**II yr BE Mechanical engineering MEES 402 Soft skills development**

**Unit IV**

**Corporate Skills- What are they?**

Corporate skills are general skills—like the ability to accept feedback, work collaboratively, manage your time, etc. These are skills that will help you in a *wide range of jobs*, not just the target job you're applying for.The top ten corporate skills in demand for today's job market:

**1. Communication skills:**It's more than just speaking the language. Communication skills involve active listening, presentation as well as excellent writing capabilities. One highly sought-after communication skill is the ability to explain technical concepts to partners, customers and co workers that aren't tech -savvy.

**2. Computer and technical literacy:**Almost all jobs nowadays require basic competency in computer software, but many job seekers fail to provide this section because they think it's implied. If computer skills are relevant to your field, insert a "Technical Skills" or "Systems Proficiencies" section to your resume.

**3. Interpersonal skills:**The ability to work in teams, relate to people and manage conflict is a valuable asset in the workplace. This skill is important to get ahead--and as you advance in your career, the aptitude to work with others becomes even more crucial. Personal accomplishments are important on your resume, but showing that you can work well with others is important too.

**4. Adaptability:** Don't underestimate the ability to adapt to changes and manage multiple tasks. In today's technology driven and rapidly evolving business environment, the ability to pick up on new technologies and adjust to changing business surroundings is important. Display your relevancy in the workforce by referencing an example of how you adapted to a sudden change at work.

**5. Research skills:**With Google at the tip of your fingers, it's easy to find answers to common issues. However, hiring managers seek employees that are skilled at assessing situations, are able to seek multiple perspectives and gather more in depth information.

**6. Project Management skills:**Organization, planning and effectively implementing projects and tasks for yourself and others is a highly effective skill to have. In the past, this was a job in itself. Nowadays, many companies aren't hiring project managers because they expect all of their employees to possess certain characteristics of this skill.

**7. Problem-solving skills:**The ability to use creativity, reasoning, past experience, information and available resources to resolve issues is attractive because it saves everyone at the organization valuable time. Highlight this skill by listing an example of when your organization had a sticky situation and you effectively addressed it.

**8. Process improvement expertise:**The number one goal every company has in common is to save money. Optimizing business procedures can save a company time and money. Quantify results in your resume by listing the before and after facts of projects that you took on.

**9. Strong work ethic:**Employers are looking for employees that take initiative, are reliable and can do the job right the first time. Managers don't have the time or resources to babysit, so this is a skill that is expected from all employees. Don't make the hiring manager second-guess by sending a resume with typos, errors and over-exaggerated work experience.

**10. Emotional Intelligence:**Although you will most likely never see this in a job description, EI is a highly sought after skill that relates to your social skills, social awareness and self-management abilities. Emotional intelligence is usually something that is revealed through actual interactions with the hiring manger, but you can hint that you have it with a strategic resume the addresses areas where your experience and skills are lacking relative to the job requirements.

Corporate Etiquette - Do’s and Dont’s

It is essential for every individual to behave in a socially acceptable way.

Etiquette refers to good manners which help an individual leave his mark in the society.

An individual must know how to behave at the workplace. There is a huge difference between college and professional life. One needs to be disciplined at the workplace.

**Corporate Etiquette refers to set of rules an individual must follow while he is at work**. One must respect his organization and maintain the decorum of the place.

Corporate Etiquette refers to behaving sensibly and appropriately at the workplace to create an everlasting impression. No one would take you seriously if you do not behave well at the workplace. Remember we can’t behave the same way at work place as we behave at our homes. One needs to be professional and organized.

It is important to behave well at the workplace to earn respect and appreciation.

