

Icebreakers for Real

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Introduction

Icebreakers, just like the name says, are a great way to break the ice and set the tone for a great start. Icebreakers also breaks down social barriers, creates a positive environment, and helps people recognize they have many things in common. Icebreakers are also an effective team building tool and successfully demonstrate how and why teams are more productive than any one single individual. Moreover, icebreakers enable you to energize participants and they help participants learn in a safe relaxed environment.

As a facilitator you can always have someone stand up and introduce themselves, but why not make your event interesting and fun. Why not make it enjoyable not just for you but also for the participants. The ice breakers offered in this book offer just that and they give you a variety of ways to get participants participating. They also encourage participants to be creativity or to use their imagination. Humor, teamwork, and rapport are also other tools participants use to help make their experience extraordinary.

Icebreakers can also be easy or complicated. Sometimes you just need the participants and sometimes you need flip charts, magic markers, or even food. So this book has a chart detailing information for each icebreaker exercise that lets you know how the size of the group, how long the icebreaker takes, and what items you need. That means you don't have to be surprised and there's no second guessing. In addition, each icebreaker is written in clear, concise steps so you won't be confused and if you want

to fill 5 minutes or if you need to fill 30 minutes, these exercises will make your activity a success.

The first section of this book deals with a variety of introductions. Section two deals with team building activities and helps to create trust, increase motivation, enhance relationships, and promote positive attitudes. Besides creating team work, it's good to encourage creativity, which is the third section of this book. The fourth section helps facilitators to review material so it stays with participants and the fifth section helps to and reinforce positive behaviors. Diversity training is the sixth section and it helps participants gain appreciation of others whose cultures, heritages, or traditions may be different from their own. Lastly, when participants get tired, the Shake Your Booty section helps you reenergize and revitalize your participants. So, let's start by breaking the ice.

Meet and Greet

The following games are designated as “Meet and Greet.” These games allow individuals to meet and learn something about each other in a non-threatening way.

I Want to Know ...

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited	1-2 minutes per person	—

This icebreaker exercise allows participants to introduce themselves and identify what topics they want covered in class.

1. Have each participant introduce him or herself and write a question on a Post-it note about what they want to learn in the class.
2. Place each Post-it note on a wall chart.
3. At the end of the class answer ask the group to answer each Post-it note question.

Oink, Oink, Arf, Arf

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited	Up to 5 minutes	Preprinted paper slips

This humorous exercise works well before the event begins and allows participants to mingle in an unusual way.

1. Prior to the event write the name of an animal and the noise the animal makes. Create five to ten slips for each animal.
 - Typical animals you might want to use include: pigs, cows, dogs, elephants, horses, roosters, frogs, cats, monkeys, rattlesnakes, sheep, donkeys, bees, owls, or geese.
2. At the event, randomly pass out the slips to participants as they arrive.
3. Instruct participants they can make noises or make gestures related to their animal, but they cannot speak. The goal is to locate other animals that match the one printed on their slip. So for example, a dog would try to find the other dogs by barking or making dog-like gestures whereas the pigs might oink.
4. Once the person finds someone who matches his or her animal, he or she needs to continue rotating around the room until all similar animals are located.
5. If you plan on having groups, you can also form groups by animal matches.

My Birth Date Partner

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited	30 minutes	—

This exercise allows participants to form partnerships by their birth dates (month and day only—do not use years).

1. Have the participants mingle amongst one another until the participant discovers the person who is closest to their own birth date (month and day only).
2. Have participants form a partnership with his or her birth date partner and find three things the pair have in common, such as marital status, number of siblings, where they were born, their favorite school subject, their favorite type of dog, their favorite color, the type of vehicle they drive, etc.

I've Got It

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Teams of 4 people	5 minutes	Preprinted list for each team Pencil for each team Small inexpensive prize

This exercise allows participants to get to know one another in a non-threatening and fun way.

Beforehand create a list of about 25 items people might carry with them. This list could include such things as calculator, cell phone, lipstick, comb, gum, brush, nail file, pencil, pen, photograph, rubber band, quarter, etc. Also include a couple of things that are less common such as a postage stamp, ruler, or screw.

1. Divide the group into teams of 4 people and give each team a copy of the preprinted list.
2. Have teams check off each item that a team member has with them. Allow up to 3–4 minutes.
3. You can also award a small prize to the team who has the most items.

How Change Works

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited	3-5 minutes	—

When you are conducting a class in a typical classroom setting this exercise works well because it demonstrates how change usually works.

1. Ensure all the desks are facing forward and move the flip charts or podium to the back of the classroom. When you begin have the participants face forward and conduct the class from behind so you see the back of the student’s head.
2. Students will immediately feel how awkward it is to be in a classroom where they cannot see the flip chart or face the teacher. Explain to students this is usually how change is implemented and that it is pushed on employees, which of course resulted in opposition. Tell students that when change is done this way it is just as successful as you are as you try to conduct class from behind them.
3. You can also explain how change is often implemented in separate departments, just like the separate rows they are sitting in, and that it makes it difficult for real teams to be effective because they are restricted or confined.
4. Ask students to rearrange the class room in a way that allows them to break out of these confinements and allows them to learn, communicate, and build teams.
5. You can also tell the class they may need to rearrange the classroom again if they find a better setting that encourages greater learning, participation, or teamwork.

By Choice

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited	Up to 5 minutes	—

This exercise helps break the ice and gets people moving. It also gives participants a chance to see what they have and don't have in common with others.

Ask participants to stand up in the center of the room and then depending on their answer move to one side of the room based on the following questions. I am

- More like a poodle or a bulldog?
- More like a Volkswagen Bug or a Mercedes?
- More like the moon or the sun?
- More like beer or a cabernet?
- More like a turtle or a hare?
- More like an A student or a member of the parking lot gang?
- More like a pine tree or an oak?
- More like the present or the past?
- More like a feather pillow or a rock?
- More intuition or logic?
- More like Burger King or a gourmet restaurant?
- More like a stream or the ocean?
- More agreeable than disagreeable?
- More like a manual typewriter or a computer?
- More like a Hawaii or Alaska?

Christmas A to Z

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited	10-15 minutes	Flip chart or board Magic marker

This exercise is great around the Christmas holidays and it allows everyone in a large group to participate.

Beforehand write each letter of the alphabet on a flip chart.

