISCUSSION?**

- ❑ Easy way to evaluate and eliminate several candidates simultaneously.
- ❑ Time-plus-cost effective method.
- ❑ The best way to identify a natural leader!

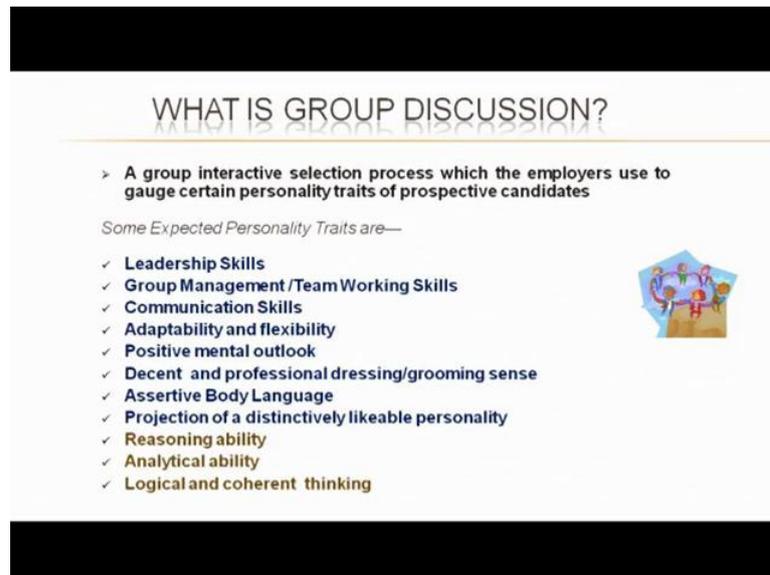


Now, before we go to actual Body Language traits, let see Why Group Discussion? is being used today and especially to select candidates it is easy way to evaluate and eliminate several candidates simultaneously by using group discussion and also its time plus cost effective method. So, you can call 5000 people and then from 5000 you can divide them into various groups and then very easily from 20 you can select 2 or 3 candidates and then in one day you can just bring it down to just to let say 500 and then from the 500 you can again very easily get 50 and from the 50, if you want those people to go for interview you can select the best 30 or 25 you want from this lot. So, it is very easy to shortlist in terms of time and cost it is very effective.

The most important of all, it is a best way to identify a natural leader. So, most of the typical group discussions the once which are conducted for management interviews for example, sound like a real fish market people go sometime they have very aggressive they fight with each other although they are not supposed to do those things and then everybody wants to be heard. So, they try to push their points of view as a result there is so much of commissioned and as if you are in a fish market and so many people talking together and making lot of noise. But in that situation somebody emerges and then

counts all the people down maybe by his or her personality, charisma, language skills, whatever it is, Body Language is playing a very crucial in this person whom everybody is sooner or later acknowledging as a kind of natural leader who is emerging out of this commercial confusion and disorder.

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**WHAT IS GROUP DISCUSSION?**

➤ A group interactive selection process which the employers use to gauge certain personality traits of prospective candidates

Some Expected Personality Traits are—

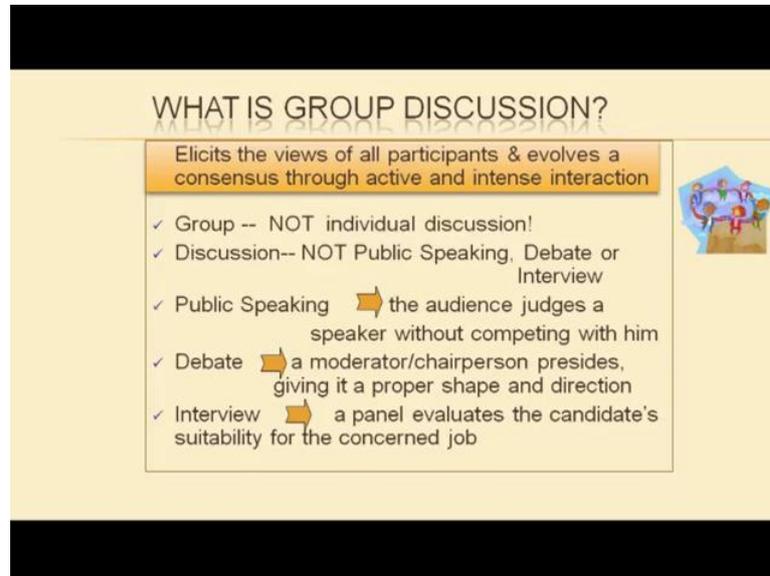
- ✓ Leadership Skills
- ✓ Group Management /Team Working Skills
- ✓ Communication Skills
- ✓ Adaptability and flexibility
- ✓ Positive mental outlook
- ✓ Decent and professional dressing/grooming sense
- ✓ Assertive Body Language
- ✓ Projection of a distinctively likeable personality
- ✓ Reasoning ability
- ✓ Analytical ability
- ✓ Logical and coherent thinking



