



Value Added Engagement and Feedback

To be an active contributor, start by carefully working your way through a forum reading. While viewing the comments that have been added by other users, you should:

2. **Gather Facts:** Jot down things that are interesting and new to you
3. **Make Connections:** Relate and compare things you are viewing and hearing to things that you already know.
4. **Ask Questions:** What about the comments and presentation is confusing to you? What don't you understand? How will you find the answer? Remember that there will ALWAYS be questions in an active thinker's mind!
5. **Give Opinions:** Make judgments about what you are viewing and hearing. Do you agree? Do you disagree? Like? Dislike? Do you support or oppose anything that you have heard or seen? Why?

Use the following sentence starters to shape your thoughts and comments while viewing posts in the forum. Comments based on these kinds of statements make interactive and engaging.

This reminds me of...

- This is similar to...
- I wonder...
- I realized...
- I noticed...
- You can relate this to...
- I'd like to know...
- I'm surprised that...
- If I were _____, I would _____
- If _____ then _____
- Although it seems...
- I'm not sure that...

When commenting, start with a greeting to the individual or to the group. Begin by quoting some part of the comment that you are responding to help other readers know what it is that has caught your attention. Then, explain your own thinking in a few short sentences.

Elaboration is important when you're trying to make a point. Finally, finish your comment with a question that other listeners can reply to. Questions help to keep digital conversations going!

When responding to another viewer, don't be afraid to disagree with something that they have said. Challenging the thinking of another viewer will help them to reconsider their own thinking—and will force you to be able to explain yours! **Just be sure to disagree agreeably—impolite people are rarely influential.**

If your thinking gets challenged by another viewer in a forum, don't be offended. Listen to your peers, consider their positions and decide whether or not you agree with them. You might discover that they've got good ideas you hadn't thought about. Either way, be sure to respond—let your challengers know how their ideas have influenced you.