

2010 Leadapalooza Game Workshop Index

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2010 Leadapalooza Game Workshop

Ah Soh Koh :

Objective: Icebreaker/Warm up

Group Size: Small | Medium

Materials: No Materials Necessary

Set Up: None

Catagories: Icebreakers/Warm up| Circle Games | Small | Medium | No Materials Necessary

Directions:

Start with the group standing (or sitting) in a circle. Use hand gestures for the following:

Ah (hand under the chin palm facing the floor)

So (hand at forehead, in salute fashion), and

Ko (arm and hand out in front of you pointing at another player).

One person starts with "Ah" (hand to neck). The direction the hand is pointing, that person follows with "So" (hand to forehead). Similar, the direction of the hand signals that person to do "Ko". And so on... If someone "messes up" or forgets to act they are "outta the game."

At that point, they step out of the circle, and the person to the right has a silent 3 second count to start the game again with "Ah".

Game continues until 2-3 people are left (up to you whether the last 2 compete for AhSoKo champion title!).

Alternatives: Optional ways to continue to involve everyone:

The people who get "out" create their "outside" version going on at the same time. Need at least 3 to be "out."

The people who get "out" can become "hecklers" whose job it is to try to get the others to mess up. Rules of being a heckler are, hecklers must stay on the outside of the circle, cannot obstruct vision, physically touch anyone, or be cruel.

Back-2-Back Drawing:

Objectives: For group members to experience receiving directions without non-verbal cues. To develop trust between group members. Icebreakers/Warmups, Communication Collaboration, Trust Activities, Partner Activities

Group Size: Small, Medium, Large

Materials: Clipboards w/Blank Paper, Pencils, Drawing Templates

Set Up: Have group divide into pairs (or groups of three with one person as an observer) and sit on the floor back to back.

Give one person the clipboard and a pencil.

Give the other part of the pair the template of the shape to be drawn.

Directions: The individual with the template has to get their partner to draw an exact duplicate of the shape drawn on their sheet using only verbal directions.

After they are done, the partners should compare the provided shape with what was drawn.

Variations: Have the group perform the activity twice with two different templates. The first time through the exercise the "drawing" person is not allowed to speak to the "direction giver."

The second time they are allowed to ask only yes/no questions.

A third time, the drawer can ask any question they like.

Another variation would be to allow the pairs to sit face-to-face, however, the "direction giver" is not allowed to speak. They must get the person to draw the shape using only visual cues. Of course you would have to make sure that the direction giver doesn't just hand over the template.

In a large group setting, one person could be the direction giver for the rest of the group. No one else is allowed to speak and everyone must try to draw the shape the direction giver is describing. Afterwards, have everyone compare their drawings.

Debrief:

What was it like to give directions? before they could ask questions, then after.

What was it like to receive directions?

Was it difficult not being allowed to ask questions?

Once you could ask questions, did that make the job easier? Why?

Why are all the pictures different???? Everyone heard the same message.

Do you think people communicate differently?

Do you think people receive or perceive the same instructions the same? What should/would you do to clarify? What's stopping you from simply asking?

Do you know your teammates enough in order to communicate effectively to get the same results?

If person x said to the group "ABC" would it be perceived the same if person y said the exact same thing?

Blind Polygon:

Objectives: Communication, Collaboration, Team Strategy

Group Size: Small, Medium, Large

Materials: Long (20 – 50 ft) Rope, Blindfolds for every person

Set Up: None

Directions: The team forms a circle with arms outstretched, drops hands and sits down. Team members put blindfolds on. Facilitator places the rope in the middle of the circle. The group is instructed to form perfect square with each team member holding on to the rope. No team member can let go of the rope. When group members feel the task is completed, they can take off the blindfolds to check the results.

Debrief Questions: How did you work together? What was challenging?

Variations: Mute people randomly, Follow up by asking for a triangle or other shapes. Give members time to come up with a plan before putting on blindfolds, then after blindfolds are in place, members may not speak or use verbal signals

Categories: Communication | Collaboration | Team Strategy | Small | Medium | Large | Rope Games

Big Buddy:

Objectives: Icebreakers/Warmups, Circle Games, Rhythm Games

Group Size: Small | Medium

Materials: No Materials Necessary

Set Up: None

Directions:

Everyone stands in a circle. The leader of this game is called "Big Buddy" The others, going clockwise, are numbered: 1, 2, 3 and so on. Big Buddy establishes a 4-beat clapping rhythm, saying "Big Buddy, Big Buddy, Big Buddy (followed by a rest) - repeat this until everyone got the rhythm. Each round begins with this rhythm.

The game then goes as follows: Big Buddy passes the buck to someone else, saying Big Buddy followed by a number, Number 7 for example. This takes 2 beats, one for saying "Big Buddy" and one for saying "Number 7."