Ask participants to provide a Christmas holiday word or phrase for each letter of the alphabet, similar to those below:

- A = Angels

B = Bells, Bethlehem

C = Candy canes, carols, Claus, Chris Kringle

D = Deck the Halls

E = Eight maids a milking, eggnog

F = Four calling birds, Frankincense, Fa la la la

G = Garland, gifts

H = Holiday cheer

I = Icicle lights

J = Jingle Bells, Jesus

K = Kwanzaa

L = Logs (as in Yule tide logs)

M = Mistletoe, Menorah

N = Noel

O = Ornaments

P = Partridge in a pear tree, Peace on Earth, Poinsettias

Q =

R = Reindeers, Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer

S = Santa Claus, Sleigh, Snow, Silent Night, Six geese a laying

T = Two turtle doves, Turkey, Three Wise Men

U =

V =

W = Wreaths, Wrapping paper

X = X-mas

Y = Yule tide

Z =

The Academy Award

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited	30 seconds each person	—

The following icebreaker helps participants to learn something about each other and allows each participant to acknowledge those who have helped them in their career.

Have each participant introduce him or herself and give a short 30 second thank you to the person or persons who have contributed to their career goals and professional development in the work place.

One Minute Introductions

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited	Less than 1 minute per person	—

The following exercises can be completed in one minute or less and allow participants a chance to learn something about each other.

Have each participant introduce him or herself and

- Identify someone who has contributed or mentored them in their professional development. Also have the person explain his or her relationship to the mentor.
- Complete the following sentence, “the big risk I ever took was ...”
- State their department and job title.
- Identify who they think is the most important person that has ever lived.
- Identify which make and model of car best describes them.
- State how long they have been with the company. The facilitator keeps a running score and announces at the end of the introductions that there is X number of years of experience in the room.
- State their expectations for the meeting.
- Complete the following sentence, “the best job I have had was ...”
- Share one positive improvement they have instituted in the past year in relation to their personal growth, their health, their relationships, their work, or their family.

If I Was Famous

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited	15-30 minutes	Preprinted 3 x 5 Card for each person Scotch tape

This icebreaker allows people to mingle and is a fun way for people to get to know one another.

- Write a famous person's name on each 3x5 card and tape it to the back of each person as he or she arrives.
 - Examples of people who can be used include Tom Cruise, the Tooth Fairy, Al Gore, Barbara Walters, Hillary Clinton, or the Abominable Snowman.
- Each person then circulates around the room and asks each person one YES or NO question to determine who the famous person is listed on his or her card.
- After each question the person tries to guess the identity of the person written on the card.
- When the person guesses correctly, the card is move to his or her chest and they become a "consultant" to the other people who have not solved the identity of the person listed on their card.



Select people appropriate in age for the card. For example, don't select Joe DiMaggio or Frank Sinatra if participants are twenty years old.

VARIATION

- Use Post-it notes instead of 3 x 5 cards and place them on people's foreheads rather than their backs.

Let’s Get Acquainted

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Even number	6 minutes plus 1 minute for each introduction	Preprinted questionnaire for each person

Sometimes participants feel uncomfortable when they have to introduce themselves, so this exercise allows them to introduce someone and share information in a non-threatening manner.

1. Give a preprinted questionnaire to each person.
2. Have participants pair up with someone they do not know.
3. Allow 6 minutes for participants to answer the following questions.
 - What is the title of the last movie you watched?
 - Who is your favorite musical group or what is your favorite song?
 - If you could any vehicle in the world, which vehicle would you want?
 - What is the title of your favorite book?
 - What is your favorite sport or hobby?
 - How or why did you acquire your first name?
 - Which word best describes you and why?
 - What is your favorite food?
 - If you could be any animal, which animal would you pick?
 - Which person do you admire most in the world?
 - If you could have a dream vacation where would it you go?
4. Have each person introduce his or her partner and answer three interesting things they learned about the other person.

My Home Town Wins

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Groups of up to 8 people	15 minutes	U.S. map for each group Markers for each group

This icebreaker examines everyone's home town and allows participants to share information and determine which home town is the most interesting.

1. Form teams of 4 to 6 people.
2. Have each person identify his or her hometown on the U.S. map by marking it with an "X".
3. Discuss each home town and have team members select the most interesting home town within each team by using the following criteria or similar criteria.
 - Fun or interesting activities to do in the home town.
 - Special events held in the home town.
 - Attractions of the home town, which could include homes of famous people or interesting landmarks.
 - Weather patterns of the home town and how seasons affect tourism.
4. Share the interesting home town selected with the other groups and tell why it was selected.

The Hard Way

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited	Less than 1 minute per person	Flip chart of board Magic marker

This introduction exercise allows participants to look back at previously behavior and see what they had to learn the hard way.

1. Determine the topics you will cover in class and list them on a flip chart.
2. Have each participant introduce him or herself and explain one thing they learned hard way from the topics you plan to cover.
3. Write each participant's name next to the topic and refer to what the person learned throughout the session.

My Objective is ...

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Groups of 6 or less	5 minutes plus 1-2 minutes per person	Flip chart or board for each team Magic markers for each team

This introduction game allows participants to examine their goals and objectives for the class.

1. Divide the class into small teams of no more than 6 people.
2. Instruct each person to identify one objective related to class.
Allow 5 minutes for the activity and post each objective on a flip chart.
3. Have each person introduce him or herself and share his or her objective with the rest of the class.

Hum, Hum, Hum

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Teams	5 minutes	Preprinted slips of paper for each person

This icebreaker is a fun way to break into groups.

Ahead of time select several songs that can be hummed, such as nursery songs like “Old McDonald’s Farm,” “Row, Row, Row, Your Boat”, “Rock-a-by Baby,” “The Itsy-bitsy Spider,” etc or other songs like “99 Bottles of Beer” or “The Star-Spangled Banner.” The number of songs you use results in the number teams and the number of slips for each song you create results in the number of participants per team.

On the day of the event pass out one slip to each person. Ask each person to hum the song and find the other participants humming the same song so that they can create a group.

One to Another

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited	5 minutes per person	—

This icebreaker allows people to learn about each other when they are members of a group, a club, or an organization.

Have each person introduce him or herself and have them answer the following open-ended questions so the class can learn information about each participant:

- How did you find out about this group?
- Why did you choose to join this group or what piqued your interest about this group?
- What do you think you will gain from joining this group?
- How will this group help improve your life?

Favorite Outfit or Favorite T-Shirt

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited	5-10 minutes per person	—

This fun icebreaker allows people get to learn how different they are from one another and they get to express their individuality and uniqueness.

1. Notify participants beforehand to wear an outfit or T-shirt that reflects their personality.
2. Have each participant explain to the group why they chose their outfit or T-shirt and how and why it expresses who they are as a person.

My Lifeline

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited	5-10 minutes per person	Large Sheet of Paper for each person Magic marker for each person

This exercise allows participants to examine their past accomplishments or significant events from their birth to the present day, and it allows participants to have insight into each participant's past experiences.

1. Have each person create a "lifeline" on the paper by writing or drawing accomplishments or significant events from his or her birth to today.
2. Each person then shares the information shown from the lifeline with the group.

Say Cheese!

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited	6-11 minutes per person	Polaroid camera Scotch tape

This icebreaker encourages individuals to focus on what they have in common with someone else.

