

# How can I run an engaging group coaching session?

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*This article outlines how you can run a group coaching or team session that is engaging, inclusive, and relevant.*

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Running a group discussion for training purposes is different than running other types of meetings. The goal of the facilitator is to foster shared understanding and knowledge by creating a safe space for people to share and learn from each other, and not to "teach" or "lecture" the group.

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Here are 10 best practices to help leaders run a group discussion using Big Think+ Lessons and [Discussion Guides](#):

## 1. Set the Tone Early

- Start with a brief check-in or light opener: *"What stood out from the video?"*
- Reinforce that this is a safe, learning-focused space - not a performance review.
- Avoid recording the session or allowing AI notetakers when virtual.
- Encourage curiosity: *"There's no one right answer. We're here to explore together."*

## 2. Be a Facilitator, Not a Lecturer

- Ask questions instead of giving answers.
- Use the Discussion Guide to frame prompts, then step back to let others speak.
- Redirect back to the group if someone asks you directly: *"Great question - what do others think?"*

## 3. Keep It Focused and Time-Aware

- Stick to the main question or theme of the week.
- Watch the clock: allow time for everyone to speak (especially in 30-minute sessions).
- If the discussion goes long, use a "parking lot" for topics to revisit later.

## 4. Encourage Diverse Participation

- Invite (but don't force) quieter team members: *"I'd love to hear your take on this."*
- Use pair shares or small breakout groups if the group is large.
- Set a norm: *"We want to hear from everyone - brief and honest is great."*

## 5. Ground Discussion in Real Work

- Ask: *"How does this apply to what we're doing this week?"*

- Prompt real-world examples: *"Have you faced a situation like this recently?"*
- Encourage action: *"What's one thing you'll try differently after this discussion?"*

## 6. Model Openness and Vulnerability

- Share your own learning or uncertainty: *"This made me think differently about how I give feedback."*
- Admit when something is challenging - you'll give others permission to do the same.

## 7. Wrap Up with a Clear Takeaway

- Ask: *"What's one insight or commitment you're walking away with?"*
- Summarize key themes or agreements.
- Reinforce how this connects to team or company goals.

## 8. Follow Up After the Discussion

- Send a quick recap or reflection question.
- Check in 1:1 with anyone who had an idea or challenge to act on.
- If appropriate, share a next step or related resource (another Big Think+ video, a practice challenge, or a coaching moment).

### Tip: Use the Discussion Guide as a Flexible Tool

- You don't need to use every question; choose 2 or 3 that feel most relevant right now.



Group Discussions: Facilitator Cheat Sheet

Your Role as the Facilitator: To guide reflection, spark dialogue, and connect learning to real work - not to deliver answers

**Before the Session**

- 3. Watch the Video Lesson:
  - Note key quotes, moments, or insights
  - Consider how these connect to your team's current context
- 4. Plan Your Session:
  - Highlight 2-3 key questions
  - Prioritize questions that feel most relevant or actionable

**During the Session**

- 1. Set the Tone:
  - Encourage reflection, not performance
  - Encourage honesty and curiosity
  - Encourage active listening and engagement
- 2. Guide, Don't Dominate:
  - Use open-ended questions
  - Listen to gather stories to pin to action or challenges
  - Encourage others to speak - pick 2-3 responses
- 3. Keep the Conversation Flowing:
  - Use follow-up prompts:
    - "What is an example of that?"
    - "How does that play into our team?"
    - "What makes that hard to do?"
- 4. Bridge to Application:
  - "How can we try this idea out this week?"
  - "What's a new strategy we can practice this?"

**After the Session**

- 1. Review or Reflect:
  - Share 1-2 team takeaways or insights
  - Encourage small actions or continued conversation
- 2. Report:
  - Hold discussions on a steady cadence
  - Consistency builds learning habits
  - Feed a culture of big, bold, and relevant

**B|T+**

Need to get ready to facilitate a discussion?  
Use our [Group Discussions: Cheat Sheet](#) to get yourself ready!