**Let us go through some Do’s and Don’ts at workplace:**

* **Never adopt a casual attitude at work**. Your office pays you for your hard work and not for loitering around.
* **Don’t peep into other’s cubicles and workstations**. Knock before entering anyone’s cabin. Respect each other’s privacy.
* **Put your hand phone in the silent or vibrating mode at the workplace**. Loud ring tones are totally unprofessional and also disturb other people.
* **Don’t open anyone else’s notepads registers or files without his permission**.
* **It is bad manners to sneeze or cough in public without covering your mouth**. Use a handkerchief or tissue for the same.
* Popping chewing gums in front of co workers is simply not expected out of a professional.
* **Stay away from nasty politics** at the workplace. Avoid playing blame games.
* **Keep your workstation clean and tidy**. Throw unwanted paper in dustbin and keep files in their respective drawers. Put a label on top of each file to avoid unnecessary searching.
* **Never criticize or make fun of any of your colleagues**. Remember fighting leads to no solution. There are several other ways to express displeasure. Sit with your colleagues, discuss issues face to face and decide on something which is mutually acceptable.
* **Take care of your pitch and tone at the workplace**. Never shout on anyone or use foul words. It is unprofessional to lash out at others under pressure. Stay calm and think rationally.
* **Never attend meetings or seminars without a notepad and pen**. It is little tough to remember each and everything discussed in the meeting. Jot down the important points for future reference. Wait for your turn to speak.
* **Pass on information to all related recipients in the desired form**. Communicate through written modes of communication preferably through emails. Keep your reporting boss in the loop. Make sure your email signatures are correct.
* **Reach office on time**. One must adhere to the guidelines and policies of the organization. Discipline must be maintained at the workplace.
* **No organization likes to have a shabbily dressed employee**. Shave daily and do not use strong perfumes.
* **Never wear revealing clothes to work**. Body piercing and tattoo are a strict no no at the workplace. Females should avoid wearing heavy jewellery to work.
* Don’t pass lewd comments to any of your fellow workers.
* **While having lunch together, do not start till the others have received their food**. Make sure your spoon and fork do not make a clattering sound. Eat slowly to avoid burping in public.
* Respect your fellow workers and help them whenever required.
* It is unethical to share confidential data with external parties and any other individual who is not related to the organization. Data in any form must not be passed to anyone outside the organization.
* Office Stationery is meant to be used only at work. Taking any office property back home is equivalent to stealing.
* **Make sure you turn off the monitor while you go out for lunch or tea breaks**. Switch off the fans, lights, printer, fax machine, scanner before you leave for the day.
* Don’t bring your personal work to office. Avoid taking kids to office unless and until there is an emergency.
* **Park you car at the space allocated to you**. Don’t park your vehicle at the entrance as it might obstruct someone’s way.
* **Never ever drink while you are at work**. Smoke only at the smoking zones.
* Do not leave the restroom with taps on.
* Female Employees should stick to minimal make up.

Body Language

[Body language](https://www.verywellmind.com/ten-body-language-mistakes-you-might-be-making-3024852) refers to the [nonverbal signals](https://www.verywellmind.com/types-of-nonverbal-communication-2795397) that we use to communicate. According to experts, these nonverbal signals make up a huge part of daily communication. From our facial expressions to our body movements, the things we don't say can still convey volumes of information.1﻿

It has been suggested that body language may account for between 60 percent to 65 percent of all communication.﻿ Understanding body language is important, but it is also essential to pay attention to other cues such as context. In many cases, you should look at signals as a group rather than focusing on a single action.

Here's what to look for when you're trying to interpret body language.

## Facial Expressions

Think for a moment about how much a person is able to convey with just a facial expression. A smile can indicate approval or [happiness](https://www.verywellmind.com/how-to-be-happy-an-introduction-3144720). A frown can signal disapproval or unhappiness. In some cases, our facial expressions may reveal our true feelings about a particular situation. While you say that you are feeling fine, the look on your face may tell people otherwise.

The expression on a person's face can even help determine if we trust or believe what the individual is saying. One study found that the most trustworthy facial expression involved a slight raise of the eyebrows and a slight smile. This expression, the researchers suggested, conveys both friendliness and confidence.﻿

Facial expressions are also among the most universal forms of body language. The expressions used to convey fear, anger, sadness, and happiness are similar throughout the world.

Researcher Paul Ekman has found support for the universality of a variety of facial expressions tied to particular emotions including joy, anger, fear, surprise, and sadness.﻿

Research even suggests that we make judgments about people's intelligence based upon their faces and expressions. One study found that individuals who had narrower faces and more prominent noses were more likely to be perceived as intelligent. People with smiling, joyful expression were also judged as being more intelligent than those with angry expressions.﻿

## The Eyes

The eyes are frequently referred to as the "windows to the soul" since they are capable of revealing a great deal about what a person is feeling or thinking. As you engage in conversation with another person, taking note of eye movements is a natural and important part of the communication process. Some common things you may notice include whether people are making direct eye contact or averting their gaze, how much they are blinking, or if their pupils are dilated.

## The Mouth

Mouth expressions and movements can also be essential in reading body language. For example, chewing on the bottom lip may indicate that the individual is experiencing feelings of worry, fear, or insecurity.

Covering the mouth may be an effort to be polite if the person is yawning or coughing, but it may also be an attempt to cover up a frown of disapproval. Smiling is perhaps one of the greatest body language signals, but smiles can also be interpreted in many ways. A smile may be genuine, or it may be used to express false happiness, sarcasm, or even cynicism.﻿

## Gestures

Gestures can be some of the most direct and obvious body language signals. Waving, pointing, and using the fingers to indicate numerical amounts are all very common and easy to understand gestures. Some gestures may be [cultural](https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-cross-cultural-psychology-2794903), however, so giving a thumbs-up or a peace sign in another country might have a completely different meaning than it does in the United States.

