

Debate vs. Dialogue

Maximizing Leadership Discussions and Decision-Making

Debate	Dialogue
Assuming there is one right answer (and you have it)	Assuming others have pieces of the answer
Combative: attempting to prove the other side wrong	Collaborative: attempting to find common understanding
About winning	About finding common ground
Listening to find flaws	<i>Listening to understand</i>
Defending your assumptions	Bringing up assumptions for inspection and discussion
Criticizing the other side's point of view	Re-examining all points of view
Defending one's views against others	Admitting that others' thinking can improve one's own
Searching for weaknesses and flaws in the other position	Searching for strengths and value in the other position
Seeking an outcome that agrees with your position	Discovering new possibilities and opportunities

MEETING GROUND RULES

- 1. Please turn off your cell phones and put away your and phones.**
- 2. Work in a collaborative spirit.**
- 3. Give everyone the chance to contribute. Encourage the people who are quiet to participate. Repetition is fine.**
- 4. Don't allow anyone to dominate the discussion.**
- 5. Be respectful of all the participants - make no judgments about anyone else's ideas.**
- 6. No killer phrases (such as: "That won't work in this organization." "The problem with that idea is..." "It'll never fly." "It may sound good in theory, but..." "It's not practical." ...)**

- 7. Enthusiasm and passion are fine, but control negative emotions.**
- 8. Be creative! Challenge assumptions.**
- 9. Piggy-back ideas - and combine unlikely ones.**