

## Welcome

Welcome to *ImprovPlus*!

We're glad you're here!

You bought this packet because you really want to use Improv in your facilitations and trainings. This guide is comprehensive, easy to use, and comes to you with lots of support.

This guide assumes that facilitators and participants have little to no exposure to Improv, though the techniques and discussion topics outlined are applicable to any skill level and any industry. We provide the instructions, we provide the exercises, and we provide the questions and discussion topics. We even provide handouts that you can use (or not). You don't have to do anything except print out this guide and follow along.

We have developed an outline that will facilitate a steady but manageable learning curve. We recommend that you follow the progression of this guide to make each technique easy to understand. However, if you want to mix things up and take the lessons and activities in a different order, that is entirely up to you. There is no specific order to any of the rules or guidelines specified in this guide, even where we might have listed things using numbers. No rule should be considered more or less important than any other - except where they might have more or less significance to you.

Along with this guide, you also have access to an extensive online repository of knowledge. Browse the Improv Game database for instructions for over 150 different games and exercises. We're frequently adding materials and help. Need something you don't see? Let us know and we'll create in-house or help you create custom materials.

As if that wasn't enough, your subscription also comes with three consulting calls with the *ImprovPlus* team. If you run into any roadblocks, if you have any questions about the guide, or if you just want some more information, do not hesitate to reach out to us. We can help.

Improv has been used for decades for this kind of work. You can read about it on our blog. Improv provides a space for conversation and encourages people to explore, experiment, expand, and excel. By introducing your participants to Improv, you are taking your first step on a path to being more awesome. Our goal is to make that path as effective and memorable as possible.

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## Facilitator Facts

**Objective:**

Give young professionals experience with networking, and the tools to network with senior-level executives.

**ImprovPlus-es:**

- Increase your team's confidence in networking.
- Create and strengthen relationships in the group.
- Establish a company-wide culture and promote team-building.

**Group size:** 15+**Duration:** 90 Minutes**Set Up:**

Set up the space like a real networking event. There should be food, there should be drinks.

We recommend high-top tables and no chairs in the room.

Ensure a large, open area for participants to mingle and meet each other without being too constrained.

Invite Senior-level executives or other important people at your company to stop by the workshop during the open networking session at the end. We want the participants to get real-world experience with networking.

If, as the facilitator, you feel you need a microphone, make sure you have one prepared. We recommend a lavalier or clip-on microphone so you don't have to hold anything.

**Improv+Tips:**

This training works best during the last 90 minutes of the work day or as an evening training.

This training can work almost anywhere, so if you are unable to get any of the specifications above, get creative.

## Agenda Cheat-Sheet

**Opening**

5 Minutes

This is where you will establish the tone (FUN! LIGHTHEARTED) and outline the objectives of the training.

**Warmup activities (page 5)**

15 Minutes

You will lead the group through their warm up activities. Remember – they will take their cue from you. The more you commit the more they will commit.

**Networking Discussion (page 7)**

30 Minutes

Go through the Networking Tips. Not all will need the same amount of time. Some will need more explanation than others. Some will illicit more questions and conversation.

**Open Networking (page 8)**

45 Minutes

**Notes:**

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## Warm Up

15 Minutes

The warm up is important! It sets the tone for the training. The goal is to get everyone in the group comfortable with the space and with each other. The more comfortable the participants feel, the more open they will be to developing their skills.

Gather the group into a large circle and work through the selection of warm up exercises.

Each exercise is accompanied with suggested discussion points. You may or may not decide to use some, all or none of them. You may recognize other discussion opportunities – that's part of the beauty and glory of Improv – it provides many avenues for conversation and connection.

### Exercises

*Instructions and Information about these games can be found in the Improv Game Database, available on the ImprovPlus app.*

#### Game 1

##### Name and Gesture

##### Discussion Topics:

1. Commitment. Encourage your participants to commit to the game. What does it mean to commit to something? What does it look like and feel like?
2. Showing Up. Show up for others in your group. What does it mean to show up without being critical and without judgement - an important skill for networking!