## The Arms and Legs

### **The arms and legs can also be useful in conveying nonverbal information. Crossing the arms can indicate defensiveness. Crossing legs away from another person may indicate dislike or discomfort with that individual**.

Other subtle signals such as expanding the arms widely may be an attempt to seem larger or more commanding while keeping the arms close to the body may be an effort to minimize oneself withdraw from attention.

## Posture

How we hold our bodies can also serve as an important part of body language. The term posture refers to how we hold our bodies as well as the overall physical form of an individual. Posture can convey a wealth of information about how a person is feeling as well as hints about personality characteristics, such as whether a person is confident, open, or submissive.

Sitting up straight, for example, may indicate that a person is focused and paying attention to what's going on. Sitting with the body hunched forward, on the other hand, can imply that the person is bored or indifferent.

When you are trying to read body language, try to notice some of the signals that a person's posture can send.

## Personal Space

Have you ever heard someone refer to their need for personal space? Have you ever started to feel uncomfortable when someone stands just a little too close to you?

The term proxemics, coined by anthropolgist Edward T. Hall, refers to the distance between people as they interact. Just as body movements and facial expressions can communicate a great deal of nonverbal information, so can this physical space between individuals.

It is also important to note that the level of personal distance that individuals need to feel comfortable can vary from culture to culture. One oft-cited example is the difference between people from Latin cultures and those from North America. People from Latin countries tend to feel more comfortable standing closer to one another as they interact while those from North America need more personal distance.

### A Word From Verywell

Understanding body language can go a long way toward helping you better communicate with others and interpreting what others might be trying to convey.

While it may be tempting to pick apart signals one by one, it's important to look at these nonverbal signals in relation to verbal communication, other nonverbal signals, and the situation. You can also focus on learning more about how to [improve your nonverbal communication](https://www.verywellmind.com/top-nonverbal-communication-tips-2795400) to become better at letting people know what you are feeling—without even saying a word.

## ****Time Management****

The [Cambridge Dictionary defines](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/time-management) time management as **“the practice of using the time that you have available in a useful and effective way, especially in your work:**He’s intelligent, but poor time management is limiting his success.**”**

Time management skills are most often addressed as **productivity**. You’ve probably heard of some of the top experts in this field, like [Tim Ferriss](https://fourhourworkweek.com/), [Craig Jarrow](https://timemanagementninja.com/), or [David Allen](https://gettingthingsdone.com/). These guys are next level, high performance advisers to the most successful people in the business world, but a little intense for the beginner.

​In this article we’ll hit the basics – effective, easy tasks and methods that even a kid can start doing now. For the purposes of this article I’ll articulate the definition of being good at time management as such:

**Being good at time management means organizing your time intentionally and prioritizing activities that efficiently advance you towards your goals and** **honor your values.**

## ​****Why Are Good Time Management Skills Important?****

Good time management is [essential to success](https://finallyfamilyhomes.org/2019/09/12/10-keys-to-success-in-life/). And it’s not limited to success in the workplace. Success as a friend, parent, spouse, fitness, anything… requires good time management skills. Success in any endeavor requires giving it the proper amount of time at the right time.

It’s easy to let the seemingly urgent tasks of life crowd out the more precious and lasting priorities such as faith and family.

Time management is a particular challenge for young adults just launching out on their own.

### ​****The crux of the problem****

Being busy doesn’t mean you’re being productive. You can be very busy, without living out your priorities or moving closer to your [goals](https://finallyfamilyhomes.org/2020/01/11/how-to-set-goals/). It’s a frustrating and disappointing place to be.

As you probably know we are living in an age of unprecedented speed and volume of information. This has led many of us to feel like we are dealing with an information overload. But according to David Allen, creator of the “GTD” (get things done) method, when we get stuck, it’s not due to an issue of information overload, but a decision-making overload.

**It’s the unplanned in-the-moment decision making that most often kills productivity.**

## ​****Five Steps to Get on Top of Your Schedule****

### ****Step 1. Define your goals and priorities****

If you aren’t [clear about your goals](https://finallyfamilyhomes.org/2020/01/11/how-to-set-goals/), values, and priorities, it’s hard to make a plan and hard to make a good decision on the fly. Get specific, write them down.

Good time management requires planning and conscious decision making. It requires defining your priorities and choosing to put them first. It requires being aware of how you spend your time.

​When your friends invite you out to a party the night before a big test, and you haven’t established that you want to get an A in chemistry, then you probably aren’t going to prioritize staying home and studying.

### ****Step 2. Make a list of everything you need to do and add anything else you usually do.****

While this may sound burdensome, it’s more important than it appears because it:

* Lightens your mental load
* Reveals nonproductive activity
* Helps you get a picture of your current workload
* Helps you identify which tasks you may need to work into your schedule

​​There may be goals you are supporting that you don’t realize for better or worse. For instance, perhaps you may realize that you spend time doing the dishes, washing your laundry, and taking a shower.  
  