Again What is Group Discussion? If it is just to identify the natural leader how it is done what are the expected traits. A group interactive selection process which the employers use to gauge certain personality traits of prospective candidates is called Group Discussion. What are the expected personality traits, now you should be observing this if you look at it the top 8 traits which I have put, overall related to nonverbal communication and soft skills and; obviously Body Language. Only the last 3 which I have put are related to knowledge. Look at the top once leaderships skills group management Team working skills, Communication skills, Adaptability and Flexibility, Positive mental outlook, Decent and professional dressing grooming sense, Assertive Body Language, Projection of a distinctively likeable personality, Reasoning ability, Analytical ability, Logical and coherent thinking. So, this last 3 are actually related to knowledge, but the remaining top once is always related to nonverbal communication Body Language and soft skills.

What will a Group Discussion do? It Elicits the views of all participants and evolves a consensus through active and intense interaction what are the things you should keep in your mind.

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**WHAT IS GROUP DISCUSSION?**

Elicits the views of all participants & evolves a consensus through active and intense interaction

- ✓ Group -- NOT individual discussion!
- ✓ Discussion-- NOT Public Speaking, Debate or Interview
- ✓ Public Speaking → the audience judges a speaker without competing with him
- ✓ Debate → a moderator/chairperson presides, giving it a proper shape and direction
- ✓ Interview → a panel evaluates the candidate's suitability for the concerned job

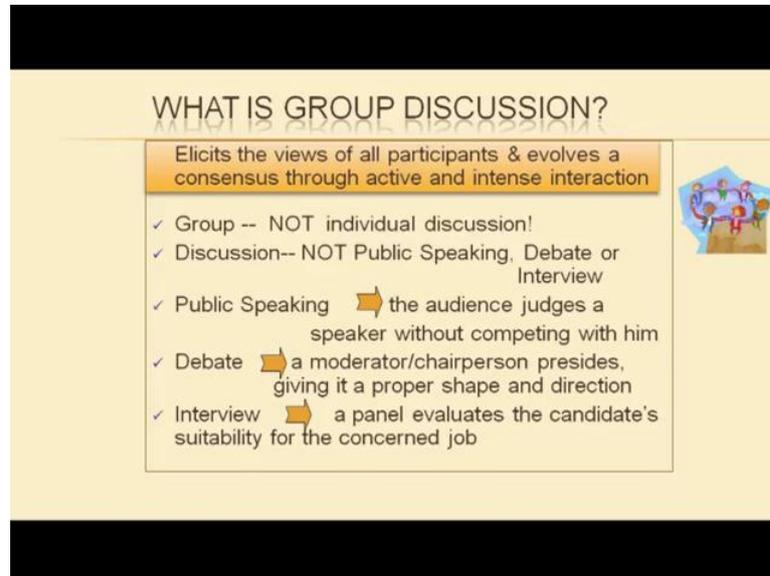
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First of all it is Group Discussion not individual discussion! You are not talking to somebody in a canteen, you are not talking to your friend in a mall, you are not meeting somebody during a walk, now these are all inter personal communication, but this is group. So, you are amassed, so many people along with you. So, it is not individual discussion.

The second part of it understands it is discussion not public speaking or debate or interview. So, in a discussion you participate you elicit information from others and then you evolve at a consensus you actively listen and then intense interaction is there in public speaking it is a kind of one way traffic you speak and the audience already give the leadership to you and the audience judges you without competing with the audience whereas, here you compete with audience, who are actually fellow participants. In Debate again there is a moderator a chair person who presides over the debate and gives proper shape and direction to the inter course of action. Again in interview there is a panel that evaluates a candidate's suitability for the concerned job. This is Group Discussion. Which is different from all this other activities where you are involved, but at an individual level intra personal level, but here you are individual who is in a group.

