

Training of Trainers
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Lecture 42 - Training Methods: Group discussion

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So as I have discussed with you in my earlier module that we will be talking about the group discussion, panel discussion and exercises and the brainstorming sessions. Now I will demonstrate that how the group discussion is to be conducted, and here I am having the students with me those who will take one particular topic and they will have the group discussion. Similarly while conducting your training program you can ask your trainees to come forward and talk about a particular topic like this we are conducting this particular group discussion and then you can give your comments on the basis of that particular group discussion, as I will be giving my comments also later on as an observer to this particular group.

Before we start the group discussion I will request my students to introduce themselves, so we first we can start.

Student: Hello. I am Deepak Patidar. I am from Indore. I did my engineering in mechanical stream from RGV University, currently I am pursuing my MBA from Department of Management Studies, IIT Roorkee in MBA in Finance and Marketing. And I did my summer internship from Cremica Food Industries Limited and as a financial analyst and I assist them for their imminent IPA process of DRHP, thank you.

Professor: Good.

Student: Hello everyone, my name is Shivam Dhakar, I am from Jaipur and I did my engineering in mechanical stream and then I am pursuing management here at DoMS IIT Roorkee in the field of operations and HR, and I did my summer internship at TAFE Motors and Tractors Limited that is the new name of Eicher. So I was working there as a management trainee.

Student: Hello everyone, I am Sahil Jatale and I am from Indore. I did my civil engineering from Acropolis Institute of Technology, Indore and currently I am pursuing MBA from Department of Management Studies, IIT Roorkee, and my specialisations are HR and marketing. I did my summer internship from Middle Earth HR and I was a HR and marketing trainee.

Professor: Right. Good, yes please.

Student: Hello everyone, I am Sneshish Khan, I am from Kolkata and I did my B.Tech in computer science engineering from Meghnad Saha Institute of Technology. I am presently pursuing MBA in marketing and operations from Department of Management Studies, IIT Roorkee. I completed my summer internship at Reliance Jio Kolkata in the role of marketing intern, thank you.

Professor: Good.

Student: Hello everyone, I am Mohit Verma, I have humble background from Delhi. I have done my B. Tech in mechanical and automation engineering from Maharaja Agrasen Institute of Technology which is also in Delhi. I have come here at Department of Management Studies to pursue my management studies on my MBA course in the area of marketing and operations. I have done my summer internship at Hexagon India and I am pretty excited about the course here.

Professor: Good, so now they have introduced. Like the trainees they will come, if it is an heterogeneous group, so all the trainees will introduce themselves and now we will start the group discussion in practice that how it is to be conducted.

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Student: So we have got the topic from our trainer and the topic for group discussion is “Social networking on Internet is a boon”. So as a group we will put forward the points on this topic.

Student: So as we can see that nowadays Internet is going... Last 1 decade, if we see the history of last 1 decade, there are so many applications of social media connectivity has come and so many indulgence in particular social media networking websites and apps have grown rapidly. So according to me, it is eating a lot of productive time in which we can go somewhere, we can do something but we are devoting our time there.

Student: I believe that despite what you have stated, social media increases the connectivity between people by significant degree. Before social media existed, you could not inform your near and dear ones or your friends or family without personally informing them individually or if they were living nearby then only you can inform them about your daily lives.

Student: I agree with you that social media has made our life easier definitely because communicating and contacting with your family members, friends or whomsoever sitting at XYZ place of the world it was very difficult in earlier days, but now communication has become a very rapid thing, within a few minutes you can get information of the world.

Student: I agree to that but there are ample amounts of studies which also say that social media is a bit of addicting thing. For instance, social media may introduce some sort of personality deviances which were not present while you were not using social media.

Student: I agree with Mohit and I want to counter your point like there are so many other alternatives to connect our parents or dear and near ones ok. We can connect via phone, we can connect by other sources but social media we are not using that as a connectivity at the large, we are just devoting our time and we are...

Student: I actually disagree to that point, I think that social networking has both sides and I want to give example regarding that also. So in previous decade there used to be so many clubs, for example, rotary club in each city, they had other clubs for like for commerce security related clubs and city development related clubs. These were clubs that were physically there and the members had to actually go there and meet everyone and actually network there through talking them face-to-face. Whereas, social networking has opened up the arena for being in contact with people from outside the particular area where the club was situated.

Student: They have diluted the boundaries.

Student: Yes, they have diluted the boundaries. But in the counter of that the relation that the previous clubs formed, the physical relationship, the one-to-one talk and the networking they made by actually going and meeting the people that has diluted. And the kind of trust that kind of relationship made has not been found in any social networking.

