



3 Extended Guide to Discussion Forum (engaging in critical discussion)

TASK

[Instructions example] Read <the case and question/statement>, and respond to this based on your lecture notes and the readings, with at least TWO posts (approx 40-50 words), using the following communicative strategies (also, not forgetting the previous strategies). As with the last forum, you might choose to:

- 1) respond either to the case directly AND to what somebody else has already posted,
OR
- 2) integrate your perspective(s) with those that others have already posted, to engage in an interesting and inclusive discussion

RATIONALE

The purpose of this forum is to begin to engage in some critical discussion of ideas and issues, by considering alternative views, presenting challenges, and (perhaps) justifying your position or viewpoint

COMMUNICATIVE STRATEGIES

- **Presenting alternatives** (already introduced in Forums X and Y): this allows a broader discussion of an idea by proposing a different perspective (e.g. *you commented that xxx, but another way of looking at it might be yyy*)
- **Challenging the idea(s)**: this is a good way to stimulate the discussion towards new understandings BUT can be tricky in online discussion. The key is to make sure you are challenging the idea and *not* the person (e.g. *while you made the observation that xxx, but in my experience this may not work because yyy*)
- **Justifying your position**: giving reasons to explain your ideas. This might be necessary to make your point clearer if there is some misinterpretation, or if it seems that others don't understand clearly your meaning (e.g. *I'm not sure I agree / disagree with this idea because ...; what I'm trying to say is that ...*)



PREVIOUS COMMUNICATIVE STRATEGIES SUMMARY

- **Address** the person(s) you are responding to by name(s)
- **Acknowledge** what they have said in some way by **complimenting** (e.g. something that has impressed you, such as an idea, an experience, etc); or **supporting / agreeing with** something they have mentioned.
- **Re-stating**: this is to rephrase, clarify or refine an idea which may also reflect your perspective
- **Extending** on ideas: this adds some more information or a related perspective to what someone else has said (or even to what you yourself have previously said)
- Presenting **alternatives**: this allows a broader discussion of an idea by proposing a different perspective