1. Take a picture of each participant as they arrive.
2. Tape the pictures in pairs onto an easel near the entrance.
3. Open the meeting by having each person find the person they are paired with on the easel.
4. Have the pairs spend up to 5-10 minutes getting to know one another by asking open-ended questions and have them discover at least one thing they both have in common.
5. Have each pair introduce their partner to the rest of the group and have them share the commonalities they found with their partner.

Line of Friends

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited	15 seconds per person	—

This icebreaking exercise works best with large groups when they will be meeting for more than one day, and it facilitates everyone meeting everyone else.

Form two lines side by side and facing each other.

1. Begin by having each participant greet and introduce themselves to the person across from them.
2. Shift one line one person to the right and have the end person move to the end of the opposite line until every person has met every other person.

Why I Attended

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited	1-2 minutes per person	—

This introduction exercise allows participants to share their reason and goals in attending the class, conference, or event.

Form a circle and have each person state his or her name and complete the following statements:

- I heard about this class from ...
- I wanted to attend this class because ...
- I hope to learn ...

Let's Play Cards

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited	10-20 minutes	Deck of cards

There are numerous card makers who have produced such cards as "Success for Dummies," "Public Speaking for Dummies," "Table Talk" or "Chicken Soup" cards.

Using a pack of cards pass one out to each participant and have them start talking. Before the events starts people can mingle and pose questions to one another or they can discuss interesting facts written on their cards.

Personal Interview

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Even number of people	20 minutes for interview plus 3 minutes per person	Paper for each person Pencil for each person

This icebreaker helps to alleviate tension caused by a person having to introduce his or herself and provides interesting facts about each participant.

1. Each person joins with another person he or she does not know or does not know well.
2. Each person then interviews his or her partner for 10 minutes. During the interview the interviewer notes such things as where the person was born, their favorite hobby, their favorite food, their favorite color, their pets names, what state they live in, favorite type of music, etc.
3. Form back into a group and have each interviewer introduce the interviewee by describing them with three adjectives and then relating what interesting facts they learned about the person interviewed. So, a person might introduce another by saying "Lindsay was my partner. She was energetic, funny, and friendly. An interesting thing I learned about her is she likes to paint portraits of dogs and is a race car driver on weekends."

My Role Model is ...

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited number	1 minute per person	Flip chart or board Magic marker

This icebreaker allows individuals to identify their role models and to determine what traits make for good role models.

1. Identify the topic for discussion.
2. Have each participant:
 - Identify someone he or she considers a role model for the topic being discussed, as well as the person's skills, talents, or qualities that makes them a good role model.
3. Have each person introduce him or herself and share the role model's name, as well as the person's skills, talents, and qualities that makes them a good role model.
4. Post the characteristics on a flip chart for everyone to see.

Meet Me and I'll Meet You

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited	10-15 minutes	—

This icebreaker helps participants meet as many people as possible.

1. Instruct participants to meet as many people as they can in two minutes.
2. At the end of the 2 minutes have participants form teams of three.
3. Instruct teams they are to find four unique things the three team members have in common, but the three things can have nothing to do with work or if this is an organization meeting, nothing to do with the organization. So for example, the team members could all drive Toyotas, they could all play on a baseball team, their favorite ice cream could be Rocky Road, and the could all live in two story houses.
4. As the teams finish the task they need to shout out, "We're done."
5. After the teams have completed the task, you can have a the teams share their commonalities with the remaining group and ask the teams.
 - What techniques teams used to completed the task?
 - What difficulties they experienced as they looked for commonalties with their team members?

My Dream Job

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited number	1 minute per person	—

It seems like at one time or another everyone needs a change. This creative exercise allows individuals to imagine what could be and it encourages individuals to seek new opportunities and personal growth.

Have each participant introduce themselves and then describe all the elements necessary for his or her dream job. Items participants might discuss include:

- The person's dream job title.
- The person's dream salary.
- The type of work done in the person's dream job.
- What changes they would want to implement in the dream job.
- How they would expect to be recognized or how they would recognize other employees for a job well done.

Name Game

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
26 people	10 minutes	—

This icebreaker helps a participant to remember the other participant’s names in a fun and unique way.

1. Form a circle.
2. The first person states his or her name and uses their first initial to describe themselves with one word. (Limits may be placed on the topic, such as no food, vacation, or sports terminology).
3. The second person repeats the first person’s information and then states his or her own information.
4. The third person repeats the first and second person’s information and then his or her own information.
5. Continue this process until everyone has stated their name.

Find Out Who

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Up to 25 people	45 minutes	Preprinted lists for each person Pencil for each person Small inexpensive prize (optional)

This is a good mingling icebreaker and allows all participants to meet face-to-face.

1. Before the event, compile a list that includes a fact about each participant. Facts can be related to the person's home or work life and you can have more than one person attached to a fact. Items can include such things as who owns a black cat named Tom, who has developed a process for online documentation, or who is a financial expert.



Ensure the fact listed is not private in nature or something that would embarrass the person.

2. Between each fact leave four line spaces so participants can enter additional information as defined below.
3. On the day of the event, distribute one copy to each participant and time the exercise for 30 minutes.
4. Each participant searches to find the appropriate participant connected to the fact and when he or she finds the correct person, they enter the participant's name, phone number, and job title in the appropriate space.
5. Prizes may also be awarded to the participant who connects the most correct facts to the correct participants.

My Favorite Animal

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited number	15 to 30 minutes	Name Card Magic marker

This icebreaker gets participants talking in a non-threatening way and helps set a creative mood for the remainder of your class, session, or conference.

1. When a participant arrives ask him or her to think of their favorite animal and give you three adjectives that describe this animal, such as playful, smart, or irritable.
2. Write the three adjectives on the participant's card ahead of the person's name.
3. Have participants mingle with each other and share why the three traits listed on his or her name tag are similar to their own personality.

Toilet Tissue Game

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited number	1 minute per sheet	Toilet tissue or individual candies, such as M&Ms or Hot Tamales.

This exercise is a fun way to get people to share information about themselves in any kind of setting.

1. Form a circle.
2. Pass the roll of toilet tissue and tell each person to take as many sheets of paper as they want. (Don't tell them why).
3. When the toilet paper has been passed to each person tell the group for every sheet of paper taken the person has to share something about themselves with the group, and you may start with the leader.
4. Either go around the circle one sheet at a time or have each person share until he or she has used up their sheets.
5. As each person shares have them rip off the sheet and place it in the center of the circle.

Brown Bag

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited	1-2 minutes per person	—

This introduction exercise helps a participant learn what is important to each participant.

Notify each person beforehand to bring three things in a paper bag that is important to the person or symbolizes the person. Then select one of the two versions of the game from below.