Student: But I just want to point out in response to this that despite the fact that personal distance may have increased, the physical distance is no longer a barrier for connectivity. So despite this I think on an overall spectrum considering overall spectrum, connectivity between people has improved due to social media.

Student: But sometimes I feel that this connectivity is a fake kind of thing because the person who is sitting in practical on a ground level which I have seen that a person who is besides us, if I have social media then I do not give so much attention to that person, I am indulging in my own thing ok. So the person who is besides us or the person who is there, there are so many chances to connect with them, there are so many chances to exchange the thoughts and so many chances to exchange the ideas which we can get and we can learn lot of things, so person who is besides us and the person from surroundings are observation. But we are indulging in 4-5 inch of space and then we are lost.

Student: See the era has changed, because earlier they do not used to....multinational companies who used to have nightshifts. Earlier a very particular or typical 9 to 5 job used to

be existed, so people could find time and during the evenings time they could match up and catch up everyone, but now things have changed in the present world. Someone is going in nightshift, someone is going in the morning shift, someone in noon. So even people from same family could not meet for long duration of time, so they could not exchange their thoughts, so I think this is an alternate to this problem.

Student: Actually what just Sahil said, actually what I wanted to say that in previous 10 years, every person has 24 hours per day and he spends those 24 hours as per his requirements. So if you see the trend in those previous 10 years, so the trend has moved from doing actual activities, meaning activities to completely social networking and utilising the apps.

So if let us say if you wanted to train in something so you could have spent like 2 hours, 3 hours on training class in previous time. Now what people do, they spend the entire 3 hours on social networking which may or may not be adding value that much as a particular training may do, so that is the kind of trend I am talking about that is actually harming the society.

Student: We can also see that there is lot of knowledge in the social networks right now on the Internet. For instance, you have advertisement that you do not want to see but artificial intelligence counters that. However, if you go to particular event for social networking for instance now LinkedIn is collaborating for organising the events that are off-line, not just online. So there you do not have to waste your time on activities that you do not want to do. However in social media there are chances that you will waste your time.

Student: Adding to him like one more important point that it is like hampering the viewpoints of people as well. They are circulating the news and the same news is going to the hands of the people very rapidly, and it may harm the society as well. Like elections, during US election and now our country's election are going to happen in 2019. So like government of India strictly went to Facebook kind of social medias that they cannot involve these kinds of things, but still the opinions has been changed just because of the transfer of this kind of information, so it could hamper the overall result of the society.

Student: I would like to point out a response to this in support of this. There is also incidents of fake news being promoted through social media, but I also have a point counter to this. Social media has also been a resistance in cases of disaster relief, for example, in Facebook you can notify whether you are safe or not in case of a crisis.

Student: Latest example of Kerala floods that happened, so Army could get to know that where the particular person is stuck and who can help him, so social networking has very good effect in this thing.

Student: In this scenario I am completely agreeing you.

Student: But talking on a larger scenario I would say that as far as businesses is concerned, now many businesses are online shifted from traditional brick and mortar within boundaries they have gone online. So companies are diversifying themselves through social media, so we cannot ignore this part of social media that it has made business effective and economical with less resources as start-up could be introduced and people can purchase things online as in case of Amazon and Flipkart.

Student: I want to add in Indian context here. If you see, the majority of the population do not have access to Internet in India. However, there are approximately 300 million users of Internet in India. The masses of India is still dependent on age-old custom of meeting people, however, the Internet is not very much accepted in the terms that you think in the West. When you see the masses of India the context is bit different from the US context or European context, Japanese context for instance.

Student: So like I wanted to point out that as you said that the business is moving, the industry is also coming on, the industry is moving completely online. Yes, it has provided the arena for advertisement but as Snehashish said that there is lot of fake news because every XYZ person without any credibility or any backing can create an event or a news or a source for a news that can be utilized by other person to create a hysteria. Now that is something that is a kind of situation that social networking has not yet faced, they are saying that it is part of the Internet revolution and it has actually freed people and they have given freedom of right to speak to people, but they are not considering the impact of actual right being implemented there because not everyone has sense of responsibility as an intellectual we have.

Some people use it there derogatively, you can see during various elections of various countries that digital marketing has actually become a part of campaign of various political parties. They actually analyse how people react to a candidate, what is the kind of situation online and that is how they judge the behaviour of people and predict that how much chances a candidate has.

Student: So in your opinion the social media is actually a gift to mankind but it is being abused by people, right?

Student: There can be remedy like the validation of the news, if someone is circulating news among the people, there should be something, a system of filter where it would be validated, if it would be validated then this is the best thing for human kind.

