

17. Library of Ice-Breakers

1. What's Your Purse-onality?

Instruction to group:

- Take two items (e.g., family pictures, credit cards, rabbits' feet) from their purses, wallets, or pockets.
- When introducing themselves to the group, they should use whatever they took out to help describe themselves in at least two ways (e.g., "I am superstitious"; "I'm such a tightwad that this is the first dollar I ever earned"). Allow 1 minute per person.
- Point out that there is always something new team members can learn about each other that will increase rapport and make the team members aware of each other's strengths and applicable experiences.

2. Costume Party

Instruction to group:

- You are invited to a fancy dress party which requires that your costume says something about you.
- What costume would you wear and why?
- Take two minutes to think of your answer.

3. Alliterative Adjectives

- Ask each person to state her name and attach an adjective that not only describes a dominant characteristic, but also starts with the first letter of their name.
- Examples: Creative Cathy, Mathematical Mary.

4. Jigsaw (Picture of jigsaw needed)

- List the ways in which the jigsaw is similar to the composition of our team.
- There are boundaries.
 - Each piece plays a specific role in the solution.
 - Pieces are highly interconnected when teamwork occurs.
 - The whole is more (better) than the sum of its parts.
 - Some pieces are central, some peripheral.
 - There are natural groupings.
 - Pieces need someone to move them.
 - Rapid solution is aided by someone with an overall vision.
- Discussion questions.
 - Are you surprised by the number of similarities?
 - What are the ways you can use this metaphor.

5. Team Building-Sentence Relay

- Divide the room in teams between 5 -10 people
- Without talking to each other, the team members in turn write a sentence one word at a time.
- Pass marker to person behind them.
- Last person writes punctuation mark at the end of the sentence.
- Sentences can be in any form: question, statement or exclamation.

(If a team finishes early they can write another sentence.)

- Ask the group:
 - What do you think of your sentence or paragraph?
 - How did you decide what word to write first?
- Continue the conversation using some of these questions:
 - How did you decide how or when to end the sentence?
 - Was this easy or difficult to do? Ask them to explain.
 - How did you communicate without talking? Or did you communicate? ~ Was anyone amazed that you achieved the goal?
 - Was it difficult to add to other teams' sentences?
- What were some of the obstacles you had to overcome in order to achieve the goal?
 - List their responses on the flip chart.

6. Make Your Own League Acronym

- We have probably all heard of amusing lifestyle acronyms such as DINKY (Double Income, No Kids Yet); ORCHID (One Recent Child, Heavily In Debt); and the more formal term NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training).
- What acronym can you devise (or suggest one you know already) that is particularly appropriate for League?

7. Drawing a House Together

Participants will work in pairs. With a pencil, pen, crayon or marker. Each person will hold on to the marker together so that they can write on the paper together.

Ask pairs to draw a house without talking to each other. It is important to ask them to figure out how. The goal is to work on the picture together.

Jot down some note that you observe:

- Which partner takes control?
- Does one dominate or do they take turns?
- How are they making decisions without talking?
- How do they correct problems?
- Do they start seriously and then loosen up?
- Does one partner “check out” or give up?
- If they stop drawing for while who starts again?

ASK PARTICIPANTS TO HOLD UP THEIR DRAWINGS AND TALK ABOUT WHAT THEY DID.

Here are some questions you can ask:

- Is this the picture you had in mind when you started? If not, how did it end up the way it did?
- How did you decide what to draw?
- Who was in control of the marker?
- Was it easy to work with your partner?
- How did you communicate without talking?

WHAT DID YOU LEARN?

- Say, “This activity caused a little conflict. What were some of the causes?”
- How did you resolve them?
- What are some things you could have done to reduce the amount of conflict?

HOW DO YOU KEEP CONFLICTS FROM GETTING OUT OF HAND?

- Set goals before starting
- Maintain 2 way communication
- Recognize differences in style
- Listen to and acknowledge other person’s ideas
- Recognize own strengths and weaknesses
- Try to see the other point of view