Version #1

1. Each person shares his or her objects with the group and tells why the items he or she chose were important to them.

Version #2

1. Put all the bags in a pile and mix them together.
2. Draw the bags out one at a time and have participants guess which person brought which bag.

Let's Get Rapping

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited number	5 minutes plus 1 minute per person	Paper for each person Pencil for each person

This icebreaker is particularly fun for young people and allows a person's real personality and creativity to appear.

1. Allow five minutes for each person to write down an acronym for each letter of their first name, so Julie might be J=Jittery U=Unbelievable L=Lucky I=Introverted E=Exciting
2. Then have the person rap their name so it goes something like "I'm Julie, so give me a J for jittery, a U for unbelievable, an L for lucky, an I for introverted, and E for exciting. That's right I'm J-U-L-I-E, Julie from the block!"

Guess Who

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
12 people	10 minutes	Preprinted Survey for each person Pencil for each person

This icebreaker sidesteps the traditional introduction techniques and allows individuals to feel less stress in speaking out in front of one another.

- Before the session begins pass out paper and pencil to each person and then have each person answer these five questions:
 - My favorite food is
 - My favorite book is
 - I last vacationed in
 - My favorite television show is
 - My favorite color is
- During the session, read the clues and have the participants guess which person is being described.

I'm Like You

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited	15 minutes	5x7 inch name tag for each person Pencil for each person

This icebreaker allows people to notice differences and similarities between them and other participants.

1. Pass out a name tag to each person.
 - Instruct them to list in the upper right corner, four animals or birds that describes them.
 - Instruct them to list in the upper left corner, four of their favorite movies.
 - Instruct them to list in the lower right corner, four of their favorite songs or bands.
 - Instruct them to list in the lower left corner, four words that best describes them.
2. Have the participants mingle and read the upper right hand corner of everyone's card for two minutes. After the two minutes is up have them meet with one or two people who were most like them.
3. Repeat the process for the remaining corners—upper left, lower right, and lower left—of the name tag.



To ensure participants meet as many people as possible, you can establish a rule that participants cannot meet with the same people more than once.

If I Could ...

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited number	1 minute per person	—

For large groups, this exercise works well. It helps the facilitator understand each person’s personality, as well as the group’s personality. For instance, if a lot of people mention politicians as the people they want to have dinner with, the facilitator learns politics is important to the group. Or if a lot of participants want to be writers, the facilitator learns writing is important to the group.

There are four variations to this exercise, so select one sentence and have each person take a turn filling in the blanks.

“If I could have dinner with any person, living or dead, I would choose _____ because _____.”

“If I could vacation anywhere in the world I would choose _____ because _____.”

“If I could choose to be anyone in the world I would be _____ because _____.”

“If I could have any job in the world, I would choose to work as a _____ because _____.”

Let's Juggle

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited number		4-6 Nerf balls

Sometimes participants get caught up in an icebreaker and this icebreaker is exactly that type of exercise. It requires concentration and coordination and results in lots chaos and laughter.

1. Form a circle.
2. Get everyone to raise one hand and tell everyone they will need to remember who they got the ball from and who they threw the ball to.
3. Start by throwing the ball to someone and have him or her throw it to someone else until the ball returns to the facilitator.
4. The second round starts the same way, but you add a second ball.
5. The third round starts and you add a third ball.
6. The fourth round starts and you add a fourth ball and so on for each round.
7. End the exercise by slowly removing one ball at a time from circulation.

VARIATION: As the ball is tossed each person says his or her name. So for example, if Brandon tosses the ball to Ian, he would say Brandon to Ian and if Ian passes the ball to Isabella he would say Ian to Isabella, etc.

Get to Know Me

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited number	15 to 30 minutes	—

Sometimes ice breakers may not be appropriate, but if you want to “break the ice” one way to accomplish this is for you—the facilitator—to introduce yourself to as many participants as possible before the event begins.

Greet each participant and tell him or her such things as

- How or why you became involved as a facilitator.
- How long you have been facilitating events.
- What you are most excited about related to the upcoming event.

Or ask the participant

- What he or she hopes to gain from the event?
- If he or she has attended a similar event?
- Why the person chose this event?

Get to Know You Bingo

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited number	20-40 minutes	Preprinted bingo cards for each person Pencil for each person Small inexpensive prize

This icebreaker helps people get to know one another in a unique way. It is based on Bingo and allows participants to mingle and get to know one another by answering questions with material gleaned from the participants themselves.

Before the event:

1. Make a blank grid that is five grids across and six grids down.
2. In the top grid write B-I-N-G-O.
3. In the center grid write FREE
4. In each remaining grid write something like:
 - Favorite color is yellow
 - Born in another state
 - Is an only child
 - Has owned a white vehicle
 - Has traveled overseas
 - Is a fan of Jennifer Aniston
5. Make one copy for each participant

At the event:

1. Pass out the Bingo cards and pencils to each participant.
2. Notify participants they need a unique person to sign each grid and have the participants get the signature of each person who fulfills the criteria written in each grid.
3. The first person to get Bingo wins a small inexpensive prize.

One Liners

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited number	1-2 minutes per person per item	—

These easy and fun ice beakers can be used alone or in combination and allow participants to learn interesting things about each other.

1. Ask each person what three items he or she would remove from their house if there was fire. Assume all pets and family members have been evacuated.
2. Have each person relate his or her most memorable life event.
3. Have each person select his or her favorite game from childhood and explain why that particular game was enjoyed.
4. Have each person select an animal that best fits his or her personality and describe the commonalities between the two.
5. Have each person talk for one to two minutes about his or her favorite vacation.
6. Have each person introduce him or herself and share something learned from their first paying job.
7. Have each person share something good that has happened to him or her within the last 48 hours.
8. Ask each person to share one unique trait that makes him or her special.

Some Unique Introductions

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited number	1 minute per person	—

This page lists numerous unique ways for individuals to introduce themselves and also allows them to learn something about each other.

1. Everyone uses his or her first name and then introduces his or her last name as either
 - Their favorite food (Example: Pamela Tamale)
 - Their favorite animal (Example: Terri Elephant)
 - Their favorite hobby or sport (Example: Chase Tennis)
2. Everyone introduces themselves using their pet's name as their first name and their high school name as their last name. So, someone whose pet's name is Rover and attended Cleveland High School, would be Rover Cleveland.
3. Each person introduces themselves using their first name and an adjective beginning with the same initial for their last name. So, Jordan might be Jordan Jumpy, Susan might be Susan Sentimental, and Forrest might be Forrest Friendly.
4. Each person introduces the person next to them by describing an outlandish dream the person allegedly dreamt. For instance, a person might introduce another person by saying, "This is KyLee. She dreamt she was elected President of the U.S. and part of her duties included touring with Madonna."

