

Leading Discussion Workshops - Question 2

Common mistakes and redirection of discussion

Question 2: Why did he or she say it? Why did the speaker/author think it was important? What was the speaker/author trying to achieve?

Common mistakes or issues	Redirection of discussion
Silent group member	Leader Ask if they can build on someone else's idea or if they agree with someone else's idea.
Person says, "I don't understand the question."	Leader Here is another way to phrase the question. "What was the speaker getting at?" Or "What did they mean? And what was the reason behind what they said?" Or "What was their strategy or logic of the talk? Did you hear ideas build one on another and make a point? What was the point?"
Merely repeating answer to question 1 "I heard the speaker say..."	Leader "Can you say more about why you think the speaker may have said that?" Or "Any idea why you think they may have said that?"
"I got a lot from this talk, and I plan on changing x, y, and z. It spoke volumes to me."	Leader Agree (if true). "I got a lot from the talk too. You may want to write that down under question #3. Now we are looking at what the speaker's point was at the time it was written."
"There is no way we can know for sure why they said what they said."	Leader "That is true, but can we look at some of our comments from question one and speculate. I wonder why they used this phrase or that example?"
"I didn't like this talk. It made me angry. I don't know why they said that. I think they are incorrect."	Leader "You have a personal takeaway for you, I recommend you write that under question 3. What do you think the speaker's point was when they gave this talk? And can you substantiate it with answers from question 1." The point of question two is to try and understand why they said what they said.
Critiques the talk "I have no idea what the point was. The speaker wasn't clear at all. They should have said it this way or used this as an example..."	Leader "Maybe it isn't clear. But let's try to take a stab at it. Can anyone help?"
Applies talk to present "This talk addresses issues or concerns that we need to face today...and"...start talking about the current things.	Leader "Yes, but that's not our task yet. Have patience and hope. Right now, we are trying to look at what the talk was addressing at the time. Can you draw some conclusions related to the past? It will be helpful for you to remember your thoughts about this talk when we get to Phase 2, write them under question 3."

Role Play exercise for leading a discussion on the two questions of the sources: **QUESTION 2**

Directions:

1. The goal of this learning exercise is to give the head of a group a chance to practice leading a group in which members will make mistakes in the discussion. It will give leaders an opportunity to practice redirecting. Make mistakes and have fun. Each small group leader should take a turn at role playing the leader of this challenging group.
2. Pass out the roles.
3. The person who drew the leader and the person who drew the timekeeper should tell the group what their role is. Other members should not share their role.
4. Ask the members not to be too difficult on the leader. At any time, the leader can look at the handout on redirection for help. Or they call a timeout and ask for help from the timekeeper.
5. The timekeeper should end the role play after 5 minutes.
6. Reveal everyone's role.
7. At the end have a conversation about what you learned from doing this exercise. This is the most important step in the exercise. The most learning can come in the reflections and conversation.

Question 2: **Why did he or she say it?** Why did the speaker/author think it was important and what was the speaker/author trying to achieve?

The Question 2 roles are:

Role leader: Repeat the question. Encourage the group to build on the answers from question 1. At any time, you may take a time out from the role play and look at the handout on how to redirect. Or you could ask the timer for help.

Role 1: Timekeeper. Keep the time for the role play. Be assertive. Stick to the time allotted of 5 minutes. Tell the group when time is up. You may participate in the group discussion as yourself. But make sure you keep the time. Ask the group to select new roles when the time is up.

Role 3: Silent member. Share, but only when prompted by the leader. Don't be surprised if the leader doesn't notice you. They will have their hands full. Enjoy listening to others.

Role 4: Listen carefully to others. And then see if you can answer the question by building on other's ideas.

Role 5: Listen for a minute and then apply the talk to some current life situation. In other words, share more about yourself than the talk. Be responsive to the leader's redirection if they give it.

Role 6: Begin your answer with, "I liked what the speaker said . . ." but do not elaborate on what they said. Rather, take over the conversation and say, "it reminded me of a time," or . . .

Role 7: Be yourself. Enjoy the role play. And participate if you wish. If you want, you can be lighthearted and make a joke or encourage someone. Again, do what you want.