Student: When you talk about that filter, I think the problems that we face here, most of them are short lived. With the advent of technology, with acceptance of technology, in the form of artificial intelligence, filters can be added which can remove these kinds of fake news.

Student: Like in day-to-day life people make online friends and they go to meet them and we certainly read instances where they have been cheated or looted by them. But on the other hand, we are not seeing that thing that if some kid has lost or somewhere he has missed from his near and dear ones, he could also be gathered or he could meet the original thing, his natives through the social media. So it is up to the human or mankind that how he makes the use of social media as a tool to connect or to be cheated.

Student: But again it is in the hands of people, whether they want a firewall as China has put up around their social media, that monitor their social media or do we want somewhat freedom as various European nations have provided to their citizen? But again, as intellectual we have to understand the pros and cons, yes there are some pros regarding social media, yes they have eased the life of various victims or various people who have lost their families but again as I said it is not like, I can give you an example. For example, in a large community that is one set of it which is very influential online, they are publishers, they are media personals, they are ideals of millions. So these people in their own spade can spread a news that is actually not true about the entire society, so that is something that needs to be countered.

The right should be equal for everyone, it should not be a situation where only few people can control the flow of information and create a trend that is actually not good for the society.

Student: But then it is individual's responsibility to determine what is the fact and what is an opinion.

Student: See, the time taken between acknowledging the responsibility by the individuals, by the part of the society is in the information age and on the social media, it is still very slow. In case of influences they react very fast to these situations.

Student: Actually there is a big difference between opinion and advocated opinion, so that actually is the main criteria of consideration.

Student: That is the situation right, in social media how do we separate those?

Student: I think the problem is that last one decade the things are rapidly changing or lots of things... So we are not analysing the things in short period of time that what is happening and what is not happening, so we humans also are very confused about that how to use this tool and how can it be beneficial for us. So in a rapid way or an anonymously or in a lack of knowledge we do the things which we should not be doing, we are not supposed to do that things, we circulate the news which are not supposed to be circulated just because of this.

We need here education as well, we need integrity and nitty gritty of the particular things that which we have to circulate, which we do not have to circulate, which will harm and what is the intensity of the harming of the things. Like defence, so whatever the things are happening in defence we cannot circulate among the people because these are very secretive norms and everything is secretive kind of thing. So these kinds of things we also need to understand and we need to educate ourselves and our society as well that how to use this tool.

Student: But apart from defence I would say that even we share personal news, that is also not good. So we should know the boundaries and people should be educated properly before using the Internet. Before giving them smart phones we should make them aware that how and what is to be posted. People very often share that where they are going, what is their location, there are high chances and there have been instances in the past that people have been kidnapped or being cheated because of their location sharing or their personal information such as birthdates or something. So this shall be, this is the, this ball is in the court of the human that who is using it, so he should be educated properly and then he should be using the thing.

Student: I have also seen so many instances that the people are so much addicted towards this kind of applications and everything, they do not consider their family members as well, their lives have been completely changed. They do not spare time with them and do things which they earlier used to do the things, so it is impacting the new generation as well, they are also

not devoting that much of time and that is why intellectually or morally or emotionally they are not as much developed as they are supposed to be developed and which we have developed.

Student: I would just like to point out...

Student: The reason behind it is that the kind of euphoria that we had when we were young figmental friends, again the situation is coming back into like in the older ages, being teen or being adults that we get the same euphoria again when we think about our virtual friends. So I think that is the reason why the level of development that the current youth has and the youth that was like a few decades back, the level of maturity and the development is not there in that.

Student: I would just like to point out that mankind has always evolved and has adapted to use of various tools and technologies. When newspapers came, mankind started to use newspapers, when radio came they started listening to radio, when television came they started watching TV for many hours every day. Same has occurred with social media, it will also be a phase of similar technology someday.

Student: But see the people have actually adopted technologies because they thought that they were actually good. Newspaper was adopted because it represented the freedom of press that any information that they provide is actually better for us and better for our development and our knowledge of the outside world. But the current technology is making people more reactive rather than inquisitive about information. They react faster to let say any news rather than inquest that actually what happened.

Student: But actually I would just like to point out, when Edison invented light bulb, people were very critical over it, people did not want it, some of the other inventions were also rejected by masses. After a while, some of them even abused them for various works but similarly afterwards it stabilised, it became just something that is used by people.

Student: Social media is designed in such a way that users get addicted to it. For instance, you need more viewers so that your business can flourish.

Student: Actually business model is dependent on the viewers like their whole and sole money is coming from the viewers and the participants, the more the participants the more

time they will spend, time factor is also very important. More time they will spend, more they will get the money.