So, Group Dynamics these are way your own personality traits. So, that becomes crucial. How is the GD structure the interesting fact about a GD is that it is a totally unstructured activity.

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In fact, in some GD s they will also be asked to identify the topic itself and then it is a leader less group, very rare cases there are moderators, but then they deliberately do not keep any moderators even if there are some facilitates they just start the GD and then they just leave the room they watch them from hidden camera or they go to a corner they completely leave them to the group it is a leaderless group and all the candidates or competitor and then you are expected to join the discussion the without the presence and participation of the examiner. So, it could have 10 to 50 candidates and it can be from fifteen to thirty minutes.

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### STRUCTURE OF A GD



- ❑ An unstructured activity
- ❑ A leaderless group
- ❑ All the candidates are competitors
- ❑ Expected to join the discussion without the presence and participation of the examiner
- ❑ 10 to 50 candidates;
- ❑ 15 to 30 minutes

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### GD IS ALL ABOUT . . .



❖ Co-ordination  
and  
❖ Co-operation



Now, if you ask me to put GD in a nutshell I will say that GD is all about Co-ordination and Co-operation. So, Co-ordination and Co-operation, if you remember this two key words and try to mold your body in terms of Co-coordinating and Co-operating, you will be the winner. Now what are the traits you need in terms of Co-ordination?

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Basically Leadership qualities, a good leader is a good co-coordinator a good follower also, management skills a good leader is also a good manager which involves planning you should keep in mind the time of the GD, you should tell them about the procedure in which you can conduct the GD, you should show conflict resolution skills and overall you should be able to harmonize if you are interested in becoming the co-coordinator of the GD. The other part of GD is all about co-operation this is team work, working together towards a shared aim.

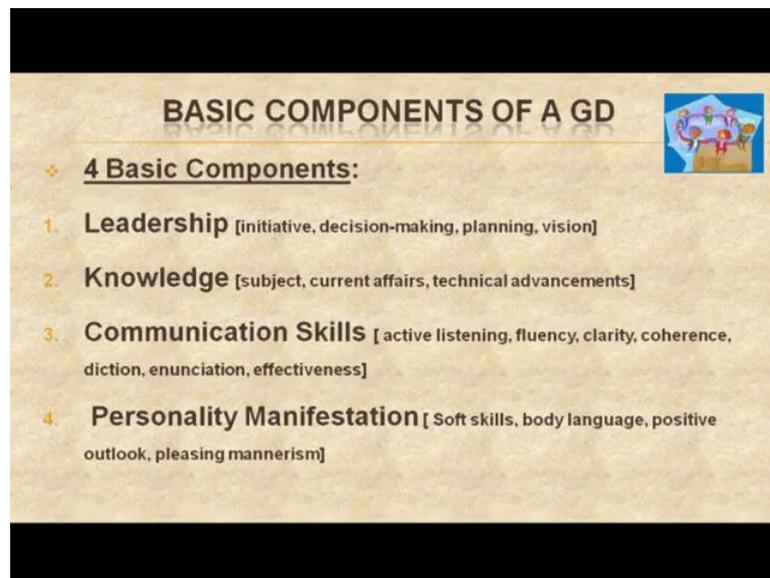
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So, you have a common objective, collective goal and you have to work together. Now the very funny thought of this thing is you need to do the things that you hate to do and you have to do that with a smile; that means, you need to talk to somebody whom you do not like to talk to you may hate this person.

By the look of the person itself your Body Language is becoming rigid and then inside your emotion is becoming very distressed and then anguished and then you do not like something in this person, maybe the person is too aggressive too dominating too condescending and you are not like that and then you feel somewhat bad about it, but you have to work with this person that is co-operation. So, co-operation is defined as doing the things that you hate to do, but you need to do that with a smile. So, you do not like this person you hate the person, but when while talking you say as my friend said, oh friend I agree with you my dear fellow participant inside you may be hating, but when you have to cooperate you cannot show your emotion you need to control it.

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Now, What are the Basic Components of a GD? So, there are 4 Basic Components. So, as I had intend it before the first component is related to Leadership, which involves initiative, decision making, planning and having a vision. The second component is about Knowledge, one has to be thorough in the subject a particularly with regard to current affairs and technical advancements. Now in this G this part of the GD we are not

focusing more on the knowledge part, but we are focusing more on the Body Language part.

