

## Leading a Discussion

### Before you watch

#### A

Discuss the questions with a partner and then share your answers with the class.

1. What types of small group discussions do you participate in at work or at school? Choose or add from this list:
  - study groups
  - brainstorming meetings
  - event planning
  - work improvement
  - organizational meetings
2. During discussions, do you prefer to talk a lot and offer your ideas, or do you like to listen most of the time and take notes about everyone else's ideas?
3. How important are these qualities for a good discussion leader? Rank the qualities 1 (most important) -5 (least important).

- \_\_\_ does most of the talking
- \_\_\_ asks everyone for their opinion
- \_\_\_ prepares questions to ask the group in advance
- \_\_\_ comes to the discussion with solutions
- \_\_\_ handles disagreements between participants well

### Video

#### A

Watch the video and choose the correct option to complete the sentences.

1. A good discussion leader's main job is ...
  - a. to get the group members to share ideas and find a solution.
  - b. to resolve conflicts and make a final decision for the group.
2. At the beginning of the discussion, the leader should ...
  - a. outline possible solutions.
  - b. set objectives about what needs to be discussed.
3. Small group discussions are more efficient when ...
  - a. there are rules and structure in place to give each member a chance to speak.
  - b. the participants with the best ideas have sufficient time to argue their points.
4. A discussion leader can remain neutral in the discussion by ...
  - a. giving everyone equal time to speak and discussing all possible solutions.
  - b. letting anyone speak who wants to and deciding who is right when conflicts occur.

## B

Match the beginnings of the sentences (1–5) with the endings (a–e) to complete the advice about leading a discussion.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. ___ Ask each person in the group to speak by | a. deciding on the next steps the group should take.                 |
| 2. ___ End arguments by                         | b. calling on participants individually.                             |
| 3. ___ Evaluate solutions by                    | c. providing feedback on participants' ideas.                        |
| 4. ___ Review the ideas from time to time by    | d. summarizing the main points.                                      |
| 5. ___ Finalize ideas and reach a solution by   | e. letting participants know they don't have to agree on everything. |

## C

Complete the sentences.

correctly    even if    make    move    review    saying    thought    thoughts

1. What are your \_\_\_\_\_ on the plan so far?
2. If I understand you \_\_\_\_\_, you're \_\_\_\_\_ you'd like to make a change.
3. Let's \_\_\_\_\_ the ideas we have first, and then think of new ones.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ we don't agree, let's \_\_\_\_\_ forward with the other details.
5. Thanks for that \_\_\_\_\_. You \_\_\_\_\_ a good point.

## Digital skills focus

### A

Complete the tips for leading an online discussion. Choose the correct option.

1. If you can't hear a participant, ask the participant to **mute / unmute** their microphone.
2. If participants want to interrupt, they can **lower / raise** their virtual hand.
3. Participants can respond to an idea by writing feedback **in the chat / on the screen**.
4. At the beginning of the meeting, **share / display** your screen so everyone can see the objectives you want to accomplish.
5. If participants need time to brainstorm ideas, make **chat rooms / breakout rooms** where they can have private conversations.

## Language focus

### A

Complete the conversation with the words in the box.

thoughts	step-by-step	summarize	analyzed	open-ended	call on
	feedback	equal time	remain neutral	resolve	

Erin: Good morning, everyone. I'd like to get your **1** \_\_\_\_\_ on ways to help people who are working from home. Ted, take us through the issues they're facing **2** \_\_\_\_\_.

Ted: Thanks, Erin. I have a long report, but let me **3** \_\_\_\_\_ the main point here. Employees are very productive, but they feel isolated. As we **4** \_\_\_\_\_ the problem, we realized they needed to connect more.

Erin: So, let me ask an **5** \_\_\_\_\_ question to start our discussion. How do we include our remote workers more? Sue, I hope you don't mind if I **6** \_\_\_\_\_ on you first.

Sue: No problem. I have about ten ideas I'd like **7** \_\_\_\_\_ on.

Erin: Well, let's start with one. I want to give **8** \_\_\_\_\_ to everyone.

Sue: We could have everyone at home attend a 9 a.m. online meeting with people in the office.

Ted: But some people are in different time zones.

Erin: Let's try to **9** \_\_\_\_\_ until we hear all the suggestions. We'll **10** \_\_\_\_\_ conflicts after everyone has a chance to speak.

### B

Complete the collocations of verbs and nouns.

call on	follow	keep	move	remain
---------	--------	------	------	--------

- \_\_\_\_\_ forward
- \_\_\_\_\_ on track
- \_\_\_\_\_ a process
- \_\_\_\_\_ everyone individually
- \_\_\_\_\_ neutral

## C

Discuss in pairs or groups. Which statement is an example of language that a good discussion leader would use? Explain your choice.

1. Call on everyone individually
  - a. "Tom, you haven't said much during the discussion. Don't you have an opinion?"
  - b. "We haven't heard from you yet, Tom. I'd like to give you a chance to speak."
  
2. Give everyone equal time
  - a. "Excuse me, but you've been talking for 20 minutes. Other people would like to speak too."
  - b. "Everyone has ten minutes to present their idea. Your time is almost up, so can you summarize your main points?"
  
3. Give feedback
  - a. "You make a good point, but I wonder if you have considered any problems this might cause."
  - b. "I don't think your idea will work because it might cause problems."

## Digital communicative task

### A

Participate in a small group discussion to help remote employees and on-site employees work together.

- Before the meeting, decide how to structure the discussion and create a document to share on screen.

*Objective:*

*By the end of the meeting* \_\_\_\_\_

*Structure:*

*Group discussion with* \_\_\_ *minutes per person.*

*Discuss* \_\_\_\_\_

*Open-ended questions:*

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

- Conduct a few minutes of the discussion. Use the screen share feature to share the objective, the structure and the open-ended question. Call on each group member to speak.
  
- End the discussion with a summary of the ideas and next steps by the discussion leader.

**After your discussion, listen to the feedback from students who observed your small group discussion.**