

Introduction to Group Discussion (GD) Process of XLRI – Xavier School of Management

A Group Discussion, commonly referred to as GD, stands as a prominent evaluation method employed by business schools during their admissions process. It entails a structured conversation among a select group of individuals, usually comprising 6 to 15 participants, who convene to deliberate upon a designated topic or issue. The central aim of a group discussion is to evaluate a candidate's proficiency in communication, collaboration, and the ability to think dynamically and articulate their thoughts adeptly within a collective setting.

Roles Taken by Participants During Group Discussions

- **Initiator:** The initiator plays a crucial role in initiating the discussion by introducing the topic or providing an opening statement. They set the tone for the discussion and establish the framework within which subsequent arguments and ideas are presented.
- **Builder:** Builders contribute to the discussion by adding to arguments or ideas put forth by other participants. They help in expanding upon existing points, providing additional context or examples, and strengthening the overall discussion by offering new perspectives.
- **Challenger:** Challengers question the logic or validity of arguments presented by other participants. They critically analyze the ideas put forth, identify potential flaws or inconsistencies, and challenge the assumptions underlying certain assertions. Challengers stimulate deeper thinking and encourage participants to defend their viewpoints with sound reasoning.
- **Defender:** Defenders counter challenges raised by other participants by defending or supporting the arguments they agree with. They provide justification, evidence, or examples to bolster their stance and address any criticisms or objections raised during the discussion. Defenders help maintain balance and foster constructive debate within the group.
- **Synthesizer:** Synthesizers play a critical role in synthesizing multiple points made by different participants, including their own, to create a cohesive and integrated perspective. They identify common themes, draw connections between disparate ideas, and offer synthesis that integrates various viewpoints into a comprehensive understanding of the topic.
- **Summarizer:** Summarizers are responsible for summarizing the key points and insights generated during the discussion. They provide a concise recap of the



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main arguments, conclusions reached, and any actionable takeaways. Summarizers help ensure that the discussion remains focused and that all participants have a clear understanding of the main points discussed.

New: Context-Based Group Discussions

This year, we're introducing a novel approach to our group discussions, centered around contextual analysis. Rather than presenting participants with arbitrary topics, we'll furnish them with excerpts from literature or relevant sources. This method is designed to ensure fairness and evaluate candidates' capacity to comprehend and engage with contextual information effectively.

The group discussion will be semi-structured. Here's how our new format will unfold:

Context Introduction: Each group discussion session will kick off with participants given 3 minutes to read the provided context. This excerpt could be sourced from books, articles, or other relevant materials. Moreover, they will formulate their arguments or viewpoints based on the provided context. This initial preparation phase is crucial for constructing well-founded arguments.

Discussion Phase: The main segment of the session will consist of a 15-minute discussion period. Here, participants will engage in dynamic discourse, articulating their perspectives, challenging others' viewpoints, and collectively exploring the nuances of the given context.

Takeaway Reflection: In the final 5 minutes of the session, each participant will be invited to share their key takeaway from the discussion. This reflection period allows individuals to distill the essence of the discourse and articulate personal insights or learnings gleaned from the exchange.

Attributes of Ideal Candidates During Group Discussions

- Recognizes the holistic perspective, perceiving the whole within the parts.
- Identifies and comprehends interconnections and relationships.
- Questions assumptions, fostering a culture of inquiry and openness.
- Facilitates shared understanding and meaning among participants.
- Approaches differences with respect and openness.
- Actively listens without resistance or prejudice.
- Skillfully builds upon ideas contributed by others.
- Maintains focus on the broader context, suspending personal judgments.



Conclusion

Group discussions serve as a valuable tool for evaluating candidates' abilities across various competencies crucial for success in both academic and professional settings. Through the implementation of context-based GDs and a structured approach to evaluation, we aim to provide a comprehensive assessment of candidates' skills and competencies in a fair and objective manner.

Admissions Office

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