Individually, these may not end up on your goal list, but they reveal something you probably value – being clean. Those activities need to be accounted for if you don’t want to find yourself out of clean underwear.

It’s important to write down your to do list because **your brain can’t operate at its best when you try to keep track of all your to-do’s in your head.**

You get those photos off of your phone so that your phone can continue operating as a phone, not a photo warehouse.

An efficient mind works the same. At some point you can become overloaded with things to do. In order to clear some working space you need upload so that your brain has space to think and create, not just store repeated meaningless information “I gotta clean that closet.”

Dump everything from your brain that relates to anything you need to do over the course of several hours. Don’t worry about forgetting something important, you can always add or adjust as more comes to mind. And it will.  
  
Also, don’t be concerned about repeating yourself. This will help you see how you have thoughts cycling through because they are unresolved. Record every little “I need to / want to” that passes through your mind.

### ****Step 3.  Apply the Eisenhower Matrix****

The Eisenhower matrix is one of the most popular tools for helping set priorities.

According to Clear, the first step is to organize all of your tasks into one of four categories:

1. Urgent and important (tasks you will do immediately – high deadline cost)
2. Important, but not urgent (tasks you will schedule to do later)
3. Urgent, but not important (tasks to delegate to someone else or automate)
4. Neither urgent nor important – Do Last or Not at All

### ****Step 4. Make a prioritized plan****

You now should have all the information that you need to make a solid plan. Set up a blank calendar. It can be a spreadsheet, paper, or application.

1. Schedule your time inflexible, high priority activities first
2. Schedule your deep or hard work around your highest energy levels.
   1. Figure out when your brain is most engaged & schedule your hardest studying or most challenging and important tasks then, in 15 – 45 minute chunks of time
   2. Schedule 15 minute breaks around your deep work
3. Fill in your schedule with your lower priority activities
4. Remove the lowest priority items altogether or set them aside as “schedule treats” (more on that below).

### ****Step 5. Stick to the plan****

Perhaps this is stating the obvious, but I want to underscore it because as I said earlier –

**It’s the unplanned in-the-moment decision making that most often kills productivity.**

The purpose of the plan is to have the decisions made so that you can confidently focus your energy towards actions that are worth your time at the right time.

This doesn’t mean your schedule won’t require some tweaking and flexibility, especially as you get started; but as a default, stick to the schedule.It may seem that there’s nothing you can do about your stress level. The bills aren’t going to stop coming, there will never be more hours in the day for all your errands, and your career or family responsibilities will always be demanding. But you have a lot more control than you might think. In fact, the simple realization that you’re in control of your life is the foundation of stress management.

Managing stress is all about taking charge: taking charge of your thoughts, your emotions, your schedule, your environment, and the way you deal with problems. The ultimate goal is a balanced life, with time for work, relationships, relaxation, and fun – plus the resilience to hold up under pressure and meet challenges head on.

## Identify the sources of stress in your life

Stress management starts with identifying the sources of stress in your life. This isn’t as easy as it sounds. Your true sources of stress aren’t always obvious, and it’s all too easy to overlook your own stress-inducing thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Sure, you may know that you’re constantly worried about work deadlines. But maybe it’s your procrastination, rather than the actual job demands, that leads to deadline stress.

To identify your true sources of stress, look closely at your habits, attitude, and excuses:

r stress level will remain outside your control.

**Start a stress journal**

A stress journal can help you identify the regular stressors in your life and the way you deal with them. Each time you feel stressed, keep track of it in your journal. As you keep a daily log, you will begin to see patterns and common themes. Write down:

* Look at how you currently cope with stress

Think about the ways you currently manage and cope with stress in your life. Your stress journal can help you identify them. Are your coping strategies healthy or unhealthy, helpful or unproductive? Unfortunately, many people cope with stress in ways that compound the problem.

**Unhealthy ways of coping with stress**

These coping strategies may temporarily reduce stress, but they cause more damage in the long run:

• Smoking  
• Drinking too much  
• Overeating or undereating  
• Zoning out for hours in front of the TV or computer  
• Withdrawing from friends, family, and activities  
• Using pills or drugs to relax  
• Sleeping too much  
• Procrastinating  
• Filling up every minute of the day to avoid facing problems  
• Taking out your stress on others (lashing out, angry outbursts, physical violence)

**Learning healthier ways to manage stress**

If your methods of coping with stress aren’t contributing to your greater emotional and physical health, it’s time to find healthier ones. There are many healthy ways to manage and cope with stress, but they all require change. You can either change the situation or change your reaction. When deciding which option to choose, it’s helpful to think of the four As: avoid, alter, adapt, or accept.

