

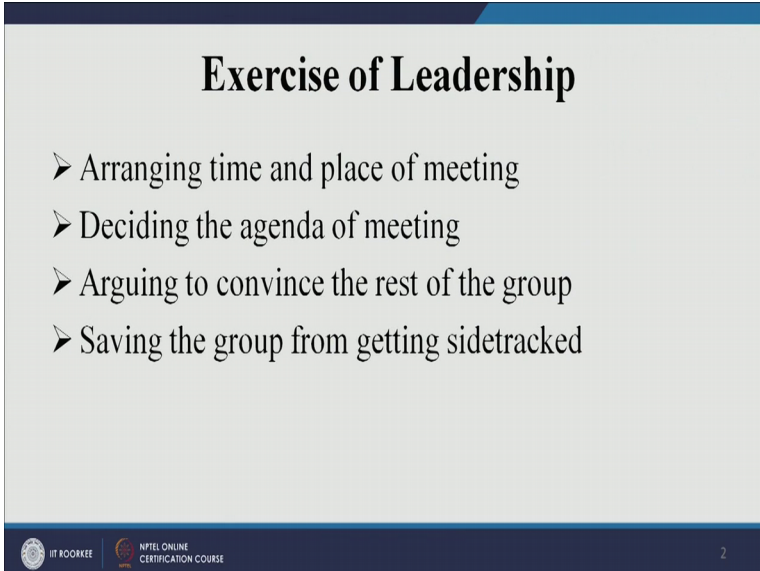
Soft Skills
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Lecture - 43
Group Discussion Part II

Welcome back friends. We are discussing Group Discussions in the previous lecture, where we talked about both topic GDs as well as case GD's. And we also show you how when you participate in a GD there are times when the discussion comes to halt because of the conflict, but then how can we come out of this conflict.

Imagine yourself being a participant of the GD, where you have something to say, but you are not able to say. And then there are two or three members who start talking to each other, and creating a lot of fuss; here is the role of a leader. as you remember well we had talked about the various theories of leadership, but what sort of a leader we can have in a GD, and how we can follow in the footsteps of such a leader, how can leadership be exercised in a GD and who will become a leader.

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Exercise of Leadership

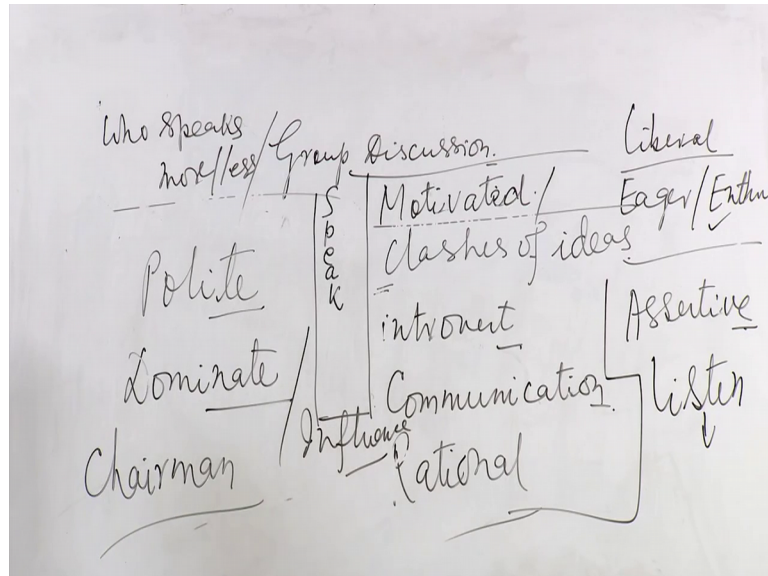
- Arranging time and place of meeting
- Deciding the agenda of meeting
- Arguing to convince the rest of the group
- Saving the group from getting sidetracked

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As usual if there is a case of designated leader or somebody appoint somebody a leader, he will arrange time place and the other ways, he also will decide the meeting agenda. And then at times, the topic he will try his level best to ensure the rest of the group, and

the major task that he will do as a leader is to save the group, he is actually a leader is a savior here.

