

ICEBREAKERS

1. **ONE GOOD THING** Participants introduce themselves and share one good thing (can be work related or personal). Provides a positive beginning and conversation starters at the beginning of a session.

2. **SILENT BIRTHDAY LINE-UP**

Tell participants that they must line up in order of their birthdays. The trick is that they must do it silently. When everyone has lined up, ask them to introduce themselves by saying their name, where they work (if relevant), and their birthday. This provides some team building as well as introductions.

3. **STAGE NAME**

Tell participants that they are going to invent their stage name. Their first name will be the name of their first pet. Their last name will be the name of the first street that they remember living on. Have them introduce themselves to the larger group by their stage name first and then their real name.

4. **FIND 10 THINGS IN COMMON**

FROM: http://humanresources.about.com/od/icebreakers/a/icebreaker_com.htm

Team Building Icebreaker Steps

- A. Divide the meeting participants into groups of four or five people by having them number off. (You do this because people generally begin a meeting by sitting with the people they already know best.)
- B. Tell the newly formed groups that their assignment is to find ten things they have in common, with every other person in the group, that have nothing to do with work. (I tell people no body parts (we all have legs; we all have arms) and no clothing (we all wear shoes, we all wear pants). This helps the group explore shared interests more broadly.)
- C. Tell the groups that one person must take notes and be ready to read their list to the whole group upon completion of the assignment.
- D. Ask for a volunteer to read their whole list of things in common first. Then, ask each group to share their whole list with the whole group. Because people are your best source for laughter and fun, the reading of the lists always generates a lot of laughter and discussion. You can also catch the drift of the conversation in the small groups based on the transitions made from item to item.

- E. This team building icebreaker takes 10 – 15 minutes, depending on the number of groups. To keep the activity to ten minutes, after seven minutes of brainstorming together, I usually tell the groups that the lists they have created are perfect, no matter how many items they have, and debrief.

5. FIVE OF ANYTHING

FROM http://humanresources.about.com/od/icebreakers/a/icebreaker_five.htm

Five of Anything Ice Breaker Steps

- A. Divide the meeting participants into groups of four or five people by having them number off. (You do this because people generally begin a meeting by sitting with the people they already know best.)
- B. Tell the newly formed groups that their assignment is to share their five favorite movies of all time, or their five favorite novels, or their five least liked films, and so forth. The topic can be five of anything - most liked or disliked. This ice breaker helps the group explore shared interests more broadly and sparks lots of discussion about why each person likes or dislikes their selected five.

You can also use this ice breaker for topical discussion. As an example, in a session on team building, you might ask, "What are five dysfunctional behaviors you have experienced when participating on an unsuccessful team?" Or, "Think about the best team you have ever been on. What are five key factors that made it your best or most successful team?"

- C. Tell the groups that one person must take notes and be ready to share the highlights of their group discussion with the whole group upon completion of the assignment.
- D. Debrief the team building ice breaker by asking for a volunteer to read their list of five of anything. Or ask the volunteer to list any movies, for example, that more than one person had in common and shared as their favorite. Then, ask each group to share their whole list with the whole group.

Because people are almost always your best source for laughter and fun, the reading of the lists generates a lot of laughter and discussion. You can also catch the drift of the conversation in the small groups based on the transitions made from item to item. When the volunteer from each group is finished, ask the rest of the participants if they have anything they'd like to add to the discussion before moving on with the rest of the session. This team building icebreaker takes 10 – 15 minutes, depending on the number of groups that need to report their discussion.

6. MAROONED:

FROM <http://www.lionsclubs.org/EN/common/pdfs/icebreakers.pdf>

Divide the large group into small groups of 3-5 participants. Explain the situation. They are marooned on an island. What five (you can use a different number, such as seven, depending upon the size of each team) items would you have brought with you if you knew there was a chance that you might be stranded. Note that they are only allowed five items per team, not per person. You can have them write their items on a flip chart and discuss and defend their choices with the whole group. This activity helps them to learn about other's values and problem solving styles and promotes teamwork.

7. WHERE DO YOU STAND:

FROM <http://www.icebreakers.ws/medium-group/extremes-game-where-do-you-stand.html>

Set up an imaginary line at the front of the room.

Have participants stand up. Ask several questions and ask them to go the side of the line they prefer as an answer to the question. Example: Coffee or Tea? Participants can go to the left, right or middle. Have the "middle" folks explain their answers.

- Hawaii or NYC?
- Summer or Winter?
- Morning person or night person?
- Working with elementary age or high school age?
- Provider Day or Presenting a Module?

8. ICEBREAKER QUESTIONS:

You can make these up or get a list from:

<http://www.icebreakers.ws/small-group/icebreaker-questions.html>

- What's your dream job?
- If you could have an endless supply of one food, what would it be?
- What are two things you have learned today during Provider Day?
- If you could visit one place, where would it be and why?
- What is the weirdest food you have ever eaten?

ENERGIZERS

1. POP UPS: This can be used during brainstorming activities. Participants pop up to answer questions.

- a. Shout out one workshop you went to today.
- b. What was one thing you learned?
- c. What EBP are you using?

2. SLAPPING LEATHER:

FROM <http://www.greeleyschools.org/Page/11394>

Have participants stand. Then direct them to touch opposite hand to foot alternating in front and then behind continue the pattern.

3. EAR/NOSE

FROM: <http://brainbreaks.blogspot.com/>

Have participants stand up. Tell them to take their right hand and grab hold of their left ear. Have them take their left hand and touch their nose. Then do the opposite: left hand grabs right ear, and right hand touches nose. Switch three or four times at increasing speed.

4. MIRROR/MIRROR

Have participants stand and turn to a neighbor. Tell them that they must look at each other and “mirror” each other’s moves as if they were each other’s reflection.

5. OVER, UNDER, AROUND AND THROUGH

FROM: <http://www.activeacademics.org/?pid=9&lessonid=641>

Participants get in lines of five. Instruct them that they must move as if they are going over, under, around and through imaginary or real objects following their leader. (The line leader will change on each new scenario). For example, go over a sea of sticky peanut butter, through a giraffe’s legs, under a low bridge, around a desk.

Go Over

- a. A steep mountain top
- b. A river on a wiggly bridge
- c. A barbed wire fence
- d. Three logs on your path
- e. A slithering snake

Go Under

- f. A low tree limb
- g. Water
- h. A big dog
- i. A limbo stick
- j. Another student

Go Around

- k. An elephant
- l. A corner
- m. A dirty trash can
- n. A thorny bush
- o. A soggy swamp

Go Through

- p. A creaky door
- q. A field of tall grass
- r. A long tunnel
- s. A haunted house
- t. A sea of Jell-O

Time: Less than 5 minutes

Source: West Virginia Department of Education - Office of Healthy Schools Let's Move Resource Guide (adapted from ABC for Fitness by David Katz)

A special shout-out to Mid-Hudson Planned Parenthood for the additional activity: The Human Version of Rock, Paper, Scissors.