Since everyone has a unique response to stress, there is no “one size fits all” solution to managing it. No single method works for everyone or in every situation, so experiment with different techniques and strategies. Focus on what makes you feel calm and in control.

* **Stress management strategy**
* **Avoid unnecessary stress**

Not all stress can be avoided, and it’s not healthy to avoid a situation that needs to be addressed. You may be surprised, however, by the number of stressors in your life that you can eliminate.

## Alter the situation

If you can’t avoid a stressful situation, try to alter it. Figure out what you can do to change things so the problem doesn’t present itself in the future. Often, this involves changing the way you communicate and operate in your daily life.

## Adapt to the stressor

If you can’t change the stressor, change yourself. You can adapt to stressful situations and regain your sense of control by changing your expectations and attitude.

**Adjusting Your Attitude**

How you think can have a profound effect on your emotional and physical well-being. Each time you think a negative thought about yourself, your body reacts as if it were in the throes of a tension-filled situation. If you see good things about yourself, you are more likely to feel good; the reverse is also true. Eliminate words such as "always," "never," "should," and "must." These are telltale marks of self-defeating thoughts.

## Accept the things you can’t change

Some sources of stress are unavoidable. You can’t prevent or change stressors such as the death of a loved one, a serious illness, or a national recession. In such cases, the best way to cope with stress is to accept things as they are. Acceptance may be difficult, but in the long run, it’s easier than railing against a situation you can’t change.

## Make time for fun and relaxation

Beyond a take-charge approach and a positive attitude, you can reduce stress in your life by nurturing yourself. If you regularly make time for fun and relaxation, you’ll be in a better place to handle life’s stressors when they inevitably come.

Don’t get so caught up in the hustle and bustle of life that you forget to take care of your own needs. Nurturing yourself is a necessity, not a luxury.

* Adopt a healthy lifestyle

You can increase your resistance to stress by strengthening your physical health.

Unit V

## What is a Group Discussion?

An average GD usually features 10 to 15 participants. The GD process begins by the announcement of the topic to the group, which is (usually) followed by a preparation time of 3 to 5 minutes. More than 5 minutes’ prep time may be given only if the GD is a case-study discussion, and has a long case statement.  
At the end of the prep time, the panel signals the group to commence the discussion, and from then on plays the role of a non-participating observer. This means that the discussion is not moderated or ‘anchored’ by a panellist. The group members must discuss the topic as they deem appropriate without any kind of suggestion from the panel. The panel expects no particular order of speakers to be followed nor a minimum or maximum duration of speaking to be followed by individual participants.  
The average duration of most GDs is 15 minutes (not including the prep time). In some exceptional cases (such as IIFT), the GD may continue for up to 45 minutes. One must remember that the longer the GD goes on, the more seriously the panel looks at the quality of the content (facts, analysis, explanation and argument) of the participant.  
The panel usually consists 3 or 4 panellists, who look at various aspects of the participants’ content and delivery. Please remember that the panellists may end the GD whenever they want to, and also extend the GD for as much as they want to. Nobody among the participants is supposed to keep time for the group or act on the assumption that the GD will end after the 15th minute.  
The GD ends in either of the two ways: first, the panel may abruptly stop the GD and announce the end of the process; second, they may ask a participant (or more than one participant) to summarise the GD. If you are asked to summarise, do remember what summary means – your summary cannot have anything in it that was not discussed during the GD. I especially stress this point as the participants who have been mostly quiet during the GD are usually asked to summarise it, and they tend to take this opportunity to air their views which are not presented during the discussion. The summary must be an objective recapitulation of the important points brought up during the discussion, and the conclusion of the discussion.

## What are the various types of Group Discussions?

Most Group Discussions can be divided into 3 kinds:  
**A)** **Topical Group Discussions**, which are based on current affairs or ‘static’ matters – for example, a GD on the topic of the recent demonetisation of Rs 500 and Rs 1000 notes would be the former, whereas a GD on whether India should adopt a presidential model of democracy would be the latter, as it has no limitation of a time frame.  
**B)** **Case-studies**, which present the group with a complex business situation that requires a decision to be made. Such cases usually have multiple problems embedded in the given situation, and both the individual participants and the group are required to analyse the situation, identify the problems, and suggest a way out.  
**C)** **Abstract Group Discussions**, which are called so because they offer us no definite framework of the topic, and hence no definite direction to take in the discussion. Instead, the participants are required to interpret the topic in their own ways and demonstrate innovative thinking in doing so. Such topics could be single-worded, such as ‘Blue’, or a short cryptic sentence, or even an image.  
Contrary to popular perception, no one kind of GD is necessarily easier or more difficult than any other, as the quality of response in any case depends largely on the preparation of the individual and the way they generally think.

## What is the evaluation criteria in a Group Discussion?

The evaluation of participants happens in two broad perspective: **Individual qualities and group skills**.