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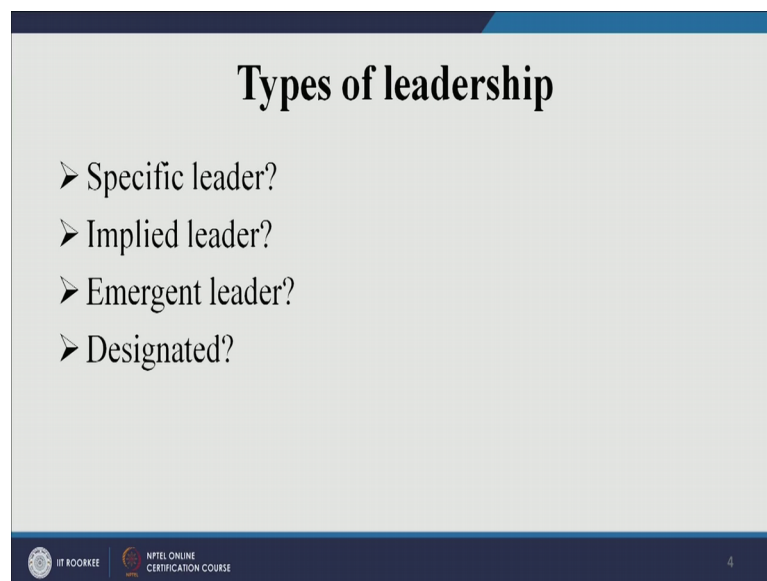
And you also can become our savior, you know any discussion where there is no leader, it is just like a boat which is having people full, but then nobody knows and when they come in the midst of the river and they feel who will help them. So, here is a leader. So, a leader is actually the main part of a group. And as a leader he will be able he will be responsible to save the group from getting sidetracked.

Conflict arises because there are classes of ideas or interests. Now, whenever there is a class and conflict, it is the leader who will help in resolution of the conflict; and then the leaders I will also fall on some people who are totally silent. So, if a person who is totally silent, anyone can help even you can also you can also initiate, you can also try to encourage persuade, goad the person to speak.

So, the inner participant to be brought back to the discussion, so that you know everyone has an idea, because there are people who are not many people are extra word, there are some people who are introvert in your group. But then he also has to share his ideas only by little bit of encouragement he can come to start expressing his views. And the leader can also from time to time if he feels that the group gets sidetracked. So, he will summarize and then he will create such a situation where all the other members will start speaking and continuing.

We have already talked about the types of leader in a previous talks. In certain cases there can be specific leader, there can be implied leader, there can be emergent leader, there can be designated. But the case of a leader in a GD is totally different. Here is a person who will emerge as an avatar, you know as a as a sort of incarnation. So, suddenly you will find somebody will have that initiative will have that guts are to tell others, can we come to the mainstream of the discussion, can we come to the main issue fine. So, here is a leader who will emerge. So, here is an emergent leader, emergent.

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Now, who can be emergent leader, even you can be an emergent leader. Now, you should have certain traits to be an emergent leader what are these traits, what are these traits? The first is all leaders have to be communicative know you should have a good communication ability communication ability fine unless and until you have that ability you cannot convince others.

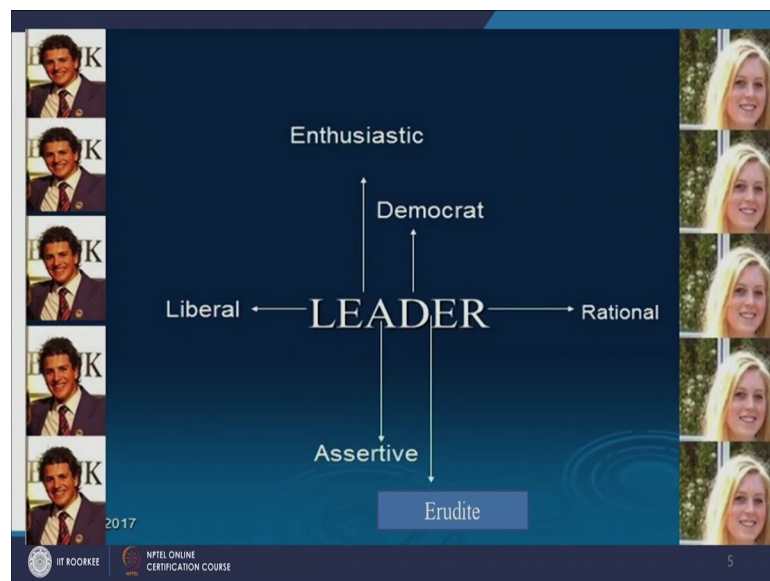
So, a leader for that matter has to be a person who has actually you know what I have done is I have taken all the words of this term leader. So, leader has not to be very rigid rather he has to be liberal, a leader has to be liberal in his attitude. He will see to it that everyone participates in the discussion. So, the first letter L I analyze as liberal. So, leader has to be liberal.

