

Target Task for Discussion Skills Development

1. The Target Task is planning an itinerary or program of 2-3 days for a specific target group or as requested by a client. Students are members of the organizing committee, which will require team discussion sessions.

It is part of a course in discussion skills development for 2nd-year Thai university students who are majoring in English or hospitality programs. It's developed from a task type that may be relevant to students going on to work in the tourism industry (e.g. tour programs), event planning or promotional work for companies in other industries.

From the O*Net site entry for event planning relevant skills could include:

<https://www.onetonline.org/link/summary/13-1121.00>:

- consult with customers to determine objectives and requirements
- plan and develop programs, agendas, budgets, and services according to customer requirements
- meet with sponsors and organizing committees to plan scope and format of events

Work activities include:

Organizing, Planning, and Prioritizing Work

Making Decisions and Solving Problems

Communicating with Supervisors, Peers, or Subordinates

Communicating with People Outside the Organization

Scheduling Work and Activities

Getting and Processing Information

The top work contexts are: telephone, constant contact with others, face-to-face discussions and email.

Team planning sessions will require discussion, active listening skills, making suggestions, expressing opinions, showing agreement and disagreement. There may be cultural issues in meeting contexts where Thais tend to defer to seniors and may expect to listen without commenting or expressing any opinions.

Other useful language areas may include prioritizing, scheduling, summarizing and making final decisions and expectations clear.

2. Questions for domain experts

What processes/procedures are followed in creating a program/itinerary?

How are different parts of the process conducted? e.g. email, face-to-face, telephone

How are meetings conducted in terms of organization, interaction etc.?

What is the decision-making process? How are final decisions made? In what forms are decisions recorded and presented?

What are the main sources of information in putting together a program?

Are there different expectations about behaviour/interaction in meetings between junior Thai and foreign staff, particularly where there are differences in seniority and experience?

What are the main communicative problems for junior Thai staff in this context?