Team Building

The following games are accomplished in a relaxed and safe environment so as to promote team building by allowing employees to better understand their coworkers, as well as coworker’s desires, frustrations, and values. In addition, these exercises encourage mentoring, develop leadership abilities, increase self-confidence, improve motivation, and promote positive attitudes among team members.

My Team View

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited number	30 minutes	Large Sheet of paper for each person Magic marker for each person

This exercise allows you to divide groups into teams and when you divide groups into teams it can be helpful for team members to see how the team members view the team. In addition, it allows team members to see what is working and what is not working within the team and helps them to consider what adjustments might need to be made.

1. Have each team member draw a picture or series of pictures that represents his or her view of the team. Allow five minutes for this task.
2. Have team members come together and allow them twenty to twenty-five minutes to discuss what they see in each person’s drawing and how each person can contribute to improving the team.

Aladdin's Magic Lamp

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited	Up to 5 minutes per person	—

This game allows employees to identify their desires and frustrations and also allows employees to better understand one another.

Version #1

1. Tell the participants they have just discovered Aladdin's Magic Lamp and it allows them to change any three work related items they want, which can include themselves, their coworkers, the boss, their equipment, an assignment, etc.
2. Discuss why change is important and how it will create a better work environment.

Version #2

1. Tell the participants they have just discovered Aladdin's Magic Lamp and it allows them to become the boss for a month.
2. What changes would they implement and why?

Charades

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Teams of 4-5 people	2 minutes per team	Preprinted paper for each team

Charades is always a fun team building game because it helps people get outside themselves and allows them to work together creatively.

1. Beforehand write slips of paper identifying the characteristics of one type of difficult person. These people might include the interrupter, the person who is always too busy to talk, the person who gets angry, the person who always has an excuse for not completing an assignment, or the person who provides unclear directions.
2. On the day of the event, divide the group into teams and give each team a slip identifying a difficult person.
3. Have each team act out the difficult person and have the remaining teams try to guess what type of difficult person is being demonstrated. Allow 2 minutes per team.
4. After each difficult person is guessed have the class discuss the best approach and techniques to handling that type of difficult person.

Synergy

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Teams of up to 6 people	20-25 minutes	Paper for each person Pencil for each person

This is a great ice breaker to illustrate how teamwork produces better results than any one individual.

1. Divide into team of 4 to 6 players.
2. Have team members answer the following questions individually. Allow them ten minutes.
 - There are nine planets, name them starting from the one closest to the Sun?
Answer: Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, Pluto
 - Name the four presidents whose first names is James?
Answer: James Madison, James Monroe, James K. Polk, James A. Garfield
 - What eight states begin with the letter “N”?
Answer: Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota
3. Have team members return to together and answer the same questions as a team. Allow teams five minutes.

What I Know About You

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
12	15 minutes	Paper Paper bag

This exercise should be completed on the second day of an event after people have had a chance to mingle and get to know one another.

1. Have each team member print his or her name on a sheet of paper, fold it, and place it in a paper bag.
2. Mix the names up and have each participant draw out one name.
3. Have the participant identify one thing he or she has learned about the person named on the paper.
4. Have the other participants try to guess who the person is describing.

What You Know About Me

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
3-4 people teams and up to 15-20 people	Up to 30 minutes	Flip chart for each team Magic marker for each team

This exercise allows all participants to see what other know about them and is a good team building exercise.

1. Place the flip charts in a circle around the room. Divide the group into teams of 3-4 four people and designated each team in some way, such as Team A, Team B, Team C, etc.
2. Place each team in front a flip chart and have each team write their Team designation—Team A, Team B, etc.—at the top. Then have them section off their flip charts—one section for each team member with plenty of room between names so that information can be added.
3. Now have the teams move to the flip chart to their right. So, for instance, Team A moves to Team B's flip chart, Team B moves to Team C's flip chart, etc.
4. Now have the teams write everything they know about the persons listed on the flip chart. Allow 5 minutes for this task.
5. After 5 minutes have the teams rotate to the next flip chart to their right, and so forth, until the team eventually arrives back at their own flip chart with their own names on it.
6. Allow the team members time to examine and discuss what has been written about each of them.

My Greatest Fear

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited number	1-2 minute per person	Flip Chart Magic marker

This exercise allows individuals to express their fears and helps them to learn how to resolve those fears.

1. Have each person state his or her greatest fear in participating on the team
2. Write each fear down on a flip chart for all participants to see.
3. At the end of the session, return to the list and have each participant explain whether or not his or her fear was realized.
4. Discuss what methods might be used to deal with fear or how fear limits effective team participation.

Guess Who

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Up to 12 people	Up to 30 minutes	4 strips of paper for each person Pencil for each person 1 Paper bag

This exercise is for groups who have worked together and think they know one another. The goal is to get people to recognize there are usually things they don't know about one another.

1. Have each person write four things—on four separate sheets of paper—that no one in the group knows about them. Allow 2 minutes to complete the four items.
2. Fold each sheet and place it in a paper bag.
3. Shake the bag and draw out one item. Read the item to the group and have the group take turns guessing who wrote the item.
4. When someone guesses the correct person, have them draw out the next statement.
5. After all the statements have been drawn have the group discuss what they learned about one another.

Truth or Lie

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited number or small teams	5 minutes plus 1-2 minutes per person	3x5 card for each person Pencil for each person Small inexpensive prize

This exercise allows individuals to examine truth and lies and helps individuals to learn true facts about one another.

1. Give each person a 3x5 card and a pencil.
2. Have each person list three true statements and one false statement. Explain the goal is to fool everyone about which statement is a lie. Allow 5 minutes for this task.
3. Each person then reads his or her four statements.
4. Have the remaining people guess which statement is false and award a small inexpensive prize to the person who most often identifies the lie.

VARIATION:

Divide into small teams of no more than 6 people.

1. Give each person a 3x5 card and a pencil.
2. Have each person list three statements that are true and one statement that is false. Explain the goal is to fool everyone about which statement is a lie. Allow 5 minutes for this task.
3. Have each person read his or her statements.
4. The remaining team members discuss which statement is false and reach consensus as to why it is false.
5. The person reading the statements then provides background information about the truthful facts.

The Worst Team I Ever ...

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited number	15 to 30 minutes	Flip chart or board Magic marker

This exercise allows individuals to examine poor teamwork and determine corrective measures to ensure successful teamwork in the future.

1. Have each person describe the worst team he or she participated in and why the team was so bad.
2. Briefly write each person's description onto a flip chart.
3. After the worst traits have been described, debrief each team by having each team member identify one proper team trait and one way to avoid a "worst team" trait.

Let Them Eat Cake

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Groups of 4-8 people	10-15 minutes	Paper for each team Pencils for each team

This exercise allows individuals to be creative and work together as team to solve a cake cutting problem.

Beforehand draw a picture of cake.