A leader also has to be eager and enthusiastic eager and enthusiastic, eager to help very enthusiastic. A leader also has to be a person who actually has a lot of knowledge. You

are in a group discussion because you have knowledge unless and until you have a grasp of the subject of course, in a GD you are not suppose to have lot of grasp about are the entire subject, but then your previous knowledge will come your aid. So, a leader has to be a person who is eager a leader has to be a person who shows his enthusiasm level in order to help the group come out of this or occurs or come out of the conflict come out of the problem help each other. You know we use the term help each other swim, help each other sail.

Otherwise, the discussion will come to a close you know there have been cases of many discussion where you know some participants simply look at the topic and then they say I do not agree with this and I think we do not have much to discuss. Now, this should not be this spirit.

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So, a leader finally, has to be a democrat. What I mean by democrat is as all of you believe a democrat is a person who sees that everybody gets an opportunity to share his or her view. A democrat is a person who sees that nobody sentiment is hurt, he also sees that everyone is treated fairly and the discussion continues in a better direction. A leader also at times he has to be assertive. And how can you assert, if you are not having the subject knowledge if you are not having a sort of erudition naturally, you cannot assert. So, you have to assert without becoming arrogant.

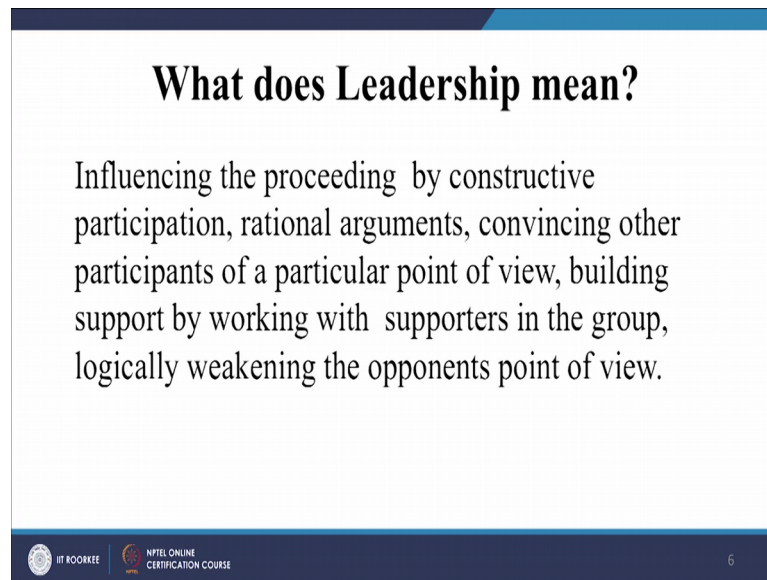
So, assert when I say assert I mean influence other people by your constructive ideas and that will help you assert. If I am confident of myself, I can assert my point. So, leader has to be assertive. A leader also has to be and meaning there by you should have subject knowledge. A leader also has to be rational you know he should not have a sort of discriminatory attitude, and he should see that the discussion continues on the proper path in the proper direction and everybody participates.

Now, the question is as sometimes you also might have felt that there are some people who never speak in the discussion. Now, are these people danger, some of you might be thinking it is good that he does not speak know. So, you get more time, no. If you are in a group discussion, you have a group responsibility as I discussed in the previous lecture. So, as a group member, you should see that other members also participate. The question is the panelist will see that why such a person is silent and nobody is taking any initiative.

So, the main task there is to persuade to try to get that person to speak and that is possible simply by being polite, you know because there is a saying that an inherited participant or as silent person in the group becomes a liability. Since you are not judged only because of your individual capability or behavior, but you are also judged because of the contribution of all other members in the group, you are just both as a group as an individual also.

Hence they need is to see that the inherited people also speak, they also share. Panelist looks at everything the panelist is a person. Now, what is the role of the panelist that are often you might be thinking the panelists, after he has given you the topic he is an observer, he plays the role of an observer, he is looking at certain things, how the entire discussion maybe a times is also jotting down certain notes.

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What does Leadership mean?

Influencing the proceeding by constructive participation, rational arguments, convincing other participants of a particular point of view, building support by working with supporters in the group, logically weakening the opponents point of view.