Student: Snehashish has naturally covered the kind of core of what is the issues behind, any issue behind social network. As you said that when the bulb was invented people were critical to it, when photography was invented the church was very critical to it because they thought that it was the work of devil. So there was a period of time that actually allowed people to digest the knowledge that this new technology had been providing. Whereas, in case of social media there has been no gestation time, as I said the people are more reactive to technology rather than more inquisitive, so people did not get that gestation time...

Student: But eventually I believe in gestation abilities of it.

Student: On the contrary, I think the gestation period has already passed. For instance, you can see people just sticking to their mobile phone and walking on the roads, this is because they have been accepting the technology on the social media.

Student: But how many people do you think those who are addicted to the social networking actually know that how the social networking actually works? Do they know that the revenue that they actually generate for the company that they are actually pseudo-employees for the company, do they know that? If you ask the people who are very addicted to the social networking, I would say like 80 percent to 90 percent of people do not actually know that what is their business model, how the social networking actually works.

Student: I think people might be knowing it because when refrigerators or say air-conditioners were introduced, people did not accept it very easily. Even in rural areas people do not use it now as well, so I can say that people might be knowing. You are saying about addiction, so people may smoke or say drink that is also an addiction, so they knew it that what is the harmful effects or what they have to suffer but they do not accept it openly but they knew it from the insight.

Student: I would like to quote my concept idea that there is a certain gustation period regarding any new thing. Cigarettes for example, there was a gustation period when people thought that it was fun, it was cool and it was very good for them, but after some time people acknowledged no, this is causing cancer right. Similar for refrigerators, initially people thought that it was a very good technology, it was revolutionary for the industry.

Student: Pricing was an issue initially.

Student: Yeah, pricing was an issue but my point was that after some time after they actually got to the gustation of technology that what actually how actually it works, they came to know that the gases that were utilised in refrigerants they were actually causing the depletion of ozone layer. Now the newer refrigerants are ozone friendly, now this is something I am saying that people have directly gone into social networking. I am saying still that 90 percent of people do not actually know how it works, now until and unless you know how it works, you will not know that what are the pros and cons of any technology, they will only understand the superficial thing of it. That yes I want to send some photos or send some details to my friends, I will use this app.

Student: From consumer's point of view I think what you are saying is partially true because as a consumer I want technology to make my life easier, whether it is refrigerator because it is quite bulky I may not accept it initially. However, maybe later on I may be using it. For social networking the same scenario, maybe because my friends are not on social network what should I do? So when my friends are on the social network, I will also be on social network so that I can be in constant touch with them.

Student: Okay. So as we have discussed here and I want to come in the conclusion part. In conclusion, there are mixed opinion from the group like somebody is liking it, somebody is not liking it, somebody they are liking it to some extent, they are liking it up to that extent, so we got mixed opinions. And I want to conclude that social media is very good for humankind on the part of connectivity, on the part of expressing their thoughts, but it is bad for humanity and for society when it is fake news or addiction kind of things are associated with this. So this is all up to the person or individual who is using them and the society with whom they are living so that they should not hamper their life as well and they should use this tool with their wisdom, so this is the conclusion of our GD.

Student: I want to add one last line that social media is a boon but conditions apply.

Student: Okay, thank you so much.

Student: Thank you, sir.

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Professor: As you have observed this group discussion, it was intentionally planned. And now I will give the certain feedback to these participants and interacting with them and you will also see that is how the trainer has to conclude this particular session as part of the training program. I have mentioned in my earlier module about whenever we talk about group discussion, in the group discussion there are 2 parts are very important; first is the content and the second one is the soft skills that is your communication, your body postures. So before I start my comments, I will take the feedback from the participants that is when they came to know about this particular topic so what was their reaction, Deepak?

Student: Sir then first of all I thought about the content like what should I have to start and then when my colleagues were putting their points then I was also brainstorming myself as well that how to response them and how to accept their points and what are their important points and everything, so it was a very good exercise we had done here.

Professor: So what is your strength you think during group discussion and where you think that you are required to improve upon?

Student: First of all, strength was my listening, I listened everyone's points and then at the same time I was making my point in my mind as well, so this is my strength. Second thing is that there might be, I think my communication is the point where I have to work out because the particular word I have to think about that which word I have to put, so this is the slight area where I have to improve.

Professor: Right. Okay, fine.

Student: So it was a very good brainstorming session, my colleagues could tell me much what I used to think about social media, so it was beyond the boundaries but I used to think the pros and cons of social media. As far as the strength I am concerned, it was like I was good in listening skills and thinking more on what person could point out because what I need to know that is more important, I can tell it the N as well. And where I need to improve is that I go much deep into the listening of the other part and I hesitate to speak, so I could speak lesser in that thing, I think this is my view.

