

Structure

Structure between the members in a group discussion plays an important role when it comes to covering all the bases or topics in a meeting. Structure can be defined as the arrangement of a plan to give it an outline and look organized. Meetings or small group discussions can perform quicker, smoother, and more efficiently when there is structure throughout the group. Having structure in a meeting means staying on task, having a planned outline of topics that need to be discussed, and everyone gets to voice their opinions and concerns. The PSU Communication Department gave us, as observers, a great example what structure looks like within a small group.

The leader of the group is the one who ensures and maintains the structure of the meeting. The leader also, unofficially, creates the structure of the meeting by addressing topics the right way and at the right time. The group we observed had a leader that kept the group on track, rarely getting off topic, therefore giving the meeting a sense of structure. The leader started the meeting by giving announcements and reminders, then ended the meeting with a question for the members to think about and consider for the next meeting. The leader also ensured that after discussing a topic, they did not move on until the members came to a consensus. The leader was very open to every member's ideas and comments.

Behavioral functions take a part in the structure of a group's meeting. We found that the members harmonized well and quite often, which showed us, the observers, signs of agreement and good communication skills throughout the group. We also found many members suggesting procedures throughout the entire meeting. This shows signs of the group ensuring the meeting

goes smoothly and all bases are getting covered, all things necessary for a good structural small group discussion.