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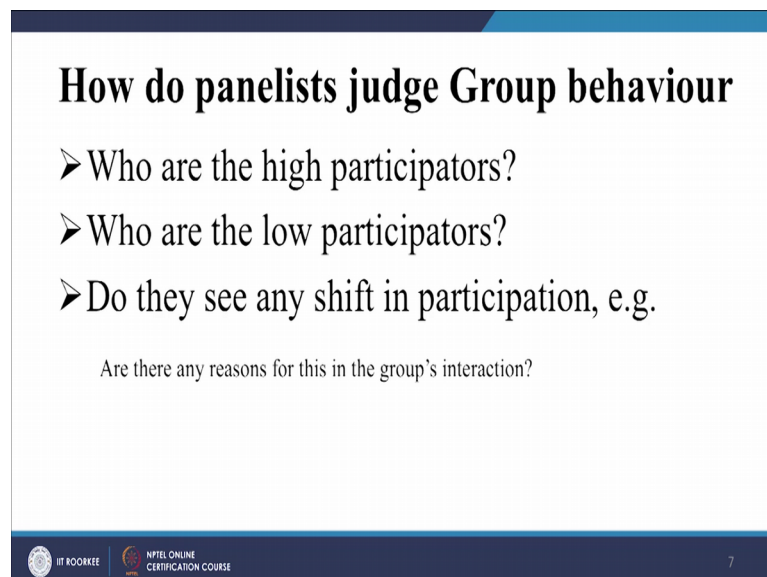
Now, a leader will influence the entire proceeding by his constructive participation by his rational thoughts, and he will try to convince other participants of the importance of the view or importance of a particular line of thinking. And he actually tries to build a support by working with supporters in the group, logically weakening the opponents point of view. I mean if somebody takes a very extreme chance I mean goes too further and I am goes to further in a way that other people get aggrieved. Now, in such a situation, the leader will come to the aid, he will come to the help and will try to save and he will try again to fill the entire group with a sort of Philip with a sort of enthusiasm, so that the discussion continues.

Moreover as I said what are actually these panelists doing, how they are observing group behavior, they are looking who started the discussion, but then they are also looking at each other's reaction to each other. Because when you participate in a group discussion you do not participate only verbally rather you participate also non verbally by showing your gesture, by showing your posture, by the pitch of the voice, sometimes you know somebody's speak something and in order to suppress subdue him you speak in a manner that may be hurting. So, what amount of loudness of the pitch you have maintained that is also in the purview of the panelists. Panelist will see to it who are the participants, who speaks more, who speaks less, who actually started speaking, but suddenly became silent.

So, who are the low participators, who are the high participators. If a high participator suddenly became a low participator what actually may be the reason. So, he is looking into all the details, are there any reasons. Because when you are participating in a discussion you also have to be aware of the fact that nobody is hurt, there are many you know depending upon the topic of GD. Sometimes you find that if the topic is controversial, because the topics may at times be factual, topic may be factual the topic may be abstract the topic may also be controversial.

So, when there is a topic and you do not know what sort of topic you have been given. So, if there is a topic, which appears like being controversial, so during this discussion it has to be seen if somebody has been hurt religiously, somebody has been hurt ethically, somebody has been insulted. So, this is actually the task of the panelist. So, panelist see that why there is a shift in participation, is it because somebody is going to support somebody or is it because somebody is going to oppose somebody or because somebody is trying just to pull his own weight and trying to subdue others, so these are some of the questions which are on the panelists mind.

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How do panelists judge Group behaviour

- Who are the high participators?
- Who are the low participators?
- Do they see any shift in participation, e.g.

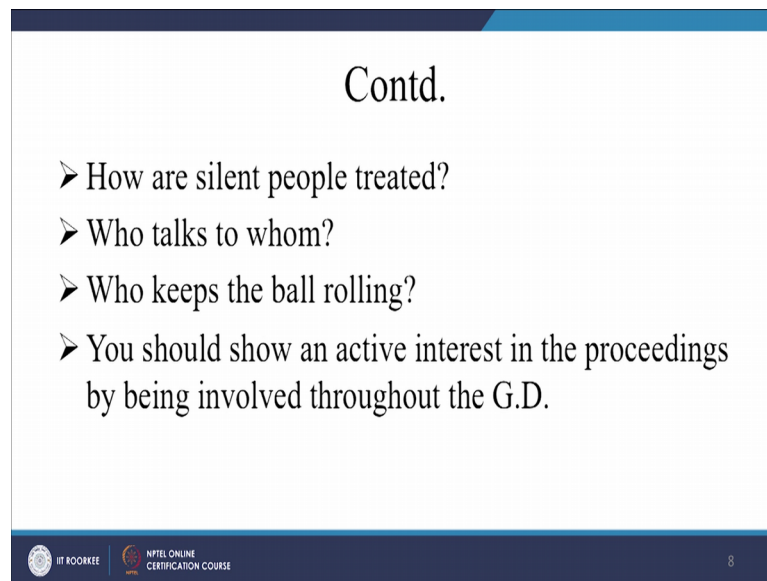
Are there any reasons for this in the group's interaction?

