

T.I.P.S.

The Speaking Center Presents:

Techniques to Improve Public Speaking

To schedule an appointment visit: <https://www.csusb.edu/speaking-center-jhbc>

Convenient and simple techniques or suggestions to help improve in a variety of public speaking areas.

How to Create Good Discussion Questions

A good question is both answerable and challenging.

- Avoid yes or no questions and ask open-ended questions
 - Strong open-ended questions guide our thoughts without expecting specific answers.
 - Closed-ended questions (yes/no or factual)
 - Useful for summarizing or reality checks, but they don't elicit much participation.
- **Example:** Do you think companies should give more than 6 weeks of maternity leave?
 - Open-ended questions (how, what, why, tell me, describe)
 - Draw people out. If your discussion isn't getting off the ground, try an open-ended question.
- **Example:** What are your thoughts on companies providing 6 weeks of maternity leave?

Ask one question and avoid giving the answer.

- Repeat or rephrase the first **question** to encourage responses.
- It's okay to have silence. Wait at least 5 seconds before saying anything more.

Summarize what is being said.

- In a simple summary, you reiterate what was said.
 - **Example:** "So Bill agrees with Michelle that this suggestion would be too costly."
- In a bit more elaborate summary, you tell the group what you think their discussion means.
 - **Example:** "So Bill, it sounds like you are concerned about what this decision ultimately means for the future of this project. Is that right?" **Note:** this form of summary confirms your interpretation with the speaker(s).

