

Icebreakers

Ice breakers and acquaintanceship exercises are important when groups come together each year and when bringing in new members. Throughout the year, they can be utilized to re-energize a group or break up the monotony.

They can be excellent devices to help people feel more comfortable with themselves, with others and feel more "at home" in a group. They also break up the "cliques", by inviting people to form random groupings and helping individuals meet others in a non-threatening and fun way.

Icebreakers are different from teambuilders because they are lower risk – meaning they do not require an individual to share as much or step out of their comfort zone. Icebreakers are designed to be fun and silly – giving people the opportunity to bond through fun, movement, and laughter.

Icebreaker Exercises

- **Human scavenger hunt**
 1. Find someone who:
 - is a marketing major
 - owns cross country skis
 - has been to Europe
 - wears contacts (make up your own...be creative!)
- **What's in a name?**
 1. Describe how or why received his/her name (i.e. named after grandfather, etc)
- **Shape Game**
 1. In a circle, each person (one at a time) says name and does a hand/body motion
 2. All other members repeat the name and motion
 3. When next person goes, group repeats the first name and motion than the second, and so on
- **Human Knot**
 1. Form a circle by placing hands in the middle of the circle
 2. Grab someone else's hands (not on either side of you)
 3. Without letting go, try to untangle the "knot"
- **Dyads**
 1. Members form groups of two and find out information about each other
 2. Possible questions to use:
 - Who do you think is the most important person who has lived in the past 100 years?
 - What is the best movie that you have seen recently?
 - If you could be any animal other than human, what would you be?
 - If you could travel to any place in the world, where would you go?
 - What emotion do you find most difficult to control?
 - What color best describes your personality?
 - What is your favorite spot on campus and why?

- **Forced Choice**
 1. Ask members to stand in the middle of the room and have them move to either side to indicate their choice (must choose one or the other)
 2. Have them find a partner on the side they have chosen and discuss reasons for their choice
 3. Are you . . .
 - More like a Cadillac or a Volkswagen?
 - More of a saver or a spender?
 - More like New York or Colorado?
 - More religious or non-religious?
 - More like the present or the future?
 - More intuitive or more rational?
 - More like a tortoise or a hare?
 - More like a gourmet restaurant or a McDonald's?
- **Chubby Bunny**
 1. Have members stand in a circle and pass around a bag of marshmallows
 2. Instruct people to take one marshmallow and put it in their mouth – but NOT to chew or swallow
 3. One by one, each person has to say “chubby bunny” with their mouth full of marshmallows
 4. Anyone who cannot successfully say “chubby bunny” must sit out
 5. Those still in the game continue to add marshmallows (without chewing or swallowing) until there is only one individual left
- **Winds of Change**
 1. Have members sit in a circle on chairs (remove any objects that could be tripped over) There should be one less chair than there are people
 2. One person stands in the middle and says “The winds of change are blowing for everyone who . . . “
 3. Whatever they fill in the blank with must be true for them (i.e. if they say for everyone wearing red socks, the person in the middle must be wearing red socks)
 4. All members that are seated in the circle that the statement is true for (wearing red socks) must get up and run to another chair (cannot sit in the chair they are in or on either side of them)
 5. The person in the middle also tries to get a chair – one person should be left standing – they become the person in the middle and so on . . .

The LEAD Team (located in the SORCE) has notebooks full of Icebreaker exercises – you are welcome to look through the resource library for more ideas or be creative and create your own.