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So, please be careful when moreover if somebody is silent you will find because you know that silent people become a liability on the entire group. So, in order to make him speak in the group sometimes you take such a stance and you may speak bit louder also. So, how are silent people are treated in the group. If silent people really have been made

to feel that their liability know they should not be done. Moreover, who keeps the ball rolling, I mean you will find not everyone in the discussion continues to speak throughout, but the participation level is to be judged who speaks to whom and who keeps the ball rolling. There are some people who simply believe that they have parted their part, well their acted their part well.

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- How are silent people treated?
- Who talks to whom?
- Who keeps the ball rolling?
- You should show an active interest in the proceedings by being involved throughout the G.D.

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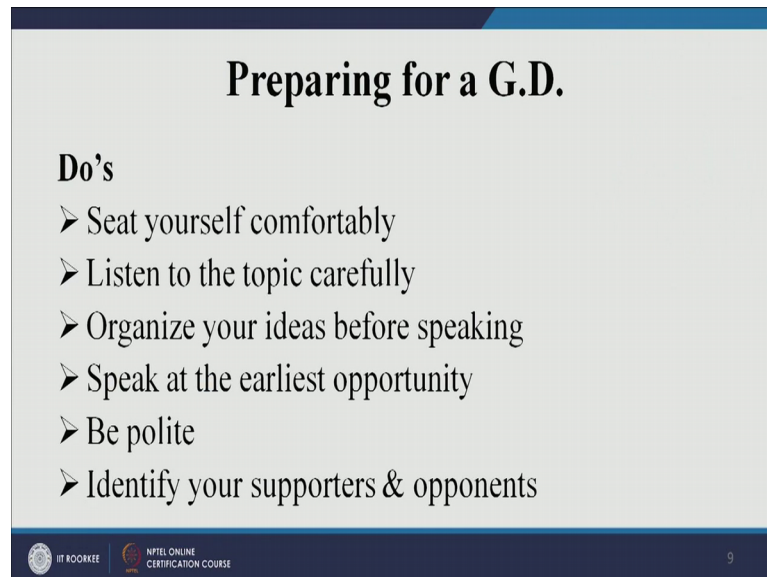
Now, they do not have to do anything you know throughout as I said in the previous lecture also you are to so your participation level and for that you have to so your motivation throughout you have to remain motivated committed in the GD. So, if the participation level is not naturally the discussion will not continue till the time given. So, who keeps the ball rolling, there will be some people who will have more participation.

Why they are more participation not because they only have ideas, but then they are more committed. All of you both as an individual and as a group member should so that you are supporting each other, supporting in a way if you really believe that somebody is trying to augment or somebody is trying to develop your point. So, you should support that panelist does not believe in the thing that since you did not speak a number of times you did not participate.

Actually, he tries to ensure that either by sporting or by rejecting or by opposing you have proved your point. So, you should show an active interest in the proceedings by being involved throughout that is; what is important not that you spoke at one time, and

then suddenly became silent, and you maintain that golden silence for a long time that should not be this spirit. This spirit would be that you are thoroughly there your presence is thoroughly there.

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Preparing for a G.D.

Do's

- Seat yourself comfortably
- Listen to the topic carefully
- Organize your ideas before speaking
- Speak at the earliest opportunity
- Be polite
- Identify your supporters & opponents

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Now, the question is how to prepare for a GD, this question you might come across most of the time. Because as a prospective job seeker as a prospective candidate since you are to be judged in the first instance through a GD. So, what should you do. Now, when you go to the venue and if the seats are arranged, the first thing that you should do is seat yourself comfortably, be comfortably seated, I mean the way you sit that actually reveals, you are nonverbal behavior; the way you start the discussion and if somebody else has a started the discussion and the way you show your reaction through that also you are showing your nonverbal behavior. So, seat yourself comfortably that is the first thing which you should do.

Then listen to the topic know many people those who have often complains that I do not know much they are actually I will call them their escapists because they not believe in listening. So, if you listen to the topic, you know half the battle you can win, if you listen to each and word very carefully. Some of the key words as I have been saying lies in the topic itself. Suppose there is a topic, but when you should understand the meaning of the words, which are in the topic. Some keywords will be there some word will suddenly ignite your thoughts. So, listen to the topic carefully. Listening is an important ingredient

of GD. You know we have been saying that if you listen you will get some more point. Because you know most of us have a good many pieces of information which are lying in our subconscious; and the moment we listen a particular word suddenly we actually become alive. And when you become alive you start contributing to the group. So, listen to the topic carefully.

