

ICE BREAKERS

NAME GAMES:

Name Memory

Go around in a circle. The 1st person says his or her name; then the 2nd person says his or her name AND says the name of 1st person; then the 3rd person says his or her name AND the names of the people before him or her and so on until the circle is completed. The last person has to repeat everyone's name.

Daring David, Inquiring Ida & Ridiculous Rick

Ask each participant to choose an adjective that begins with the first letter of their first name and one that really matches their personality. Have them introduce themselves allow time for others to ask questions.

GET TO KNOW YOU ACTIVITIES:

Picture Guessing Game

Everybody draws a picture that expresses something about themselves. The drawings are collected. One by one, the drawings are "pulled out of a hat," held up, and the group tries to guess who drew it. Whoever guesses correctly is the next one to choose a drawing "out of the hat" to hold up for the group to guess. When someone guesses correctly, the person who drew the picture must explain it's meaning to the group.

What You Don't Know

Hand out slips of scratch paper and ask people to write down something about themselves that they think nobody else in the room knows. Then collect the sheets, shuffle them, hand them out again (making sure nobody gets their own). Each person reads out what is on their slip, one by one, and the group tries to guess who wrote it.

Finding Common Ground

Form equal-sized teams of three to six. Give each team a sheet of paper and a pencil. Tell teams their challenge is to list everything they can think of that all team members have in common. For example, team members might all attend the same school; prefer the same kind of music, or like the same brand of tennis shoes. The only rule is that they can't list similar body parts, such as, "We all have two arms, a brain, and a nose." Tell teams they have three minutes to create their lists, so they need to work quickly. To add to the urgency and excitement of the game, inform teams when there's one minute as well as 30 seconds remaining. When time is up, find out which team has the longest list and ask team members to read the similarities they listed. Then ask teams who had

similarities not already listed to share them. To conclude, have the entire group discuss the following questions.

Ask:

- How easy was it to discover something in common with another team member? With every team member?
- What does this reveal about the extent to which we're alike? The ways in which we're all different?
- How can our similarities draw us closer? How can our differences help us grow closer?

Two Truths & a Lie

Each person writes down three facts about themselves, one of which is a lie. Each person takes turns reading their list aloud. Have participants note which "fact" they think is a lie. When everyone is done reading their lists aloud, the first person reads their list again and identifies the lie. This icebreaker can show how right or wrong our perceptions can be.

Personal Bingo

The facilitator will need to do a little homework before the meeting to find out a few tidbits about each participant (favorite hobbies, books, vacation spots, number of children, favorite foods, etc). Prepare a bingo card (duplicate the card for all attendees to have the same one) with one tid-bit for each square, and instruct the participants to mingle with the group to identify the person for each square. As the information is uncovered, they ask the participant to sign their corresponding square. Keep moving among the guests until all squares are filled. Rules: only open-ended questions may be used. First person who fills card wins a prize.

What's Different, Partner?

Ask everyone to team up with a partner, preferably someone they haven't met. Ask them to turn back-to-back and change five things about their appearance. Partners turn around when ready and try to guess the five things that have been changed.

Milling to Music

Play some music, something catchy and have the group "mill" around. They can walk, hop, stroll, or dance to the music. When the music stops have everyone turn to the closest person that they don't know. Then have them answer a question to each other. (You can call out a question, hand out a sheet with questions beforehand or have the questions sealed in separate envelopes and instruct students to open a specific envelop.)

Treasure Hunt

At the beginning of the training, explain the importance of becoming acquainted with the other participants. Create a form to handout to each attendee and ask that everyone find similarities (for example: "grew up in

Chicago") with the other participants. You can award a small prize for the first person completing the form.