Individual qualities refer to the competencies that you may demonstrate in or outside the context of a group. They include the following:  
**A) Content:** What you say during the discussion is looked into from two perspectives – relevance and comprehensiveness. It is possible that a participant has talked a great deal in a GD, but he or she may have deviated from the topic significantly, in which case the content is deemed largely irrelevant without the possibility of further evaluation. If the content has been relevant to the topic, the panel examines whether your treatment of the topic is superficial or in-depth, distinction we shall discuss in detail in the next few posts.  
**B) Analytical skills:** The panel is of course interested in your facts, but they also like to see whether or not you can explore the ‘why’ and the ‘how’ of the subject matter. This is put to the sternest test in a case-study topic.  
**C) Reasoning skills:** The panel looks at how you support your standpoints, and how you respond to those of the others, how effectively you can ‘strengthen or weaken’ an argument, how logical you are in your overall approach to the topic.  
**D) Organisation skills:** You may have the facts, the supports, the explanations, but are you able to present them in the right order so as to maximise the impact of your good content? The panel wants to examine this.  
**E) Communication skills:** You may have exhibited all the skills stated above, but can you get your point across to someone in a simple (not simplistic) language they understand, with relevant illustrations they can identify with?  
**F) Creativity:** Are you able to bring to the table a novel perspective on the topic? Can you look at a problem differently from ten other participants and suggest a path-breaking solution? Can you interpret an abstract topic in ways the others cannot? If yes, the panel looks at you as someone with one of the rarest of human qualities.

You may have observed that the above skills and qualities can also be directly applied in the evaluation of the [WAT](https://www.handakafunda.com/how-to-approach-group-tasks-extempore-pictorial-wat/)response.  
On the other hand, the **group skills** refer to those skills which can only be evaluated in the context of a group. They include the following:  
**A) Listening skill:** The panel constantly observes whether or not every participant is listening to the discussion. In my experience, most participants are concerned only with speaking, and feel that they are done with the job as soon as they have spoken, which is contrary to the spirit of a discussion. There are many ways a panel may infer that a participant is a poor listener, such as a lack of eye contact with the group, or a poor summary at the end. It is one of the rarest skills, and a must for a would-be manager.  
**B) Leadership quality:** In highly-charged discussions, one or two participants usually play the role of the anchor, in that they define the topic appropriately, offer the initial analysis of the keywords of the topic, and also try to hold the group together in pursuit of a common goal. Such individuals could demonstrate effective leadership, and score some extra points. However, one cannot score anything extra simply because one spoke first in the group, or was the loudest.  
**C) Body language:** While assessing the body language, the panel primarily looks at eye contact and hand movements. The speaker must maintain a consistent eye contact with the entire group as he or she speaks, and the listeners must reciprocate. If the either doesn’t happen, you allow the panel to infer whatever they wish to – from a lack of confidence to a lack of interest in the GD to the lack of concern for others. Hand movements are to your speech what punctuation is to your writing. If used wisely they beautifully enhance the effect of your words; if used unwisely they attract unnecessary attention and distract the listener from your words. I recommend that you simply ‘free’ your hands. Do not engage them with something pointless such as playing with the pen, or tapping on the desk, or running through your hair (common among female participants). The body has an intelligence of its own. Just leave your hands alone and focus on the topic. The hands will start moving naturally. Please remember that body language cannot be faked. A skilled observer will quickly see through such deception. Just focus on the task at hand and the body will obediently follow. The panel may also pay attention to your voice modulation. A monotonous pitch may reduce the impact of even the most powerful words unless you are a Tommy Lee Jones! Vary the pitch of your voice in order to create emphasis wherever needed.  
**D) Group behaviour:** This is usually assessed in a broad distinction – assertive or aggressive. Avoid the latter no matter what. Assertiveness is a rational display of conviction of one’s thoughts, while aggressiveness is a display of domination through subtle intimidation. Assertiveness allows room for flexibility – which is a desired trait – while aggressiveness leads to irrational rigidity of viewpoint. Please remember that B-schools are looking for sensitive individuals, not skinhead bouncers.

Now that you know how you will be evaluated, focus on specific areas of improvement during your practice GDs. Identify with the help of your trainer the strengths and weaknesses. Set clear goals for yourselves, and do not lose the sight of them during your practice.

## Recommended Background Preparation for a Group Discussion

The most vital component of one’s performance in the GD is the content. As current affairs tend to dominate the GDs, a conscious effort to build the fact-bank of current affairs is necessary. Review the timelines of important national and international affairs and the subsequent developments therein. Follow at least 2 local, 2 national, and 2 international newspapers and news channels every day. Concentrate on information. In newspapers, it is found mostly in the first 4 pages, the finance page, and the sports pages. You may or may not the read the editorials (which offer opinion, comment and perspective), but you must read the news. Because you need facts to support your standpoints. For if you have no facts, you only have opinions, which you may end up merely repeating throughout your contribution in a GD.  
Please remember that the GD is not an elimination process, but only one of the several selection processes with certain weightage that contributes to the final score.

