

How can I run effective online group learning discussions?

Last Modified on 06/27/2025 12:15 pm EDT

This article shares best practices for creating and sustaining engaging social learning group discussions in tools like Microsoft Viva, Teams, Slack, or other chat-based platforms, or in the Conversation tab of individual Big Think+ lessons.

Well-designed asynchronous group chat discussions rooted in microlearning make leadership development more convenient and accessible, especially for busy, frontline, or deskless leaders. By combining short, thought-provoking content with flexible, peer-driven reflection, these conversations build critical thinking, empathy, and confidence in real time and in real work. This approach meets leaders where they are, while creating space for shared insight and meaningful application.

How can I create and run an engaging online group discussion for my leaders?

Follow these tips to ensure success:

- **Design with a Clear Structure**

- Weekly or themed learning prompts: Keep cadence consistent (e.g., "Monday Mindset" or "Thursday Takeaway").
- Invite your learners to a dedicated space for the discussions.
- Pair each Big Think+ lesson with a simple post: "After watching [Title], what's one thing you would try differently in your next team conversation?"
- Start simple - post one lesson per week to build the habit.
- Use emojis or bold formatting for visual hierarchy: 📌 Prompt | 📌 Share | 📌 Action Tip

- **Ask Open, Relatable Questions**

- Use questions that spark reflection and experience-sharing, not right/wrong answers:
 - "What's one situation this reminded you of?"
 - "Which idea would be hardest for you to apply and why?"
 - "How would you explain this concept to a new hire?"
- **Time saver:** Select relatable, relevant questions from the Big Think+ Discussion Guides posted in [Expert Classes](#).

- **Model Participation Early and Often**

- Ask leaders or champions to post their responses first.
- Tag individuals to invite input gently: "@Jordan, curious how this connects to the

challenge you mentioned last week."

- Share your own honest reflection: *"This hit me because I often rush through decisions when I'm under pressure..."*

- **Create Micro-Challenges or Action Prompts**

- Encourage experimentation with simple, low-lift tasks: "Try using a feedforward question in one conversation this week and report back with how it went!"
- Use polls or quick reactions to keep engagement easy and low-friction.

- **Keep the Feedback Loop Alive**

- React to comments with 📖 ❤️ 📖 to show presence.
- Ask follow-up questions: *"That's a great point! What helped you build that skill?"*
- End each week with a "Top Insight" summary or spotlight thoughtful contributions.

- **Make Participation Feel Purposeful**

- Connect discussions to real work: *"How might this week's insight help us improve the handoff process?"*
- Remind learners of how this ties into business, personal, or team development goals.
- Ask for volunteers to help moderate the discussion to build their facilitation skills.

- **Respect Time and Attention**

- Keep discussion questions short and scannable.
- Share only 1–2 content pieces per week. Fewer is better for deeper engagement.
- Use pinned posts and tags to guide late joiners.

- **Measure and Celebrate Success**

- Acknowledge thoughtful posts publicly: *"Loved this insight from @Marisol about empathetic feedback. What a great example of leadership in action!"*
 - Offer lightweight rewards: badges, shout-outs, or manager recognition.
 - Collect highlights for team newsletters or retrospectives.
 - Create a follow-up survey to gauge usefulness or select new topics.
 - [Use Big Think+ Analytics to measure engagement.](#)
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