

Personal Attributes That Emerge Out of Group Discussion

Sanjeev Kumar Mathur and Sunil Kumar Gupta

Abstract—Group discussion is a key to the selection of young graduates/ post graduates/ researchers in various streams in contemporary recruitment procedures. It facilitates recruiters to pinpoint versatility of job seekers and match with the job profile so that they can fit in to organizational scheme of things. Most of the candidates do not understand the significance of this powerful methodology that organizations employ to unearth the talent out of plethora of aspiring candidates.

Index Terms—Group Discussion, Job profile, Job seeker, Recruitment, Talent

I. INTRODUCTION

Gone are the times when there was scarcity of human talent in different areas of specialization with the liberalization of education pan world. Every organization wants to have a pool of charismatic professionals who can turn around the business fortunes overnight. The reason: Competition is stiff and today's brilliant idea becomes tomorrow's common thought for all. To understand this concept, let us take the example of MBAs that are being churned out globally every year. It will not be inappropriate to say that loads of MBAs are inundated every year nowadays as compared to handful of guys who aspired this post graduate degree in the 1970s. The institutions awarding this degree were limited across the globe during those times and this degree was a passport to a dream job for one and all with hefty pay packages. In comparison to all that we have stated, overabundance of MBA institutes in the last one decade have led to a chaotic situation and there is a huge loss in terms of quality of MBAs produced. The outcome: Organizations are in a dilemma to find right person on the right job, as it is a headache for them to segregate genius from mediocre talent, as number of candidates applying for a position are in massive quantity. Group discussion has come into view as a vital cog to pick the better than the best talent to fill up vacancies. This is applicable to all industries [1-14].

II. GROUP DISCUSSION

Group discussion, as the name suggests allows group of people to discuss at length a topic with well chosen words and preciseness either in favour of or against it. It is a quick elimination cum selection round of candidates to hasten up the selection procedure. Since each position attracts a

sizeable number of candidates and it is a cumbersome exercise to subject all for personal interview due to time consumption, group discussion becomes a handy tool to distinguish talent from trash stuff. GD provides a lot of insight in to each individual's personality. The various facets gets exposed which may be further explored during one to one interaction

III. NEED OF GROUP DISCUSSION

This is a constructive tool to assess various dimensions of candidates in quest of spotting the right talent. This encompasses all facets of human personality ranging from communication skills to analytical skills including emotional quotient, which is very significant to be successful at work place.

IV. ABILITY TO HANDLE SITUATION OFF HAND

A successful professional is one who is an intelligent planner and prepares himself to practice with excellence as the benchmark. Ability to speak well with clarity of thought helps candidate to stand apart in the group. It is also an individual's testimonial to think rationally and assimilate views and present effectively. In GDs, this quality comes out very clearly and interviewer can assess individual ability to tackle situations impromptu.

V. COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Eloquence is of paramount importance to speak out mind clearly. For communication to be effective, a candidate has to pay attention to 3 things:

- Communication must be precise
- Communication has to be meaningful
- Communication must be free from any grammatical mistakes

A pleasing personality with power packed communication strongly supports candidature. In fact, many jobs require excellent command over language such as anchoring, call centre executives, customer relationship managers, pharmaceutical sales executives etc. As discussions proceed, communication skills surface in favour of good candidates. It will not be incorrect to say that excellent language control of professionals in certain organizations is their back bone that makes it stand tall among competitors.

VI. ABILITY TO SYNTHESIZE SEVERAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION

With the advent of internet technology, the knowledge has become omnipresent. There is no dearth of information

Manuscript received April 15, 2011; revised May 24, 2011.

Sanjeev Kumar Mathur is an Assistant Professor in Department of MBA, with Yagyavalkya Institute of Technology Jaipur, Rajasthan, INDIA (e-mail: skmonnet@yahoo.co.in).