## **Practice good nonverbal communication**

It's about demonstrating confidence: standing straight, making eye contact and connecting with [a firm handshake](https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/perfect-your-business-handshake). That first [nonverbal](https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/nonverbal-communications-interview) impression can be a great beginning—or quick ending—to your interview.

## **Dress for the job or company**

Today's [casual dress codes](https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/Appropriate-Interview-Dress) do not give you permission to dress as "they" do when you interview. It is important to know [what to wear to an interview](https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/what-to-wear-for-job-interviews) and to be well-groomed. Whether you wear a suit or something less formal depends on the [company culture](https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/culture-fit-questions-you-should-ask-1116) and the position you are seeking. If possible, call to find out about the [company dress code](https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/what-to-wear-job-interview) before the interview.

## **Listen**

From the very beginning of the interview, your interviewer is giving you information, either directly or indirectly. If you are not hearing it, you are missing a major opportunity. [Good communication skills](https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/communicate-better-at-work-0117) include listening and letting the person know you heard what was said. Observe your interviewer, and match that style and pace.

## **Don't talk too much**

Telling the interviewer more than he needs to know could be a fatal mistake. When you have not prepared ahead of time, you may ramble when answering [interview questions](https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/100-potential-interview-questions), sometimes talking yourself right out of the job. [Prepare for the interview](https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/practice-makes-perfect-how-to-rehearse-for-your-next-job-interview-hot-jobs) by reading through the [job posting](https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/job-description-0617), matching your skills with the position's requirements and relating only that information.

## **Don't be too familiar**

The interview is a professional meeting to talk business. This is not about making a new friend. Your level of familiarity should mimic the interviewer's demeanor. It is important to bring energy and enthusiasm to the interview and to ask questions, but do not overstep your place as a candidate looking for a job.

## **Use appropriate language**

It's a given that you should use [professional language](https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/persuade-new-job-crimmins-1216) during the interview. Be aware of any inappropriate slang words or references to age, race, religion, politics, or sexual orientation—these topics could send you out the door very quickly.

## **Don't be cocky**

Attitude plays a key role in your interview success. There is a fine balance between [confidence](https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/build-confidence-at-work-0217), professionalism, and modesty. Even if you're putting on a performance to demonstrate your ability, overconfidence is as bad, if not worse, as being too reserved.

## **Take care to answer the questions**

When interviewers ask for an example of a time when you did something, they are asking [behavioral interview questions](https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/you-can-survive-the-behavioral-interview), which are designed to elicit a sample of your past behavior. If you fail to relate a specific example, you not only don't answer the question, but you also miss an opportunity to prove your ability and talk about your skills.

## **Ask questions**

When asked if they have any questions, most candidates answer, "No." Wrong answer. Part of knowing how to interview is being ready to [ask questions](https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/nine-questions-to-ask-interview) that demonstrate an interest in what goes on in the company. Asking questions also gives you the opportunity to find out if this is the right place for you. The best questions come from listening to what you're asked during the interview and asking for additional information.

## **Don't appear desperate**

When you interview with the "please, please hire me" approach, you appear desperate and less confident. Reflect the three Cs during the interview: cool, calm, and confident.

# Goal Setting

## Five Rules to Set Yourself Up for Success

Have you thought about what you want to be doing in five years' time? Are you clear about what your main objective at work is at the moment? Do you know what you want to have achieved by the end of today?

If you want to succeed, you need to set goals. Without goals you lack focus and direction. Goal setting not only allows you to take control of your life's direction; it also provides you a benchmark for determining whether you are actually succeeding. Think about it: having a million dollars in the bank is only proof of success if one of your goals is to amass riches. If your goal is to practice acts of charity, then keeping the money for yourself is suddenly contrary to how you would define success.

To accomplish your goals, however, you need to know how to set them. You can't simply say, "I want" and expect it to happen. Goal setting is a process that starts with careful consideration of what you want to achieve, and ends with a lot of hard work to actually do it. In between, there are some very well-defined steps that transcend the specifics of each goal. Knowing these steps will allow you to formulate goals that you can accomplish.

### 1. Set Goals That Motivate You

When you set goals for yourself, it is important that they motivate you: this means making sure that they are important to you, and that there is value in achieving them. If you have little interest in the outcome, or they are irrelevant given the larger picture, then the chances of you putting in the work to make them happen are slim. Motivation is key to achieving goals.