Again if you look at it of the 4 basic components accept knowledge the 3rd one communication skills which involves active listening, fluency, clarity, coherence, diction, enunciation, effectiveness and 4th one Personality Manifestation involves soft skills, body language, positive outlook, pleasing mannerism or all to do with soft skill communication skills and Body Language. How will you be evaluated? Again here also if you see 75 percent of the marks are actually given to things which are not related to knowledge. Knowledge gets one fourth of credit.

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EVALUATION CRITERIA			
<i>Personality</i>	<i>Knowledge</i>	<i>Communication</i>	<i>Leadership</i>
25	25	<i>Skills</i> 25	25
<b>Dress/ Appearance</b>	<b>Depth</b>	<b>Active Listening</b>	<b>Initiative</b>
<b>Temperament/ Tone &amp; Voice</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>Fluency</b>	<b>Team Spirit</b>
<b>Gesture/ Body Language</b>	<b>Logical Thinking</b>	<b>Diction</b>	<b>Endurance/ Conflict- resolution skills</b>
<b>Mental State</b>	<b>Organization of Ideas</b>	<b>Enunciation</b>	<b>Decision-Making</b>
<b>Over-all impression</b>	<b>Over-all impression</b>	<b>Over-all impression</b>	<b>Over-all impression</b>

So, personality out of 25 marks roughly they would give 5 marks for dress appearance, another 5 for temperament, tone and voice, at another 5 for Gesture Body Language and another 5 for Mental State ok and then 5 for overall impression. Knowledge again it is divided 5 each Depth, Range, Logical Thinking, Organization of Ideas, over-all impression, but communication skills active listening, fluency, diction, enunciation, overall impression, Leadership Initiative, Team spirit, Endurance, conflict-resolution, skills, Decision-making and then over-all impression.

Now, while evaluating they also look for some positive traits as well as some negative traits. Let us look at what are the positive traits, as I said most of the things they talk in terms of personality or closely related to Body Language.

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<b>POSITIVE TRAITS</b>			
<i>Personality</i>	<i>Knowledge</i>	<i>Communication Skills</i>	<i>Leadership</i>
<b>Enthusiasm</b>	<b>Depth</b>	<b>Clarity</b>	<b>Initiative</b>
<b>Keeness, Curiosity</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>Felicity of expression</b>	<b>Team Spirit</b>
<b>Participation</b>	<b>Analytical Ability</b>	<b>Categorical conclusion</b>	<b>Flexibility, Conflict-resolution skills</b>
<b>Cheerfulness</b>	<b>Organization of Ideas</b>	<b>Coherence of ideas</b>	<b>Decision-Making</b>
<b>Smartness</b>	<b>Co-ordination of thoughts</b>	<b>Effectiveness</b>	<b>Patience</b>

The first one they look for is Enthusiasm then Keeness and Curiosity, Participation Cheerfulness, Smartness. So, Knowledge is the same what I discussed before, in terms of Communication Skills positive traits they look for Clarity, Felicity of expression, Categorical conclusion, Coherence of ideas and overall Effectiveness. In terms of Leadership, it is like the same that I discussed before except team spirit and then patients is also added generally as of positive traits.