Sunil Kumar Gupta is an Assistant Professor in Department of Electrical Engineering with Yagyavalkya Institute of Technology Jaipur, Rajasthan, INDIA (e-mail: sunil_sunel@yahoo.co.in).

available on internet. All that is required is to be a garrulous reader to expand intellect. A well read candidate who dwells upon the topic projects a clear cut picture about his willingness to explore new horizons and a burning desire to seek knowledge. The dissemination of quality information in GD promptly gets registered in the mind of interviewers and an urge to explore such a candidate becomes quite obvious. It is commonly seen that an avid reader always scores over sluggish readers.

VII. Demeanor

A person's character, values, belief and upbringing comes forth naturally during the discussions that participants indulge into. Either of the two basic characters of every participant i.e. fake or genuine comes into sight as the debate steps forward. Every organization wants to create and nurture conducive and encouraging environment in which individuals brings out their best to help organization achieve its time bound goals with great ease and comfort. This calls for integrity, amiability, persuasiveness, patience, diligence, etc. which surfaces tangibly in group discussions. There are jobs which need soft spoken employees who are pleasant to talk to, with enormous amount of zeal to work for longer hours. Many organizations take pride to talk about their culture that inculcates good demeanor.

VIII. Enthusiasm

Enthusiasm is a sum total of an individual's involvement, honesty, commitment, sincerity and belief. Such motley shades of an individual's personality are quite apparent in debates. Most organizations buy aspirant's enthusiasm treating the same as an important attribute and an integral part of a successful professional. Even in tense situations, an enthusiastic worker will continue to spread around positive vibes and work indefatigably to come out of a tight situation. Enthusiasm is contagious and enthusiastic people are fantastic carriers. Enthusiasm is the most powerful positive feature one may be in possession of and that is what recruiters are always in search of through healthy group discussions.

IX. Leadership Skills

A good leader skillfully manages his team members, always smiling, showing warmth of friendliness and setting example to others by leading the team from the front. His familiarity with modern management techniques stays him ahead of his followers. Group discussion is a wonderful instrument to measure up leadership skills on various parameters that organizations prioritise. Leadership skills may be innate or acquired. No Bill Gates or Mother Teresa or Barak Obama was a born leader. Through experiences of life, leadership qualities were built; nurtured and later refinement was done to illuminate the masses across the globe. A leader is always a visionary, a creative thinker and an executor of his ideology. He converts stumbling blocks into stepping stones to write a wonderful script of success for many generations to follow. A clear cut distinction can

be made between dominant or submissive personality through GD.

X. Depth of Knowledge

The requirements of corporate world are very different and at times, there is a mismatch between the qualification of employees and the corporate needs. The present jobs are pretty demanding and expect its employees to be champions in every walk of life. Apart from being good in academics, it is expected that the new recruits will be street smart with profound knowledge in every field. It is deep understanding of other areas that makes a candidate multi faceted and all rounder who can emerge out a victorious winner in any circumstances. Knowledge is the accumulation of information as wealth and timely act on it. This superb quality makes individuals look and perform at a different platform than others.

XI. Thinking Skills

An open inquisitive mind always filters correct information and stores in brain from the surroundings. It is very essential to ignore redundant information from the useful information. This can only be done by a rational mind. It is often being said that if the input is good in quality, and correct process is followed, then output will also be superb. A rational thinking brain in a given set of conditions will yield an excellent result. GD is quite an interesting exercise to segregate quick thinking rational brains from slow-moving ones. The thinking skills of professionals lay the foundation of a sound organization that can withstand any storm by sheer analysis of situation and take timely correct decisions.

XII. Considerate

Patience to listen to the views of others, give chance to others to put forward their viewpoints that may be a value addition to the group in search of an answer, empathizing with colleagues, maintaining decorum etc. are those qualities that are a "must" in a team work. Prospective recruiters relate it easily during group discussion with participating individuals to discover this essential attribute. Insensitivity of team players or leaders may yield disastrous results that may be detrimental to the organizational health. It is being said by Bill Gates that it is fine to celebrate success, but more important is to heed to the lessons of failure. This is possible if one is a good listener and attentive to the surroundings.

XIII. Ability to Absorb Others' Views

In corporate world adaptability, respect for one and all and ability to listen to others are very essential. All such attributes surface easily as candidate immerses in to Group Discussion. Some key factors of a successful team are great degree of flexibility among team members and mutual

admiration and respect. Arguments, lack of respect to heed to colleagues' viewpoints are those shortcomings that are very expensive for any organization to afford. Organizations need ductile and malleable professionals to work as a cohesive team at the grass root level.