Set goals that relate to the high priorities in your life. Without this type of focus, you can end up with far too many goals, leaving you too little time to devote to each one. Goal achievement requires commitment, so to maximize the likelihood of success, you need to feel a sense of urgency and have an "I must do this" attitude. When you don't have this, you risk putting off what you need to do to make the goal a reality. This in turn leaves you feeling disappointed and frustrated with yourself, both of which are de-motivating. And you can end up in a very destructive "I can't do anything or be successful at anything" frame of mind.

### 2. Set SMART Goals

You have probably heard of [**SMART goals**](https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/smart-goals.htm)  already. But do you always apply the rule? The simple fact is that for goals to be powerful, they should be designed to be SMART. There are many variations of what SMART stands for, but the essence is this – goals should be:

* **S**pecific.
* **M**easurable.
* **A**ttainable.
* **R**elevant.
* **T**ime Bound.

#### Set Specific Goals

Your goal must be clear and well defined. Vague or generalized goals are unhelpful because they don't provide sufficient direction. Remember, you need goals to show you the way. Make it as easy as you can to get where you want to go by defining precisely where you want to end up.

#### Set Measurable Goals

Include precise amounts, dates, and so on in your goals so you can measure your degree of success. If your goal is simply defined as "To reduce expenses" how will you know when you have been successful? In one month's time if you have a 1 percent reduction or in two years' time when you have a 10 percent reduction? Without a way to measure your success you miss out on the celebration that comes with knowing you have actually achieved something.

#### Set Attainable Goals

Make sure that it's possible to achieve the goals you set. If you set a goal that you have no hope of achieving, you will only demoralize yourself and erode your confidence.

#### Set Relevant Goals

Goals should be relevant to the direction you want your life and career to take. By keeping goals aligned with this, you'll develop the focus you need to get ahead and do what you want. Set widely scattered and inconsistent goals, and you'll fritter your time – and your life – away.

#### Set Time-Bound Goals

Your goals must have a deadline. Again, this means that you know when you can celebrate success. When you are working on a deadline, your sense of urgency increases and achievement will come that much quicker.

### 3. Set Goals in Writing

The physical act of writing down a goal makes it real and tangible. You have no excuse for forgetting about it. As you write, use the word "will" instead of "would like to" or "might." For example, "I will reduce my operating expenses by 10 percent this year," not "I would like to reduce my operating expenses by 10 percent this year." The first goal statement has power and you can "see" yourself reducing expenses, the second lacks passion and gives you an excuse if you get sidetracked.

### 4. Make an Action Plan

This step is often missed in the process of goal setting. You get so focused on the outcome that you forget to plan all of the steps that are needed along the way. By writing out the individual steps, and then crossing each one off as you complete it, you'll realize that you are making progress towards your ultimate goal. This is especially important if your goal is big and demanding, or long-term. Read our article on [**Action Plans**](https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newHTE_04.htm)  for more on how to do this.

### 5. Stick With It!

Remember, goal setting is an ongoing activity, not just a means to an end. Build in reminders to keep yourself on track, and make regular time-slots available to review your goals. Your end destination may remain quite similar over the long term, but the action plan you set for yourself along the way can change significantly. Make sure the relevance, value, and necessity remain high.

**Career Planning**

#### Definitions:

1. A career may be defined as ‘ a sequence of jobs that constitute what a person does for a living’.

2. According to Schermerborn, Hunt, and Osborn, ‘Career planning is a process of systematically matching career goals and individual capabilities with opportunities for their fulfillment’.

3. Career planning is the process of enhancing an employee’s future value.

4. A career plan is an individual’s choice of occupation, organization and career path.

Career planning encourages individuals to explore and gather information, which enables them to syn­thesize, gain competencies, make decisions, set goals and take action. It is a crucial phase of human resource development that helps the employees in making strategy for work-life balance.

#### Features of Career Planning and Career Development:

1. It is an ongoing process.

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2. It helps individuals develop skills required to fulfill different career roles.

3. It strengthens work-related activities in the organization.

4. It defines life, career, abilities, and interests of the employees.

5. It can also give professional directions, as they relate to career goals.

#### Objectives of Career Planning:

**The major objectives of career planning are as follows:**

1. To identify positive characteristics of the employees.

2. To develop awareness about each employee’s uniqueness.

3. To respect feelings of other employees.

4. To attract talented employees to the organization.

5. To train employees towards team-building skills.

6. To create healthy ways of dealing with conflicts, emotions, and stress.

#### Benefits of Career Planning:

1. Career planning ensures a constant supply of promotable employees.

2. It helps in improving the loyalty of employees.

3. Career planning encourages an employee’s growth and development.

4. It discourages the negative attitude of superiors who are interested in suppressing the growth of the subordinates.

5. It ensures that senior management knows about the calibre and capacity of the employees who can move upwards.

6. It can always create a team of employees prepared enough to meet any contingency.

7. Career planning reduces labour turnover.

8. Every organization prepares succession planning towards which career planning is the first step.