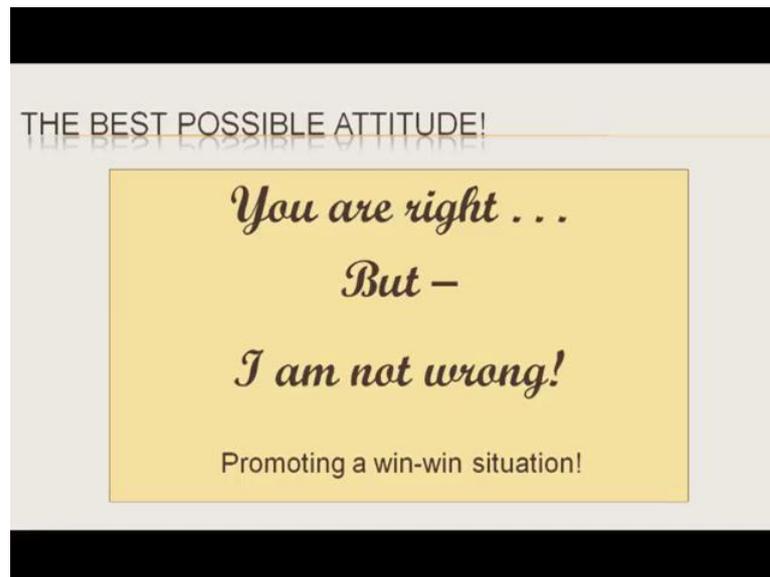
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<b>NEGATIVE TRAITS</b>			
<i>Personality</i>	<i>Knowledge</i>	<i>Communication Skills</i>	<i>Leadership</i>
<b>Introversion, slowness</b>	<b>Lack of subject knowledge</b>	<b>Fumbling, Muteness</b>	<b>Isolated, Insulated</b>
<b>Lack of confidence</b>	<b>Lack of meticulousness</b>	<b>Confused &amp; unclear</b>	<b>Unapproachable</b>
<b>Apprehensive, tenseness</b>	<b>Poor quality of mind</b>	<b>Meandering</b>	<b>Egoistic &amp; Aggressive</b>
<b>Impoliteness</b>	<b>Lack of creative ideas</b>	<b>Incoherence</b>	<b>Weak &amp; Wavering</b>
<b>Apathy, unresponsive-ness, boredom</b>	<b>Lack of analytical thinking</b>	<b>Monotony</b>	<b>Impatient</b>

The negative traits, again personality please pay complete attention to this because Body Language will be revealed in terms of your personality introversion and slowness, that is if you keep your thoughts to yourself and if you are very slow to respond that is a negative one lack of confidence. So, there are 10 people and then everybody speaks and then your turn comes. So, they are asking would you like to speak you take the mike, I think I will talk later, I would let it pass. So, I would rather think about it later. Now you lose your chance you also exhibit a very poor self image of you, lack in confidence, apprehensive. So, all the time being afraid of somebody, somebody will do something to you tenseness. So, stressed and impoliteness using rude words. So, that is also part your soft skills using polite expressions are very important. Apathy that is complete absence of any feeling unresponsiveness and also boredom, you sit and then show that you are very bored and then you just listen to other people as if you have no interest.

Now, Knowledge Lack of subject knowledge, Lack of meticulousness, Poor quality of mind, Lack of creative ideas, Lack of analytical thinking, all will contribute to negative traits. In terms of Communication Skills Fumbling, Muteness, Confused and unclear, Meandering that is keep on diverting and not coming to the main point incoherence. There is no Proper coherence in the thought, in the wave one person is speaking Monotony, same way same ideas are expressed repeated again and again. Leadership Negative traits, Isolated, Insulated that is he keeps aloof protects himself and behaves as if the person is unapproachable very Egoistic and aggressive weak and wavering and often the person is impatient. Now the best possible attitude you should have in GD is this that you should think you are right.

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And then you should show appreciation if somebody is right, but I am not wrong. So, prove till the end of the GD that categorically you are not wrong and overall try to promote a win-win situation and that will see you through in the GD and get you the desired success what are some most common Body Language speak.

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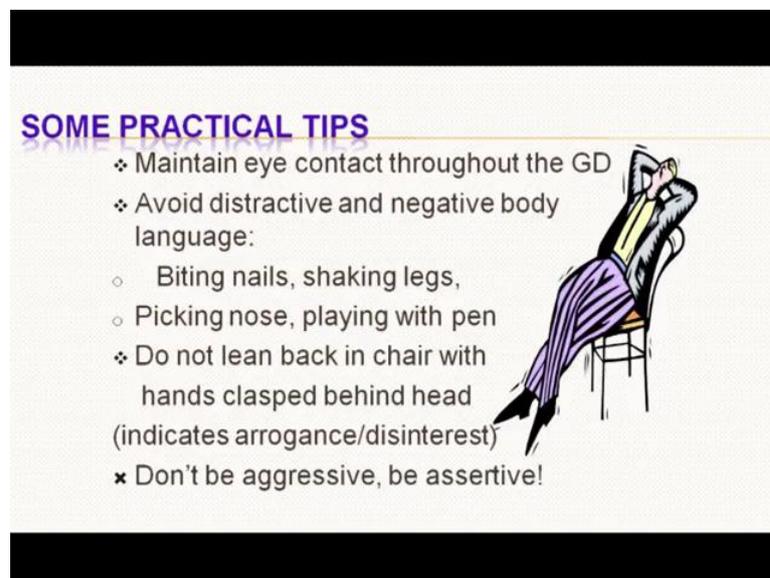


If you are anxious to talk too much and then if you are nervous and then you talk too little you show aggressive behavior and then arrogant gestures distractive Body Language, what is distractive Body Language? Like playing with the button playing with

pen, sometimes opening the pen and then closing it looking at the pen playing with the watch playing with the ring playing with the ear ring nose picking and. So, on like all negative gestures which makes other people look at you. So, they become distractive Body Language indifference. So, as if you are not a participant and then spectator behavior, you just sit and watch other people do you do not participate.