Tell participants the objective of this exercise is to produce eight pieces of cake with only three cuts of the knife.

Possible solutions include:

- Cut the cake in half so you have 2 cakes. Then put them on top of one another and make 2 more cuts, so you have 8 pieces.
- Cut a curved line through the cake so that there are three curves. The cut another curved line that intersects in the middle of the first curved line. Then cut the cake in half.
- Cut a circle in the center of the cake so you have 2 cakes, now cut it into fourths and then into eighths.

VARIATION: If you have 8 people you can use a real cake.

Yummy 500

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Small teams of 5-6 people	15-20 minutes	Various food items Small inexpensive prize

This exercise allows individuals to be creative and work together in a unique and interesting way.

Purchase various food items which will allow participants to make edible vehicles. So, for instance, you might provide such things as gum, peanut butter, Twinkies, fruit roll-ups, toothpicks, cookies, Life Savers, rice cakes, carrots, lemons,

1. Divide people into small teams.
2. Give each team a set of goodies and allow them up to 10 minutes to build their racing vehicle.



If you use something sticky such as peanut butter make sure you supply a knife or have some way to spread it.

You can also have rules, such as all vehicles must have two axles or everyone has to use a Twinkie for the vehicle's body.

3. Race each vehicle down a sloped ramp and the vehicle that makes it the farthest wins a small inexpensive prize.

VARIATION: You can also substitute stationery supplies for the food. So, for example, you might use pencils, construction paper, cardboard, glue, scissors, staplers, etc.

Our Team is ...

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Small teams of 4-6 people	10 minutes, plus 2 minutes for each team to share	—

This creative exercise helps teams to become teams by solving a common goal.

1. Divided the group into small teams of no more than six people.
2. Instruct each team to discuss and identify an analog that best describes the team. For example, “Our team is like a well oiled machine because we quickly selected a leader and assigned tasks.” Allow ten minutes for discussion.
3. After each team has identified an analogy, have each team share their analog with the other teams. Allow two minutes for each team to share.

Cast Away

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Small teams of 4-6 people	30 minutes	Flip chart or board Magic marker

This exercise helps team members learn about each other's values and encourages teamwork.

1. Tell participants they are a cast away stranded on a deserted island after a terrible storm.
2. Each team member must decide what three items he or she would bring if they knew ahead of time they were going to be stranded. Each person also needs to defend his or her choices with their team mates.
3. Each person's selections are written on a flip chart and then as a group the list is whittled down to five items.
4. Present your list to the other teams and discuss why your team chose those five items.

Word Team Building

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Small teams of 4	5 minutes	Flip chart or board for each team Magic marker for each team Small inexpensive prize (optional)

This exercise helps teams work together to solve a common goal.

1. Have teams write the word TEAM BUILDING on their flip chart.
2. Instruct the teams they have 5 minutes to form as many four-letter words as possible. Words might include.
 - Bait
 - Date
 - Build
 - Meat
 - Bald
 - Guild
3. You can also give a small inexpensive prize to the team that comes up with the most words.



You can use different words, such as RELATIONSHIPS, INTERACTIVE, or COMMUNICATIONS and you can have participants find three-letter words instead of four.

Complicated Structures

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited	10-15 minutes	Legos

This exercise shows how much easier it would be if team members work in unison and share ideas. It also encourages teamwork and shows how each team member can contribute something of value to the overall success of a project.

1. Beforehand build a complicated structure from Legos and display it.
2. Hand out a Lego to each person being sure to use the same Legos used to build the complicated structure. (You can also give them totally different pieces so it makes it impossible for them to duplicate the structure.)
3. One by one have each person add his or her Lego in an effort to duplicate the complicated structure.
4. Discuss how the process could have been faster and more successful if they had worked as team.

VARIATIONS:

- Variation #1:
Use gumdrops and toothpicks instead of Legos.
- Variation #2:
Divide into teams and allow one person in each team to see the complicated structure. Have that person describe it to his or her team members and have the team members build the complicated structure.

Improve Creativity

This section contains exercises and games to promote creativity and allows employees the opportunity to examine and solve problems in new and exciting ways.

The Best Costume Wins

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
No more than 10 people to a group	30-45 minutes	Small inexpensive prize Visit a Dollar Store and purchase items such as, Colored construction paper, pins, lace, yarn, Elmer's glue, brown bags, wrapping paper, scissors, tin foil, Saran wrap, flowers, stickers, etc.

This exercise allows individuals to express their creativity and is an effective team building tool.

1. Divide into groups of no more than 10 people and distribute purchased materials.
2. Instruct each team to design a costume using the materials they have on hand. Allow up to 30 minutes for this activity.
3. Have a fashion show and have each group model their costume.
4. Vote for best costume and award the winning team a small inexpensive prize or allow them to leave fifteen minutes early.

Toy Story

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
12 people or 12 teams	30 minutes	Clay, Legos, or Tinker Toys for each person

This exercise allows individuals to review material learned in class in a creative and interesting way.

1. Distribute the clay, Legos, or Tinker toys to each person or team.
2. Instruct each person or team to build a model of the concept just discussed. Allow up to twenty minutes for this task.
3. Each person or team then presents the model they created to the entire group and cites how the model is related to the concept they have just learned.

What Does This Say About Me ...

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
20 people	30 minutes	Paper for each person Pencil for each person

This creative exercise examines people’s assumptions and allows participants to dispel preconceived notions they might have harbored.

1. One by one have each person place some object on a desk at the front of the room. Make sure no one else sees what object a person contributes.
2. After everyone has contributed one object, hold up each object and have each person write down the name of the object and one word that he or she thinks describes the person. So for example, if someone contributed a knife, a person might write knife and outdoorsman. If the item was a lipstick a person might write lipstick and well groomed.
3. Show each item again but have the owner stand up as his or her item is shown and then have each person read the word he or she wrote to describe the person.

VARIATION:

Have people only use words that begin with the first initial of the item contributed. So for example, if someone contributed a hairbrush a person might write hairbrush and health nut or if it was a pencil it might be pencil and proper.

Run Away

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Up to 12 people	10-15 minutes	Paper for each person Markers or crayons

The object of this exercise is to demonstrate creativity and to allow others to learn something about each person not previously known.

1. Instruct each person to run away anywhere in the world and to transform into a person, animal, or character that is unusual. Be as creative and whacky as possible.
2. Each person is to color or illustrate his or her transformed person, animal, or character within five minutes.
3. Return to the group, share each drawing, and have each person answer the following questions:
 - I chose this character because ...
 - I am similar to this character because ...
 - This character is different from me because ...

If I had a Slogan

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited number	5 minutes plus 2 minutes per person	—

This creative exercise allows individuals to use their imagination and share with the class something unique about themselves.