Now when you start speaking before speaking it is actually mandatory that you should organize your thoughts. When I say organize your thoughts, I mean whatever you have to say organize it in such a manner suppose I am talking about some policies oh which I like which I favor. So, I may say the recent announcement of this appears quite logical and convincing, but then your case does not end there, you have to also talk about the attributes why you feel because, listening is an important part of the GD.

Hence, all of you will see that if you speak one sentence, there has to be some follow up sentences that will ensure that you are having a sort of information on that particular topic. And you have organized and when you organized do not speak only in short sentences or in short phrases, please speak the complete sentence. And then when you speak see that the sentence is grammatically correct that is why I say organize your thoughts before speaking.

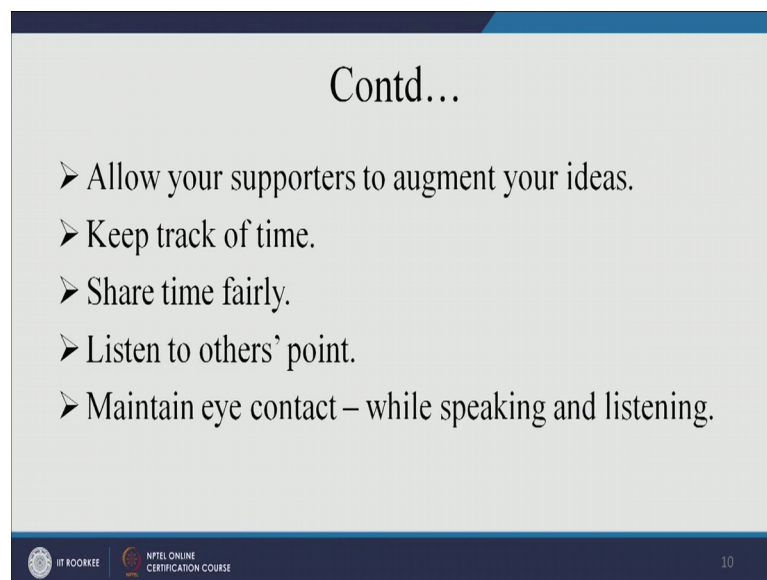
Remember all of you have to speak at the earliest opportunity what do I mean by earliest opportunity for that you cannot snatch others opportunities you have you know it is just like crowded bus where you also deserve some space. So, how you will create your own space is your own endeavor. So, speak at the earliest opportunity, but while doing so, do not fight with others, there are other people also because all the other participants in the group are like you.

So, speak at the earliest opportunity, but see that if other person is speaking, you have to maintain some poise, you have to maintain some balance, you have to have some patience let him speak and then speak. But remember do not allow others to speak continuously. The moment you feel that he has to be stopped, if there is a person who continues to speak for a long time maybe you can just intervene and say something, but when you say something that has to be very rational because you are trying to see that time is being shared equally.

If you have to say something say it in a very polite manner, say it in a very polite manner. As I have earlier talked may I share my piece of mind, may I say my piece of information I believe that what MR. Suraj says may be right in a particular situation, but then this cannot be applied in all other situations like this. Every situation has its own requirements. I mean this is how you are proposing your own viewpoint by being polite.

You also have to identify your supporters and your opponents as we have been saying, but if you are supported is speaking something, you can keep mum and if the need be you can augment his thought. And you somebody is opposing, please listen to his views carefully and then if you feel he needs to be countered, you can put your own views. So, identify your supporters and your opponents.

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- Allow your supporters to augment your ideas.
- Keep track of time.
- Share time fairly.
- Listen to others' point.
- Maintain eye contact – while speaking and listening.

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But remember because the panelist who has given you the time sees to it that everything is done well in time. Of course, so you have to see that you keep track of time and time has to be shared fairly moreover that is should not stop you not from listening to others listen to others; and when you listen to others through your body language through your behavior through your manner, so that you are committed. While you are speaking to somebody please maintain eye contact not only while speaking or putting your own point, but even also while listening. You know all your thoughts all your ideas will be null and void if you do not maintain the eye contact while talking to your opponents or even to your supporters. But remember since GD it such an opportunity where you have

to shared time fairly at times what people do, and that they create a blender is, they are in a great hurry and they simply feel that their space is being taken by others, their time is being taken by others.

So, you have to have certain precautions and one of these precautions, the very first of these precautions is do not be in a hurry to start discussion. Because you know if you have 20 minutes time you will get your time, but you will have to show your own initiative. Never ever try to be silent in a group discussion you have to speak something. And as I gave you the mantra if you do not have any point, and if you there listen two people, perhaps you will get some points, because there is no other the point in a group discussion since there are people who are expressing their views.