Fidgeting, showing nervousness smelling bad oh maybe you just took some garlic fried rice you dint wash your mouth you smoked you dint wash your mouth you took some beer you dint wash your mouth. So, that is smell pungent smell. So, will make people immediately feel annoyed and irritated with you.

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**SOME PRACTICAL TIPS**

- ❖ Maintain eye contact throughout the GD
- ❖ Avoid distractive and negative body language:
  - Biting nails, shaking legs,
  - Picking nose, playing with pen
- ❖ Do not lean back in chair with hands clasped behind head (indicates arrogance/disinterest)
- ✗ Don't be aggressive, be assertive!

Some more practical tips in terms of Body Language which has been said already, but I would like to particularly emphasize. In terms of GD also maintain eye contact throughout the GD. So, even if you are not addressing somebody. So, keep looking at the people around you and when you are talking again you try to vary the eye contact and then try to address the entire group do not focus on one particular person especially the person who tends to agree with you or the person whom you like. So, try to even look at the person whom you think you do not like and who is likely to be your opponent, but then looking at the person will also try to help you to maintain a kind of repo.

Avoid distracting a negative Body Language more in terms of biting nails shaking legs or shaking hands shaking legs is really very distractive gesture picking nose playing with

pen I already told you do not lean back in chair with hands clasped behind head which shows that you are arrogant or you are disinterested and it will also show that you are very aggressive you should not be aggressive, you should be assertive and then they can also give you chairs with wheels. So, do not try to move back and forth move sideways hit somebody's chair play with the chair the if the chair can also rotate. So, do not just try to move here and there keep rotating it. So, these are all distractive behavior and show a very immature and unprofessional attitude in you.

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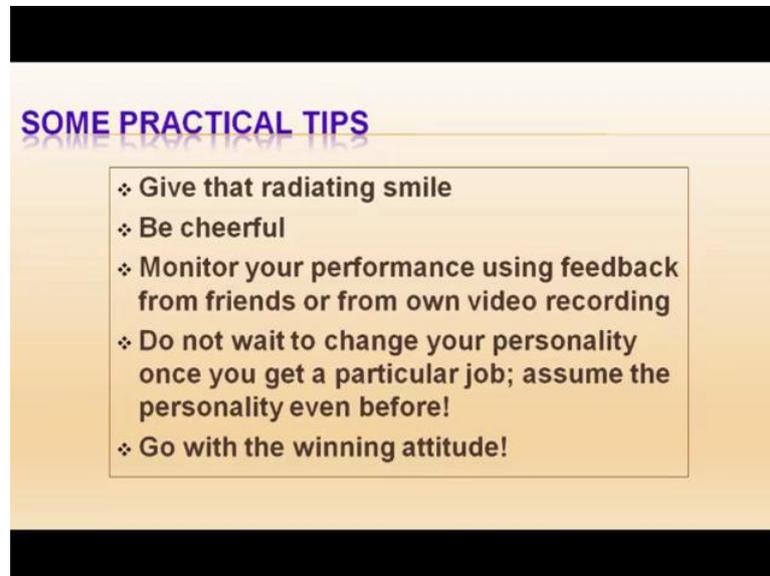


Overall what aspects of Body Language you should be exhibiting in group discussions posture, even while going and sitting walk upright as it was said before stand tall and then sit tall before sitting give firm handshake or if there are females and then they are shy to give handshake you can just say Namaste and try to control any kind of negative traits such as showing aggressive behavior getting provoke. So, easily do not get angry at all in the GD although if somebody giving a very provocative statement leans slightly forward to show interest and empathy you open firm gestures. So, do not put it inside your pocket do not put it on the bag. So, do not try to hide it if you have a coat or something you open firm gestures and if you have a file or handbag do not try to hide.

