

The Structure, or Moves, Press of a Discussion Discussion Discussion Discussion, especially open discussions, may seem to have lible or no structure, as if anyone veryone is talking at the same discussion or everyone is talking at the same time or in no order. Although it may oppear there is no organization, there is some overarching structure to the discussion. This structure is often unfamiliar to or overlooked by participants, whick becomes rapidly apparent when students do not use the proper phrasing or do not say anything a all When the moves are missing, a discussion may One proceed as well as it could have, and participants may feel disappointed after the discussion. It is important to (1) be familiar with the parts and (2) to know the language-verbal and non-verbal-you should use as

you progress from part to part. A leader moves a discussion through six moves. The six moves are:

- 1. Starting the Discussion
- 2. Getting All Participants Involved 1
- ichigan Press. 3. Managing Participants and Controlling Content
- 4. Keeping the Discussion Going
- 5. Clarifying and Confirming Consensus
- 6. Summarizing and Closing

Note where the arrows between each move point both ways. Why? As much as we would like for discussions to next move from one step to another, the process is more fluid and often depends on the factors. After the leader starts the discussion, maybe Move 2 is not needed because there are only four people and it is a člosed discussion in which each person will have a turn. Maybe the leader will have to repeat Move 3 if there is one participant who has not talked much and needs to be called on and later there is another participant who is talking too much. Move 5 may occur more than once, especially if the discussion has more than one purpose or goal. You will see how this can happen as we learn about each of the six moves.

Move 1: Starting the Discussion

Calling to Order

You would think that Move 1 is the first thing to happen. That is true to a degree. The actual discussion does not always formally begin. Be aware that there is sometimes talking before the actual discussion. As people enter the room, there are greetings and perhaps even some small talk. If there is coffee or refreshments, people may ask about other classes, how your weekend was, or even offer a compliment as they are getting a drink or some food. You can review some social interaction language to help you participate in conversations before the official discussion, such as greetings, introductions, complimenting, and small talk.

You will notice that Move 1 is at the top of the moves and has only an arrow pointing downward. Move 1 must happen first to "officially" start the discussion. A leader will say something like:

Is everyone ready to get started? She we ready to begin? Set's get started. Everyone, we'd better get busy.

In more formal situations, a leader might execute Move 1 with:

I'd like to call this meeting to order. We need to begin. It's 3:00. Time for us to begin. My watch says it's time to get started. We don't have much time today, so we'd better start.

Providing Scope or Focus

Once the leader has the attention of the participants and everyone is situated (around the table, in their chairs, etc.) and settled (has their coffee and notebooks/coffiputers), there is usually a short pause or silence. The leader can then proceed to the second part of love 1giving the scope or focus. This part of the prove focuses the participants. When possible, the leader:

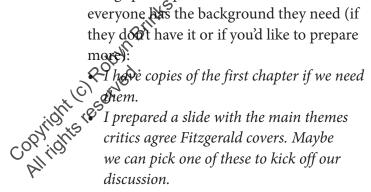
- specifies (or reviews) the opic and purpose
 of the discussion: of the discussion:
 - Topic: Today we meed to discuss The Great Gatsby that everyone was assigned to read for our Explish class.
 - Purpose: The instructor asked that we discuss what made this novel an American

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- one-word answers and avoid unanswerable or overwhelming open-ended questions):
- In what ways does Fitzgerald convey the theme of [love, wealth, isolation, the American Dream, mortality] as seen in The Great Gatsby?

maintains a list of questions, arguments, or topics that arise and/or can be used if the discussion lags:

- ... ine theme of the interview of the interview
- *Fitzgerald includes?Can someone who is not* from a wealthy background really be accepted or blend in with the old mone period in the novel? Why or why not?
- brings participants "into the know" so that everyone has the background they need (if



• *I wrote a list of the key criticisms levied at* the novel.

- outlines any constraints or concerns (time limits, sensitive topics, respect for others' opinions, keeping the discussion fair and
- Critics sometimes disagree on [a point], so let's make sure we respect event opinions tod. Critics sometimes disagree on fu ponej so let's make sure we respect everyone's opinions today.
 TASK 4
 Answer these questions.
 What would you do if: NOO

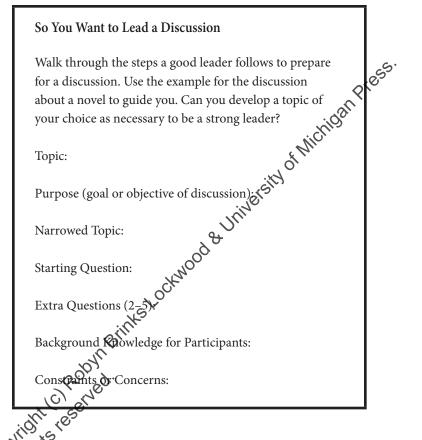
1. you were starting a meeting at a business?

- 2. you were starting a study group?
- re starting a discussion about a book, article, or

Gou were starting a discussion about a team project?

5. everyone was talking and it was loud?

6. everyone was already seated and ready?



Aove 2: Getting All Participants Involved

After starting the discussion, the next move is to actually get the participants to speak. Notice the bi-directional arrow between this move and Moves 1 and 3. A leader may have to do this several times, such as opening the floor at the beginning or re-focusing when the topic has strayed off course or a new topic or subtopic is starting.

Sometimes the leader will want to open the floor to for anyone to start. There are certain words or phrases that open discussions. Use something like this to open Does anyone want to comment on [the article were assigned]? What did everyone think of [the book]? Who has an idea [for our project break] What do we the floor.

What do you all think caused the results we got in the lab? Let's list some ideas [199 conference abstracts].

Once the wiginal discussion is started, a leader might begin mentioning people specifically by name or bring up æpecific point.

What to add on to what Abdoul said? What do you think about Miguel's point? How Boes anyone have any other answers to the question? Can anyone answer Jeena's question?

TASK 5

Discuss these questions with a partner or small group.

- 2. How do you feel when a leader mentions some ine by name? How do you feel if you are the person named?

So You Want to Lead a Discussion

- What can you do if no one begins after you open the floor?
- How can you her everyone's names? What strategies can you use
- ors should you consider when calling COPYFIGHTS 105 hame?

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