Care should be taken that you will never dominate know simply you know some people are under the impression that if they are dominate, they will be decided as leaders that is actually a wrong thought. You know simply by dominating, you cannot become a leader you actually instead of dominate, let us use the word influence, you have to influence the group. How can you influence, you can influence the group by your constructive suggestions, by your rational ideas, by your factual and supporting views. Never take the role of a chairman, who is a chairman, chairman is a person who actually gives judgment know.

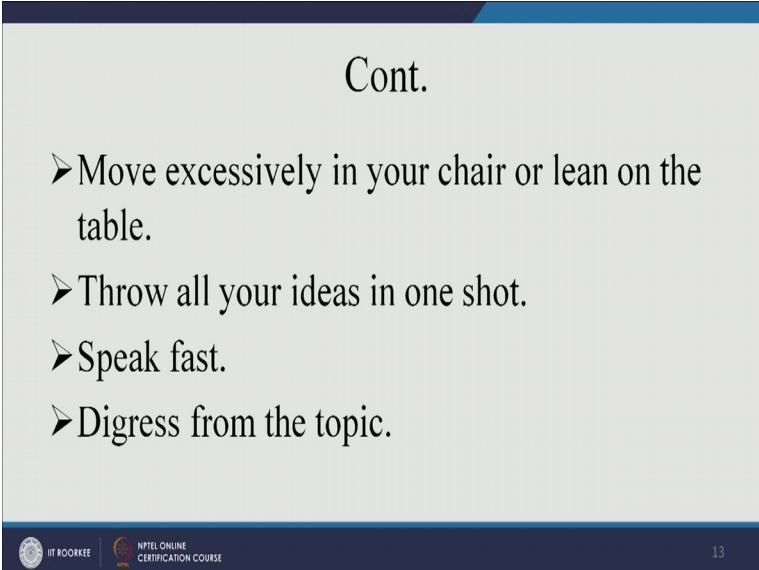
So, you are not to judge, you are to discuss, know your roles and play your part well, you cannot become a spoilsport, I mean you should not become a person who is going to kill you know the entire episode. So, never take the role of a chairman, and do not ever take an extreme stamps. Sometimes you know many people what they do is they take an extreme stance and they become very judgmental, they become very ethical you know you have to be ethical of course, but while discussing you should not so that you are the only person who knows everything, and you are judgmental. And you say you cannot do like this, you cannot speak like this, no, you do not have to do like the you simply have to express your own view points and then you have to maintain that you are a participant as other participants

Of course, you may be exercising your leadership skills through different ways by influencing, by trying to save the other people, who are trying to create a caws. Sometimes, there may be situations where you feel like you know the views of some of

the people you do not like. But then you should not waste time simply by arguing a lot with him, you know he is as good a participant as you, so you need to express your own views and he has also a express his own views. So, never ever enter into arguments many people you know all of us are humans. So, sometimes it. So, happens if we find that there is a supporter for us we start a sort of whispering or parallel conversations. So, do not do that never enter in to arguments with your opponents nor even start whispering with your supporters. Let us try not to pass value judgments.

Moreover, some people while they are participate in the group discussion also start looking at the faculty or at the panelists trying to influence him that he or she is speaking, but then that so wrong trait, never look at the faculty. And if somebody is not speaking I mean if there is a passive speaker, if there an inert speaker, if there is inner participant there is no need to shout at him by using language which at times you feel are quite unbecoming which are swanks. Never do that you know otherwise it will actually kill the spirit of the GD.

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- Move excessively in your chair or lean on the table.
- Throw all your ideas in one shot.
- Speak fast.
- Digress from the topic.

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Some people have often been seen that when they are in a GD and they are discussing, they start moving accessibly; sometimes in ordered to present their views and you want to try to subdue their partners, they actually move forward also. Now, this is very wrong you know you need to maintain a sort of balance, you need to be in the chair, your thoughts have to have you know your ideas have to have weight, you should not show