1. All companies have slogans to identify or reflect on what their about. For example, Kellogg’s Cereal uses “Get a Taste for the Healthy Life” and Ford Motor Company uses “Quality is Job One.”
2. Have each person either change a slogan or create his or her own slogan. Allow ten minutes for this task.
3. Each person then shares his or her slogan and tells why that particular slogan fits them.

Oxymorons

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited number	15-20 minutes	Flip chart for each person or group Magic marker for each person or group Small inexpensive prize

This is a fun exercise to get people looking outside the box.

- Each participant or team identifies oxymorons and lists them on a flip chart. Allow ten minutes for the task and use the oxymorons from the following list to help people get started.
 - Criminal justice
 - Adult children
 - Birthday suit
 - Cardinal sin
 - Cautiously optimistic
 - Girly Man
 - United Nations
 - Couch potato
 - Anxious patient
 - Sweet and Sour
 - Rap Artist
 - Paid Volunteer
- Have the participants or teams share their oxymorons with the other participants and award a small prize to the person or team with the largest list.

Creativity in a Snap

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited	—	—

These activities require creativity and original thinking and they can be used alone or in combination.

1. This version of charades has each person act out a household appliance or a piece of electronic equipment—egg beater, toaster, blender, coffee pot, computer, cell phone, Blackberry, etc.—while everyone else tries to guess.
2. Each person introduces him or herself and then acts out their favorite thing to do for fun.
3. Everyone removes one shoe and puts it in the center in a pile. Then one by one each person describes his or her shoe using non-verbal clues until the group identifies the person’s shoe and returns it.
4. Each person acts out his or her favorite task at work or at home without speaking.
5. Every participant is given a roll of toilet tissue and five minutes to create a unique costume.
6. Each participant names one technique for dealing effectively with a difficult person.

Silence is Golden

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited number	10 to 30 minutes	—

This icebreaker works well with large or small groups and requires creativity and team work to accomplish.

- Ask everyone to line up according to the month and day of his or her birth but participants can only use non-verbal means to accomplish the task.

This exercise usually results in laughter or inspiration to accomplish communication with one another.

Let's Review

Classroom and learning activities can sometimes be overwhelming because of the concentration required to accomplish the task. One way to make sure employees retain what they learn is by offering a creative and fun review. The following games and exercises show how to accomplish effective reviews and revitalize and refresh classroom participants.

Process Ball Toss

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited	Up to 1 minute per person	Magic marker or chalk Nerf ball or stress ball

This review game helps participants to review concepts or ideas they learned in an interesting way.

1. Stand and form a circle.
2. Toss a soft ball to one person in the circle.
3. The person who catches the ball then relates a concept or process learned during the session and the instructor writes the item on the board for future reference.
4. The ball is then passed to the next person and is continued around the circle until everyone has a chance to participate.

Reflection

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
20 people	60 minutes	Stop Watch

Sometimes the best way to help people learn something new is to allow them time to reflect on what they have learned.

1. Have classroom participants either lay their heads on the desk or lie or sit comfortably on the floor.
2. Instruct them to reflect quietly on what they have learned for five minutes.
3. At the end of the five minutes, tell them a key phrase or key word and have them reflect on it for one minute. Repeat four more key phrases or key words and allow them a minute to reflect on each.
4. After quiet reflection, gather the group into a circle and have each person state in two minutes what he or she believes is the most important concept and how that concept can be used effectively at work.

Stress Ball Toss

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
At least 6 people	Up to 1 minute per person	Magic marker or chalk Stress ball

This game allows individuals to shake off that tired afternoon feeling and helps them retain what they’ve learned by reviewing concepts they have learned.

1. Stand and form a circle.
2. Toss the stress ball to one person in the circle.
3. The person who receives the stress ball relates which concept was the most important and why.
4. The stress ball continues around the group until everyone has a chance to participate.

Card Review

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
At least 3 people per team	40 minutes	Blank Cards (4 per person) Large sheet of paper for each group Marker for each group

This game allows participants to review and retain material they have been learning.

1. Give each participant four blank cards and give participants 5 minutes to write down four key points (one on each card) covered during the session.
2. Collect the cards, shuffle them, and redistribute three cards to each participant.
3. Place the remaining cards face down in the center of the table.
4. Have each participants discard one card face down.
5. Have each participant select a new card from the center pile.
6. Have each participant exchange one card with the person to his or her left.
7. Form the participants into teams of at least three people and have the team select the three cards they like best. Allow 5 minutes for the selection process.
8. Have the teams create a poster demonstrating the key points based on the three cards chosen. Allow 15 minutes for the poster's creation.
9. Relate the key points shown in each poster to the other teams.
10. Vote to select the best poster.

Beach Ball Game

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
10 people	20 minutes	Large Blow Up Beach Ball Fine point magic marker

This game allows participants to review material they have learned in a non-conventional way.

1. Form a circle.
2. Pass a large inflated beach ball around the circle and have each person write a question on it related to the course materials.
3. Have each person answer 2 of the questions written on the ball.

Information Web

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
30 or more people	15 minutes	Ball of yarn Tacks or tape

Reviewing material from a class doesn't have to be boring. This game allows participants to stretch their legs, review concepts, and learn how sharing information benefits everyone.

1. Form a circle.
2. State something you learned or a concept discussed in class.
3. Hold onto one end of the yarn and pass the yarn to another person.
4. The person with the ball of yarn then states something he or she learned or a concept discussed in class.
5. Continue passing the ball of yarn until everyone has had a chance to participate, so that by the time the group has finished a yarn web has been completed.
6. Tack or tape the yarn web on the wall and discuss how sharing information benefits everyone.

Rah, Rah, Rah Motivators

As a facilitator you may find you need to motivate participants, this next section lists exercises that motivate or reinforce positive behavior.

Positive Reinforcement

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited	5 minutes	Deck of poker cards Small prize

Explain to participants ahead of time that you will be giving out playing cards and at the end of the day the best poker hand will win a small prize.

Tell participants they can earn a card for the following:

- Participation—Often people don’t want to participate, so give a card to those who do.
- On time arrival—Lunch and breaks can sometimes result in stragglers who disrupt the rest of the class. To help eliminate this problem give those who return on time a card.
- Volunteers—If you need people to help pass out materials or assist in some other way give participants a card for their assistance.

At the end of the day those who received cards form poker hands and the best poker hand wins a small inexpensive prize.

I've Noticed ...

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited number	15 to 30 minutes	—

This exercise works best when participants have been involved in a previous workshop and asked to change behaviors. There are two variations:

1. Have each person identify one change he or she has noticed in another person.

OR

2. Have each person identify one change he or she has implemented since the last team building session.

Diversity Training

As a facilitator you may need to perform diversity training and you need to accomplish this in a sensitive and professional manner so no one is offended. The exercises listed below allow individuals to express their diversity while also allowing other participants to learn about the person’s preferences, cultures, or traditions.

