



Discussion Panel

Hosting a discussion panel provides a diverse, interactive means of learning and of exploring. It also helps to clarify what ideas and specific values are important in the ethical culture of your organization. Discussion panels are also flexible, adapting to the advancement and maturity level of the audience.

In order to create a valuable discussion panel that generates learning, keep the following in mind:

- **Choose your panelists carefully**
 - Select enthusiastic experts
 - Choose a diverse group with a variety of points of view
 - Choose panelists who enjoy speaking and teaching
- **Communicate your goals**
 - Make sure that both your panelists and your audience understand the purpose of the panel discussion
 - Do your best to make sure that everyone comes to the panel prepared
 - Panelists & participants know the purpose of the panel
 - Panelists & participants should know the goal of the panel—what should they learn?
- **Encourage your audience to participate**
 - Active learning is learning that lasts. Audience members who participate will learn and remember more.
 - Audience participation may raise issues and topics that would not otherwise be considered
- **Keep a flexible structure**
 - Have a plan—if the audience doesn't participate, you'll need material to make the panel worthwhile
 - Be willing to abandon the plan. If the audience has questions, let the discussion flow.
- **Have a good moderator**
 - Provide someone with flexibility and vision to guide the discussion, keep it on track, and prevent conflict.
 - Make sure your moderator is capable, but not authoritarian. The discussion should be the main attraction—the moderator should just keep things on topic.

Discussion Panel Questions

Although you are encouraged to formulate your own, personalized questions, the following discussion questions are given as a starting point and guideline for a panel on ethics in leadership.

- Why does leadership matter?
- Leadership credibility - Why is it so important?
- What is your communication strategy as a leader?
- What are your communication beliefs?
- How have you evolved as a leader in the last five years?
- What insights have you gained about your talents and strengths?
- Where would you say the drive to be a "leader" comes from?
- Could you describe some of the challenges you've encountered as a professional, and discuss how you dealt with the challenge; successfully or not?
- What are the greatest lessons you've learned as a leader?
- As a leader, talk about your views on community involvement. What opportunities have you chosen to participate in, and what opportunities have you turned down?
- What are your values or beliefs about balancing work and home life? How do we integrate these into our corporate culture around the world?
- Do you take your work home with you?
- What talents or strengths do you rely on most in your daily life as a leader?
- How do you align individuals' expectations with your organizational or team strategy?
- When selecting someone to join your team, what talents or qualities will you not live without?
- When hiring, what are some absolutes in your decision?
- Do you help people get what they want, or do you help them get what is right for them?
- Do you enjoy taking risks? Talk about a risk you've taken in your leadership position.
- What makes you passionate about your job?
- Do leaders need to be liked in order to be successful?
- Tell me about a time when you had to make an uncertain decision, and there was a possibility of an adverse public reaction. How did you manage the situation?
- How would you manage a situation where you believed that something was not in compliance with professional ethics?

Discussion Panel Questions Continued

- What would you do if you saw a valued customer behaving in an unethical manner?
- What are some of the characteristics of an effective leader?
- Do any mentors come immediately to mind when you think of the paths you've taken as a professional?
- What advice would you give to new professional who is hoping to take on leadership roles in his or her place of employment?
- Do you have a "mantra"? A phrase or thought that keeps you moving when you're feeling doubtful or sluggish?
- How do you distinguish between management and leadership? How are the two related, and where do they diverge?
- Do you think it's necessary to be both a manager and a leader?
- Is there any one person you'd love to have the opportunity to work with or learn from?
- Could you share some of the most unanticipated or unexpected leadership responsibilities of your work?
- Tell us about any point in your career that you would classify as a "turning point" towards your engagement in leadership.
- Did you set out to become a leader, or has your career led you to leadership?
- What have mentors/advisors/supervisors etc done to encourage and/or aid your pursuit of leadership?
- Have you encountered any situation where someone has discouraged or barred your pursuit of leadership? If so, how did you handle it?

Works Cited:

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