Professor: Right, so therefore first I will take these two participant's feedback and the trainer then has to help them that is what is important is the vocabulary, vocabulary is very important. First is the ideation that is what idea comes in your mind, as soon as you listen the particular topic then immediately you have to synchronise your ideas that what will be the ideas. Normally I suggest participants to go through the SPELT: Social, political, economical, legal and technological. So these points you have to immediately consider. For example, the social media, what is the social impact is there, what is the political impact is there, like one participant has just mentioned about the election and all, so then definitely in that case that was a political point is there.

Is there any economic effect is there? Because you are the management graduates, so you have to also see, it is having the advertisement effect, right? So economic effect is to be seen. Legal effect like nowadays the major problem is that the legal aspect of this particular social media, yes. And that points you have covered, that is about it should not be the fake news, and if it is a fake then it is the misuse of the social media right? So then there are legal aspects are there, government of India is working on that, right and the technological aspect is there. So the technological aspect is the strength of this particular. So what I will suggest is that communication practice and synchronisation of ideation.

Because it is very important in group discussion your initiation, what initiative you take, and second is how do you conclude. So initiation, participation and conclusion, these 3 aspects are very very important, yes Shivam.

Student: So I think my take on the GD was that the idea of being diplomatic on any topic is most important when we go for GD because it is not necessary that we have to point out only our opinion, we have to understand others' opinions and change our stand as per that and that

is required in outside world as well. Now my strength in the GD was that I was strong on my topic and I was ready to push my idea towards it but I was also listening towards what others were saying. For example, Snehashish and Mohit also pointed out the issues with my point and also their weak points actually enforced my points, so I was ready to accept what they have to give to me.

And I keep my mind open towards new ideas and new perspectives towards the social media. As many of us did not know that social media was actually used in campaigns of election, so I actually thought that would be an important part of GD and getting-to-know. Now I did not know that in brick and mortar system what was the impact of development of the business online, the others told me about it. So I think that openness helped me out in understanding the topic.

Professor: So I agree that we have to listen to others also and then we have to put our points also, but just a word of caution is that one should not look confused, right. One should be very clear about this particular topic whether he is in favour or he is in against, so he can talk about the flavour also, he can talk about against also, he can talk about the strengths also, he can talk about the weakness also but at the end when he is speaking about the strengths, weaknesses or balancing these points, at the end he should be clear what is his opinion. So whether ultimately he takes it as strength or ultimately he takes it as a weakness, so be careful that is whenever you are making the group discussion, finally your opinion should come as a firm opinion right.

Yes, what is about you? He was in leadership position setting his concern, however as far as the body language is concerned, some of them were having crossed hands right. So crossed hands should not be there, it should be open hand like the Sahil sitting if you have observed that was a proper which has been told that is in the group discussion what should be the body language. And as far as position, leader's position was good, only thing that he was little bit bent, so avoid it and you have to stand erect. As far as the eye contact is concerned, all of you were having very good eye contact that was a strength and it was really looking like a discussion in a group, however your points please.

Student: This GD was a very good learning experience and I learnt much by listening to opinions of my colleagues. I learned to understand that my own views and not the only views and there was much to learn from my colleagues. As far as strengths are concerned, I think I

had a firm grasp on the concept of GD, concept of the topic but I think I have to improve on the structure of GD as well as my body language.

Professor: Okay, what is about the comments as a leader position?

Student: My position as a leader, I do not really have any actual comments on that.

Professor: I actually commented on that. Okay, fine. Yes, please.

Student: My first thought was that it is a GD not a debate; it is a discussion not a debate, so I have to be an active listener.

Professor: Very good point.

Student: Everybody is speaking something, they may have something different point of view, I have different point of view but that should not be the centre point of GD. GD is to explore, if you are exploring any issue, you can find out that you are not thinking what the other person is thinking, that what happened with me on certain point. However, we can also explore the concept of lateral thinking, you know when I am thinking something, and maybe I am thinking in some particular direction from top to bottom structure, however, in lateral thinking you go sideways as well. I think soft skills was a very good concept that this GD did not became a fish market, everybody was you know very open to others' opinions and that helped me express my opinions. I was a bit hesitant on what should be the point of entries for the GD, that was I think my weakness.

Professor: Okay, so this is all about their opinions and I am sure that in the GD as I mentioned, the content and then the soft skills. If you focus on that then definitely you can have very fruitful discussion in a group. Thank you, thank you all of you.

Student: Thank you sir.

Student: Thank you sir.

Student: Thank you sir.