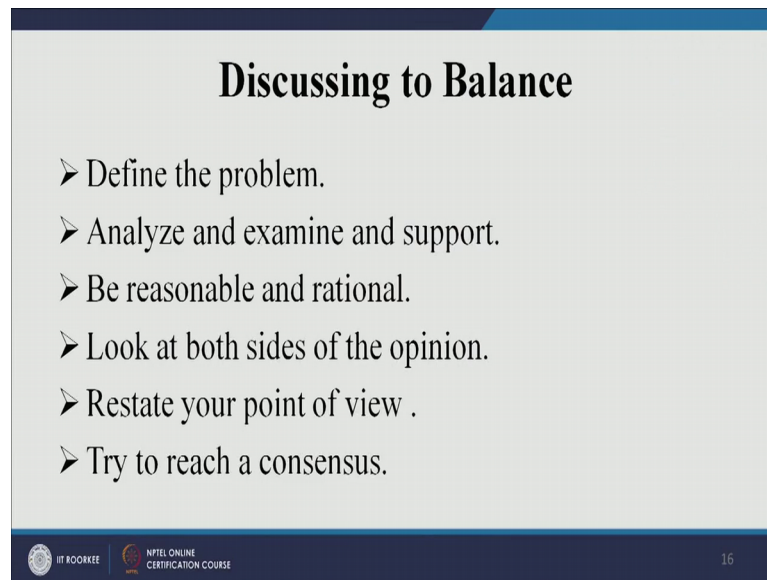
your own weight. Moreover, if you feel that you have lot of ideas never put all the idea just in one go. If you speak everything just in one go, not only you are killing your own time, but you are also spoiling others time. And some people feel that if I starts speaking and if I speak very fast trying to show you know your fluency and all you have to be fluent no doubt, but you do not have to speak so fast, so that others may not understand. Otherwise, if others do not understand your line of thinking is there is any use of being in a GD, no.

If you are a good speaker you will you will maintain a proper pitch, a proper intonation, a proper articulation level in a manner that others also understand. And do not digress from the topic. It has often been seen that at times people while showing their views they deviate from their discussion, but then that will be mended and that will be done by the leader who will try to save the entire group.

There of course, critical issues as I said the critical issue is of one person whom I have in my previous lecture call a person who tries to dominate such a person creates caws and he can appear like a bulldozer. And this bulldozer can be brought back to normalcy simply by finding some weakness or fault in the line of thinking. But then there is no need to be too vocal while handling turbulence; turbulence is a part of the game, but the turbulence need to be controlled and that can be controlled by rational ideas by controlling the thoughts in a very positive manner.

Of course, there are conflicts because of the nature of people, but then that also has to be restricted to great amount. Because there are some people who often while being very excited in order to prove their own points, sometimes they also forget the fact that in a GD, there may be gender differences also, cultural differences also, other some people who are very egoistic, all these things should be kept apart when you participate in a GD. Please see to it that you maintain a proper decorum once you are in a GD because your main objective in a GD is to continue a discussion in a very coherent in a very feasible, in a very rational, in a very logical, in a very democratic in a very ideal manner. And this can be done if you maintain a sort of balance.

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Discussing to Balance

- Define the problem.
- Analyze and examine and support.
- Be reasonable and rational.
- Look at both sides of the opinion.
- Restate your point of view .
- Try to reach a consensus.

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How can this balance come out you know sometimes you may find that the group gets sidetracked. So, at that point of time there are certain majors you can define the problem. And as if as an active participant in the GD you will feel that all of us have to look at both sides of the coin; and whatever views you are going to say you know even if you are going to convince, there is no need that every GD will come to a proper consensus. But at least there should be a proper exchange of words, trial should be made to reach a consensus, but sometimes there are certain topics where you feel there cannot be consensus, but at least you can put forth your own views.

There are certain GD topics which you might be very curious to know about GD topics differ from you know sometimes it may be as I said factual, brain drain should be stopped, human cloning should be ban sometimes, it may be abstract also sometimes it may be factional also sometimes it may be controversial also. For example, if there is a topic like money makes happy, but too much of money make us dissatisfied and unhappy.

If we say there should be no reservation in jobs know that again can be a controversial topic. If we say can all the places of religious importance be transferred or be changed to something else, now such topics can create a lot of you know discussion, but then care has to be taken that the discussion goes in a right manner, and does not create much of a sure are.

My dear friends keeping all these parameters into consideration when you go to participate in a GD take a [FL] mantra I mean take a solid stand, but your stand should be based on logic. And you should always follow the path that you are there to discuss you are there not to quarrel, because sometimes through discussion and through argument, you end up quarreling. Our main motto through GD is not to quarrel, but to express our views and come to a consensus, because it is not only your individual responsibility, but it is also the responsibility of a group. And a group as well as an individual, they contribute to each other because every GD is a blend of individual responsibility and group responsibility.

I do hope that with the sorts of points that we have discussed, now you might be bubbling, you might be getting excited to participate in a GD where you will use all these cautions all these precautions and help yourself become an effective speaker, effective listener and come across any GD topic see to it that you contribute your own might and you become successful.

Thank you very much.