

Discussion and Q&A strategies (and examples)

A. Initiating/starting

[Starting discussion] • Can I start by sharing my thoughts on this?

[During discussion] • Can I say something here?

[Interrupting] • Sorry to interrupt, but...
• Sorry, can I say something here?

[Q&A] • Can I ask a question?

B. Explaining in detail

[Rephrasing] • I mean...
• In other words...
• What I'm trying to say is...

[Comparison & analogy] • It's like....
• It's similar to...

C. Giving opinions

• I think...
• In my opinion...

[Hedging] • I'm not sure, but...

[Disagreeing] • Yes, but don't you think...?
• That's an interesting point, but....

[Changing opinion] • Now that I think about it...

[No clear opinion] • I don't have a strong opinion on this, but...

D. Supporting opinions

[Giving examples] • For example...
• For instance...

[Giving reasons] • This is because...
• One reason is....

[Giving evidence] • According to...
• Studies show that...

E. Reacting

[Interested] • I see
• Really?

[In common] • Me too.

[Agreeing] • That's right
• I agree

[Strongly agreeing] • Exactly
• I couldn't agree more

[Accepting opinion] • Good point

F. Asking for more information

• You said _____, what did you mean?
• Could you give me an example?
• What kind of _____?
• Do you have any evidence to support this?
• What / Who / When / Where / Why...?
• How much/many/long/often...? etc.

G. Clarifying and checking

• Sorry?
• Could you repeat that?
• What do you mean by _____?
• Do you mean _____ (or _____)?
• Sorry, I'm not sure what you mean
[Checking as the presenter] • Are you following me?
• Does that answer your question?

H. Maintaining discussions

[Asking others] • What do you think about _____?

[Reflecting question] • How about you?

[Changing the topic] • OK, let's move on to _____
• So...

[Adjusting the topic] • Speaking of _____

[Returning to the main topic] • Anyway...
• Getting back to our topic...

[Thinking time] • Let me see...
• Well...
• That's a good question

I. Dealing with difficult situations

[Cannot answer question] • I'm sorry, I'm not sure
• Can I get back to you on that?

[Delaying interruptions] • I'm sorry, just let me finish first...

[Do not understand Q&A question even after checking] • I'm sorry, I still don't understand your question. Maybe we could talk later?

[Inappropriate topics/comments] OK, now let's keep the comments appropriate...

[Ending with disagreement] • I guess we'll just have to agree to disagree on this point