Alphabet Search

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Teams of 6 people	Up to 30 minutes	Paper for each team Pencil for each team

This exercise allows people to explore their diversity and provides insight into the differences among people. It also provides team building by allowing groups to work together to solve the problem.

1. Divide people into groups of six.
2. Have each group member search his or her belongings and identify one item for each alphabet letter from A to Z.
3. Write each item down on a piece of paper and have the team discuss the diversity of the group.

My Heritage

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited	Up to 2 minutes per person	—

It is important to understand a person's heritage and this game allows participants to examine and explore each other's heritage in an enlightening way.

Each person introduces him or herself and speaks about their ethnic heritage or their ancestors. The following items may be discussed:

- Tribulations or trials the person or their ancestors encountered when immigrating to America.
- Traditions the person's observes and how that tradition expresses the person's culture.
- How ethnicity plays a part in the person's every day life.
- What ethnic values a person wants to pass on to their children, students, or coworkers.

Five Commonalities

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Groups of four	Up to 15 minutes	—

People often see themselves as completely different from someone of another culture. This game helps people find commonalities creating a base of understanding.

1. Pair two people together who do not know one another.
2. Each pair will be given 30 seconds to discover five things they have in common.
3. Combine two pairs into four and give them 1 minute to discover four things they have in common.
4. Each group of four then presents their four commonalities to the other remaining groups.

I Did Not Know ...

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Groups of four	Up to 15 minutes	—

People often think they understand everyone thinks just like them and if they people don't they often avoid them or see them as a troublemakers. This game helps participants understand why a person might have a different point of view or why a person thinks differently from them.

1. Pair two people together based differences, such as their age, culture, or heritage.
2. Each pair will be given 10 minutes to discuss and learn about a tradition, rite, or belief that is unique to the person that the other person was not aware existed.
3. Each person then shares the tradition, rite, or belief he or she learned with the remaining group members.

Prejudicial Self-Awareness ...

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited	Up to 10 minutes	Preprinted list for each person Pencil for each person

People sometimes have prejudices they may not be aware they possess. This game allows individuals to explore their beliefs and helps them to understand how to look at things differently.

1. Create a list of ten statements that might bring up positive or negative reactions in people, such as
 - Black people are lazy.
 - Asians people are smarter than Europeans.
 - Girls don't like science.
 - White men can't jump.
2. Have participants keep a loose count as to their own negative or positive reactions.
3. Have participants reword the list so as to make the statements neutral. So the statements might change to read.
 - Black people are as lazy as all other people.
 - Asian people are as smart and stupid as any ethnic group.
 - Just as many girls don't like science as boys.
 - Just as many White men can't jump as Black men.

Split a Gut or Shake that Booty

When groups get tired disruptions occur and effectiveness is lost. These energizers use physical activity along with such things as humor or emotions to revitalize and refresh fidgety groups. Energizers are also good because they encourage interaction and participation.

Ho

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
20 or less	Up to 7 minutes	—

This exercise works best when groups have trained together for a while or when they have finished a session of heavy concentration.

1. Form a circle and designate the first person.
2. The first person says ho, the second person to the left adds a ho and says ho, ho, and the third person to the left adds another ho and says ho, ho, ho.
3. Each new person adds a ho until the ho has made a complete circle. You can also set a time limit of five minutes and continue the ho until the time is up.

Usually before the last ho, people are laughing or trying not to laugh.

VARIATION:

Other words to use besides ho are ha, hee, or hidy-ho.

Follow the Leader

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited	Up to 5 minutes	—

This game allows participants to get up and move around after sitting for long periods. It also helps to shake off restless feelings.

1. Form a circle with the facilitator in the center of the circle.
2. Instruct participants to imitate the facilitator's movements. As the facilitator performs each of the following seven actions he/she turns to face everyone in the circle. The facilitator performs the following actions:
 - Snaps his/her fingers together.
 - Claps his/her hands together.
 - Slaps his/her thighs.
 - Slaps his/her thighs and stamps his/her feet.
 - Slaps his/her thighs
 - Claps his/her hands together.
 - Snaps his/her fingers together.

Take a Load Off

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited	Up to 5 minutes	—

This exercise works best with large groups, such as a group meetings held in hotels where there is a large amount of room. It also lets people move around and shake off that afternoon sleepiness after lunch.

1. Form a line side by side and try to arrange it so the line loosely starts with the shortest person and ends with the tallest person.
2. Instruct everyone to make a quarter turn so everyone is facing the back of another person.
3. Each person places his or her hands on the shoulders of the person ahead of them.
4. Everyone then sits on the knees of the person behind them.



Make sure the shorter people are at the front of the line before anyone sits, otherwise the whole line might tumble to the ground.

It’s a Scream

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited	Less than 1 minute per person	—

Often people have to deal with difficult people in the work place. This exercise helps people to identify their emotions and helps people learn how to alleviate stress when dealing with a difficult person.

Each participant introduces him or herself and fills in the following blanks:

“I feel _____(emotion)_____when this person does _____(behavior)_____ and I feel like _____(action)_____.”

So, a person might say “I feel frustrated when this person does not complete assigned task on time and I feel like taking the day off.” Another person might say, “I feel angry when this person submits assignments after the due date and I feel like breaking my pencil.”

Make sure each person makes his or her statement with as much emotion as possible and after everyone has finished enjoy a group scream.

My Bonnie

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited	Less than 3 minutes	—

This exercise helps to restore energy after a heavy discussion or heavy concentration on a subject.

Using the song “My Bonnie,” people stand up or sit down with each B used in the song. The song is:

My Bonnie lies over the ocean, my Bonnie lies over
the sea, my Bonnie lies over the ocean, so Bring Back
my Bonnie to me, Bring Back, oh Bring Back, oh
Bring Back my Bonnie to me.

Repeat the song three times and each time sing it faster than the last.

Tag

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Unlimited	10 minutes	—

This exercise helps to shake off that tired afternoon feeling. It works best in large open spaces, although boundaries or rules may need to be put in place.

1. Starting with the facilitator he/she tags someone and locks arms with the person.
2. Jointly the tagged team attempts to tag someone and when they do that person locks arms with the tagged team.
3. The tagged team attempts to tag someone else, and as each person is tagged, he or she locks arms with the others.
4. The game is completed when everyone has been tagged.

Cheers

Number of People	Approximate Time	Items Required
Small teams of 4-5 people	5 minutes plus 2 minutes for each team	—

This exercise encourages teamwork in a fun way and gets everyone up and moving.

5. Divide the group into small teams.
6. Each team develops a cheer with a pattern. Allow about 5 minutes for this task.
7. Each team then teaches their cheer to the remaining teams. Allow 1–2 minutes.
8. Remaining teams then perform the cheer in unison.