XIV. CONCLUSION

Group discussion is an effective and sure shot methodology to assess personal attributes of young professionals and need to be judiciously handled by aspiring candidates to get a coveted job at the grass root level. Thorough understanding about the motive behind such an exercise by the recruiters can make the task of candidates as easy as a pie.

REFERENCES

- [1] Vroom, Victor; Sternberg, Robert J., "Theoretical Letters: The person versus the situation in leadership". *The Leadership Quarterly* 13: 301–323, 2002.
- [2] Spillane, James P., Richard, Diamond and John, "Towards a theory of leadership practice". *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 36 (1): 3–34, 2004.
- [3] Miner, J. B., "Organizational Behavior: Behavior 1: Essential Theories of Motivation and Leadership" Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 2005.
- [4] Crawford, C. J., "Corporate Rise the X Principles of Extreme Personal Leadership" Santa Clara, CA: XCEO, 2005.
- [5] Frey, M., Kern, R., Snow, J., & Curlette, W., "Lifestyle and Transformational Leadership Style" *Journal of Individual Psychology*, 65(3), 212-240, 2009.
- [6] Renesch, John, "Conscious Leadership: Taking Responsibility for Our Better Future," LOHAS Weekly Newsletter, March 1, 2001.
- [7] Barnlund, D. C., "A Transactional Model of Communication. In. C. D. Mortensen (Eds.), *Communication theory* (2nd ed., pp. 47-57). New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction, 2008.
- [8] Daniels, M.D., D.; Price, PhD, V., "The Essential Enneagram," New York: Harper Collins, 2000.
- [9] Tagger, S., Hackett, R., Saha, S., "Leadership Emergence in Autonomous Work Teams: Antecedents and Outcomes" *Personnel Psychology*, 52, 899-926, 1999.
- [10] Kickul, J., & Neuman, G., "Emergence leadership behaviors: The function of personality and cognitive ability in determining teamwork performance and KSAs" *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 15, 27-51, 2000.
- [11] Foti, R.J., & Hauenstein, N.M.A., "Pattern and Variable Approaches in Leadership Emergence and Effectiveness" *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 92, 347-355, 2007.
- [12] Lussier, R.N., & Achua, C.F., "Leadership, Theory, Application, & Skill Development" (4th ed). Mason, OH: South-Western Cengage Learning, 2010.
- [13] Tittmore, James A., "Leadership at all Levels" Canada: Boskwa Publishing, 2003.
- [14] Kaiser, R. B., Hogan, R., & Craig, S. B., "Leadership and the Fate of Organizations" *American Psychologist*, 63(2), 96, 2008.

Sanjeev Kumar Mathur received Gold Medal in B.Sc (Science Maths) from Maharaja's College, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, Rajasthan in the year 1982 and completed M.Sc. (Chemistry) from Department of Chemistry, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, Rajasthan in 1984. He passed out MBA (Marketing Management) in 1990 from R A Podar Institute of Management, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, Rajasthan. After serving pharmaceutical industry for 23 years at various responsible positions (the last being Sales Manager, Bal Pharma Ltd., Bangalore) and successfully training professionals pan India , he moved to education sector to teach his real life experiences in a bid to create employable and deployable MBAs to various industries. Presently, he is having three years of teaching experience as HOD – Department of MBA, Yagyavalkya Institute of Technology, Jaipur.

Sunil Kumar Gupta received his B.E. in Electrical Engineering from University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, India in 2003 and M.E. in Power Electronics Machine Design and Drives from Maharshi Dayanand University *Rohtak*, India in 2006. Presently he is a research scholar in Department of Electrical Engineering, Malaviya National Institute of Technology Jaipur (INDIA). He is working as an assistant professor and Head in Department of Electrical Engineering, Yagyavalkya Institute of Technology *Jaipur*. He is having more than six years teaching, research and industrial experience. His research interests include power electronics, power system, electrical machines, drive and non-conventional energy sources.