#### Game 2:

##### Zip Zap Zop

##### Discussion Topics:

1. When does this game work well? When participants speak clearly, make eye contact, etcetera.
2. Stay present and don't get distracted.

Game 3:

### Five Things

#### Discussion Topics:

1. Support each other – how awesome is it knowing there are no wrong answers and that the group has your back?
2. Encourage the group to think outside the box. Try your best to rattle off the 5 things quickly – part of successful networking is being able to respond ‘in the moment.’

### Need more?

For additional games to play, consult the Improv Game Database for games listed with the tags “warmup” and “icebreaker.”

### Additional Discussion Topics

1. Connect any pertinent comments, questions, etcetera to networking.
2. In successful networking, we must show up. We must be present in the room – not distracted by phones or outside business.
3. We must be able to speak clearly and communicate well.
4. We must be curious about those around us, and be willing to engage in conversation.

### Questions to Ask

1. How do these games apply to networking?
2. What did you notice about yourself or others while playing?

## Networking Discussion

30 Minutes

*Refer the participants to the first handout - "Networking Tips." Below are the tips as well as common discussion points, FAQs and their answers as well as relevant comments. Adjust as needed to suit your company culture and expectations.*

**1. Set goals**

- Why are you going to this event? What is this event worth your time and money?
- You don't have to meet everyone in the room. You don't have to get every business card.
- Determine how long you want to stay, who you want to meet (position, field or name) and what you need to get out of the event.
- Give yourself permission to do what is right for you.

**2. Do your research**

- If possible review the attendee list – who do you know? Who do you need to connect with? Who seems interesting or intriguing? Bring your business cards. Keep them handy – in a side pocket on your purse, in your lanyard, etc.
- Do a bit of research on the hosting group or industry. What issues are important or timely to them?
- Coming prepared will help you make conversation!

**3. Mind your manners**

- Networking events are NOT for eating. Eat before. You won't risk awful breath, food in your teeth or projectile pieces flying out of your mouth.
- When it comes to alcohol don't take your cues from senior leadership. They can get away with things that Young Professionals needing to make a good impression cannot.
- This is also where YOUR company culture comes into play. Have an honest discussion. Your goal is help them feel successful and look good!

#### 4. Master the Handshake

- Refer to the add-on content, “*Handshake Academy*,” available on the ImprovPlus app.

#### 5. Make conversation. Ask questions.

1. Discuss good questions to get conversation started. Here are some that work well:
  1. What brings you to this event/Why did you want to attend?
  2. Who are you hoping to meet or connect with?
  3. What other groups are you involved with?

#### 6. Be a Connector.

1. Help make connections by offering to introduce two people is a wonderful way to build your network and keep conversation moving. It’s also a helpful way to get out of a conversation.
2. Demonstrate this for them and let them practice. *A video demonstration will be available soon through the ImprovPlus app.*
3. Being a connector is as important as being connected.
4. Refer to the add-on content “*How to make an introduction*” available on the ImprovPlus app.

#### 7. Follow-up.

1. If you do end up connecting with someone and want to continue to develop the professional relationship here’s what you do:
  1. Indicate that you would like to follow up. Ask them the best way to communicate with them – email, Twitter, Facebook, text?
  2. Soon after the event write an email to everyone you met. A simple “nice to meet you, enjoyed our conversation” is a great way to extend the connection.



## Networking Practice

45 Minutes

The final piece of the puzzle is having the participants practice these tips.

Ideally, you have worked through all the tips. Questions have been answered. Handshakes have been mastered. Tips have been well received.

Senior leadership has started to filter in.

Encourage the participants to put their new information into play.

Challenge them to make introductions. Challenge them to ask questions.

Your role becomes that of Coach. If you see someone stuck to the wall, introduce them. If you see a conversation stall out, find a way to reignite it or bring someone new into the group.

The goal is to make this feel as close to a 'real world' networking event as possible.

### **The Last 5 minutes**

As time draws to a close, get everyone's attention.

Encourage them to find a networking event in the next 3-5 days that they can attend.

Thank them for coming. Dismiss them.