Guidelines for Engaging in Group Discussion Protocols

Discussion protocols are carefully constructed directions to help you develop ideas, share opinions, and provide constructive criticisms with your peers. This protocol is intended to help you strengthen your communication skills while promoting equity and responsibility. Follow the guidelines below when engaging in a discussion.

1. Find a place to meet, ensuring that all members can sit comfortably and hear one another.

2. If your discussion protocol does not include predetermined roles, you may choose to make your own. Here are a few common roles you may select:

    - *Timekeeper:* Manages the discussion by ensuring that everyone gets a chance to speak and that the discussion stays within the given time frame.

    - *Birdwalk Manager:* Ensures that everyone stays on task and focused on the conversation.

    - *Protocol Promoter:* Reads the protocol directions and ensures that the collaborators are following the guidelines.

    - *Materials Person:* Ensures that all materials are gathered and distributed to collaborators. Returns materials at the conclusion of the activity.

3. Everyone actively listens to the speaker. All participants are engaged, on task, and move on only when their peers finish their thoughts.

4. Participants acknowledge what others say with supportive or challenging comments, utilizing positive language.

5. Each new comment is related to prior comments or introduces a new idea that will further the conversation.

6. Participants are mindful of who is speaking and encourage all participants to offer opinions.

7. When you have accomplished your goal, express gratitude toward one another for respectfully exchanging thoughts.

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