So, you put it here and then you are try to hide do not do that. So, be open and nod your head to show agreement and sometimes even you can nod gently smile even to show appreciation by showing that you are able to appreciate somebody even if you are not

made up point it shows another important trait in your leadership quality that you do not feel in secured if somebody making a good point and then give that radiating smile.

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So, it comes with lot of energy it is nice to look at you when you give the radiating smile be cheerful throughout even if somebody is insulting you do not take it too hard. So, this is a GD and you have come here to express your views more light should come even if there is a fight and you should minimize the fight before GD as well as after the GD monitor your performance using feedback from friends or from your own video recording. So, you even when it is happening if you could arrange for video recording of your performance review that and try to have mooch performance look for negative behavior particularly and try to minimize it and ask people your friends in the group as what they liked in you when you are giving the doc presentation in the GD and try to enhance those traits the likable once.

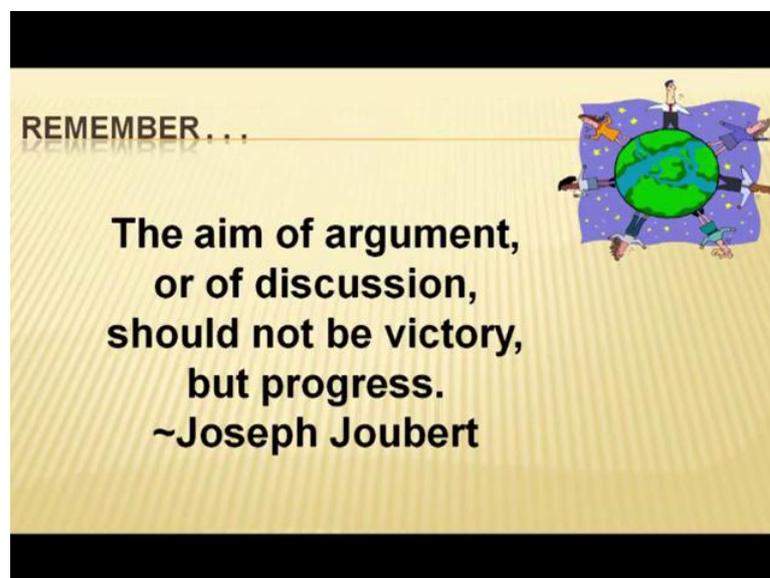
And the next advise I would give you is do not wait to change your personality once you get a particular job. So, do not think that if I get that job and then I try for the next job I will improve my soft skills and personality I will become a very good participant in GD right now I am shy right now I am introverted right now I do not want to develop if I do that if I get that job I will definitely do that, but assume the personality even before when you assume that personality you will automatically get that desired job or even a better job, but thinking that after getting the job you will change develop your personality is not

going to help become the person even before you get the job behave as if you are in the position even if before you are promoted to that position and overall go with a winning attitude.

So, that is very important. So, when you go with a winning attitude like psyching up your mind and thinking that you are going to get it. So, there will be cheerfulness on your face you will be common collected the entire body will exhibit that you are not somebody who is going to be afraid or who is going to be suppressed by somebody you will emerge as the natural leader and it will be very difficult to reject you in GD alone.

Now, having said this even if you go with the winning attitude sometimes there are some people who have developed qualities better than you maybe they had better awareness than you. So, sometimes they appear to dominate you they appear to get things done faster than you maybe they got selected in the GD, but remember this do not become disheartened remember this, this is my concluding note for you.

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The aim of argument or of discussion should not be victory, but progress. So, you should not think that oh I lost and somebody won, no, the entire aim of the discussion was progress in terms of thought progress in terms of gaining new experience progress in terms of your own personality development each GD that you attend gives you a kind of peak experience each interview that attend it is also going to give a complete different experience, which you do not get it otherwise the kind of stress that is built up the

eustress the positive stress and the relief that you have after that takes you to another level if only you learn from some minor mistakes that you might of committed by watching your own video by participating again and again in more GDs you seen the tips I have given particularly focusing on your Body Language aspect very keenly, very closely, definitely you will make progress.

With this note we are concluding this week and we just have one more week and then that will be the last concluding week this, the next lecture that will be in the coming week I am just going to start with presentation skills as many of you wanted to know how you can do in presentation skills that will be the next one, but as of today I wish you once again success in all the GDs that you are going to participate wish you all the best and.

Thank you so much for watching this video.