Say Cheese, Please

As each participant arrives, take their picture with a Polaroid type camera and hang their photo on a piece of easel paper or poster board in the entrance area of the meeting room in groups of two or three photos, depending on the size of the training. Use your creativity and decorate the easel paper to extend a Warm Welcome and set the tone of the training. Once all participants have arrived, ask them to find their partner(s) from the photo display on the easel and spend about five or ten minutes getting to know the person(s). Then have them introduce their partner(s) to the rest of the group and share something they discovered they have in common.

Birth Order

Put one of the following signs in each room corner: Only Child, Oldest Child, Youngest Child, Middle Child. Have participants go to the appropriate corner of the room based on their own birth order position. When everyone is assembled, ask them to discuss what special characteristics their birth order has and how it is reflected in their choice of job/career. Have small groups share with the large group.

A Matter of Degrees

Write the words "agree," "disagree," "strongly agree" and "strongly disagree" on separate pieces of paper and post them on four different walls of the room. Then make a statement such as "our organization can change the world" or "what would be the ideal job environment?" and have everybody move to the part of the room that matches their opinion. Have the group discuss why they chose their response.

ENERGIZERS:

Long Lost Relative

As a group, 1) Ask each person to greet their neighbor as if they really didn't want to be at the training. Yeah, you know what I mean; you can't wait to get out of there! 2) Then have everyone turn to the same person and greet him or her as if (s)he is a long lost, deeply loved relative who has just returned home and you're about to see the person for the first time in years. 3) Okay, now ask everyone (again simultaneously) to turn to the same person and greet him/her as if this person just told you that you won the state lottery for FIFTY MILLION DOLLARS and you have the ONLY winning ticket!

Beach Ball Brainstorming

Announce a topic (safety hazards, sexual harassment, etc). Have employees form a circle and then pass around an inflatable beach ball. Have everyone stand and randomly pass the ball. When someone catches the ball, they shout out something related to the topic and then toss the ball to someone else. This activity gets people up and moving, and is a fun one to do in the afternoon to

break up a long session. Variation: Ask employees to state one thing that they have learned in the training, so far.

Wink (Some call this energizer "Murder!")

Have the group stand in a circle with their eyes closed. One person walks around the circle and quietly taps the back of the one person who will be the "winker." Everyone opens their eyes and begins to mill around the room. If a person has been winked at, she or he must count to ten silently and then make a scene to let others know that he or she is out of the game. The object of the game is to catch the winker before everyone loses. If a person suspects the winker's identity, she or he shouts, "I have an accusation!" However, there has to be TWO accusers. When someone else becomes suspicious, he or she also shouts, "I have an accusation!" Then both accusers count to three and point to the person(s) that they think is the perpetrator. No discussion is allowed. If they both point to someone that is innocent OR point to different people, they are out of the game. If they both point to the perpetrator, then the game is over.

Knots

Stand in a circle shoulder to shoulder. Ask everyone to reach out and grab two hands. (You cannot have both hands of one person, and you cannot have the hands of the person on either side of you.) If possible, try not to criss-cross. Now, untangle so that all are standing in a round circle again.

Animal Charades

Get in groups of three. Each group is given the name of an animal. The group must come up with a way to demonstrate that animal, or act it out as a team. Then each group presents their demonstration to the class, who have to guess what animal it is.

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES, WITH A TWIST:

Dear Abby

Break the group into small teams. Give each team a "Dear Abby" letter and tell them that they have to respond to the letter. Prep work: Write "Dear Abby" letters and make sure that the facilitator knows appropriate responses for each letter. "Dear Abby" letters can be about anything ~

Review

Tape a 3 x 5 index card on each individual's back with a human resources term, policy or law. Individuals circulate in the room and ask questions that can ONLY be answered with a YES or NO to identify clues that will help them find out the term.

Charades: Policy or Not?

Group employees and have them act out various policies. Have employees guess what the policy is. The individual who guess correctly gets a prize and explains the policy to the class.

Burning Questions

Have participants write a question on a slip of paper. Then, put the slips in a container. Go around the room, have students pull out question and then answer it. If a student doesn't know the answer, they can redraw.