

# Articles for Small Group Discussions




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## Introduction

The Wall Street Journal's insight and analysis of current events can spark passionate debates among its readers. See how Sheila Webber, chair and professor of management and entrepreneurship at Suffolk University, uses the Journal to encourage her students to share their points of view on issues.

## Using WSJ to organize small group discussions

Professor Webber uses three different approaches to class discussions:

-  Students are assigned to read one of two WSJ articles prior to class. When students get to the classroom, they are asked to divide into groups of four or five based on the article they read and share their answers to posted discussion questions.
-  If an article has different perspectives, the class is divided into teams based on the perspective they agree with. Using this approach, the class is able to have short debates on the topic.
-  If time is short, the class is divided based on discussion questions so each team gets one discussion question to address with the rest of the class.

## Types of articles that work best

Students tend to be responsive to articles about companies they are familiar with and whose products and services they use. They also gravitate towards articles that address topics relevant to the lives of college students and the young employee population.



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## Instructions for organizing discussions

Instructions can vary depending on the selection of articles.

From a selection of four to five articles, students are assigned to read one before class. When they get to class, they are then divided into small groups based on their assigned article. The information is shared across the class so everyone has an understanding of the articles and the issues being addressed.

Conversely, articles will be selected and assigned to the entire class when they address a particularly important subject for students.

## How to assess students' work

Professors can evaluate students by having each one share his or her answer to a discussion question with the entire class. Class participation credit may be given based on these answers. Discussion questions can also be posted to an online discussion board. Students can get credit for the answers they post to these questions.