Person Number 7 then passes in 2 beats to Number 4 for example, saying "Number 7 Number 4". It then continues until someone makes a mistake or messes up the rhythm: if and when that happens everyone says (in 2 beats) "Oh Snap", after which they repeat Big Buddy Big Buddy Big Buddy (+ rest on 4th beat). After that, the player that made the mistake goes to the end of the circle, immediately right of Big Buddy and becomes the highest number. This also changes the number of all participants that were after that person in the circle. The goal of the game is to become the Big Buddy by working your way to Number 1. Participants can also try to make Big Buddy mess up ("Big Buddy" can be used in place of a number in the calling sequence).

This game is also known as: "Big Booty"

Categories: Icebreakers/Warmups | Circle Games | Rhythm Games | Small | Medium |

Birthday Lineup

Objectives:Icebreakers/Warmups | Communication

Group Size: Medium | Large

Directions: Instruct Group members to line up in order of their age without talking.

Variations: Blindfold some or all participants

Use alternative criteria like middle name, sho size, Birthdate etc.

Categories: Icebreakers/Warmups | Communication | Medium | Large

Crazy Handshakes

Objectives: Icebreakers/Warmups

Group Size: Small

Materials: No Materials Necessary

Set Up: None

Categories: Icebreakers/Warmups | Small | No Materials Necessary

Directions:

Split the group into pairs. Each pair is directed to develop and practice a creative handshake. Once each pair has a handshake, the pair splits and each individual partners with another group member. The newly formed pair then teaches each other the original handshakes and together creates a new handshake. When each pair comes together, ask them to introduce themselves. Repeat a third time asking partners to share all of the handshakes previously learned and then recall the group into a circle. Ask for volunteers to share all of the handshakes learned.

Diversity Bingo: Diversity Bingo is also often known as Discovery Hunt and Discovery Bingo.

Objectives: Icebreakers/Warmups | Communication | Breaking Down Stereotypes

Group Size: Medium, Large

Materials: Pre-printed "Bingo" Cards (see set up)

A pencil or pen for each participant

Set Up: Create a master "bingo" card and make enough copies for each participant.

The bingo card should contain a grid of squares each containing a statement or question that will apply to some members of your group and is in line with the objectives of your class, workshop, or event. For a few examples see:

<http://www.uww.edu/learn/diversity/discoveryhunt.php>

<http://vcc.ca/deptUploads/diversity/DiversityBingo.pdf>

<http://home.snu.edu/~hculbert/bingo.htm>

Directions:

Hand out the bingo cards and instruct participants to mingle around introducing themselves and finding other participants who can sign their cards indicating that a statement applies to him/her e.g. if one of the squares says "speaks more than one language" and you asked me if that applied, I would sign that square on your card. Typically it is best to limit the number of squares any one person can sign on each card, e.g. no one can sign more than 1 or 2 per card, to encourage people to mingle with more people in order to fill their card.

Alternative Goals: You can set the goal that everyone should try to fill their card in the time allotted (recommended since this encourages the most discussion and collaboration), or you can choose to offer a prize to the person/people who finish first (encourages more competition and less discussion) or in typical bingo fashion, you can have the person who finishes a row first yell out "Bingo!" and win a prize (allows for least amount of discussion, but also requires the least amount of time).

Alternative Content: This can be adapted for almost any content so be creative e.g. squares can contain math problems, trivia questions, or personal statements such as "has lived in 2 or more countries," "doesn't have a profile on myspace or facebook," or "has stood up for someone else's rights."

Debrief: Share something you learned about one of the other participants.

Which squares were easy to fill? Which were hard?

Share something you learned about yourself during this activity.

Categories: Icebreakers/Warmups | Communication | Breaking Down Stereotypes |

Diversity | Medium | Large

Famous People Party/Who Am I:

Objectives: Icebreakers/Warmups | Communication | Breaking Down Stereotypes
Diversity

Group Size: Medium | Large

Materials: Nametags, Marker, List of Celebrity Names or demographic characteristics
(see variation below)

Set Up: Writing out the names on the tags ahead of time saves time, and also have brief bios of the people to help with the debrief.

Directions:

From the participants perspective, the object of this activity is for each group member to discover the personality that is written on their own back. You begin by assigning each group member a "personality" by sticking a nametag with the name of a famous person or character to his or her back. DO NOT show this nametag to the participant!

Participants should be able to view the personalities of all other group members, just not their own. You then instruct the group to mingle, and ask questions of the other "guests at the party." Individuals can ask yes or no questions about their personalities of others in the group, such as "Am I a woman? Am I a singer? Etc. Instruct participants to ask each member of the group only one question at a time, moving on to another person after each question. Encourage participants not to offer hints.

Variations:

You can also use this activity to address issues of stereotypes by using an intentionally diverse group of name tags. For this variant the facilitator goes around to the group and sticks the name tags to the participants foreheads. When each participant has received their label ask the participants to introduce themselves and to shake hands with others. Participants try to guess what their label is by the way they are treated by others. Possible labels might be:

Cheerleader * Football Player * Person in a wheelchair * Trash Collector * Catholic priest
* Mechanic * Single teenage mother * Lifeguard * Homeless person * Walmart Greeter
Baseball Player * Banker * Hearing impaired person * Race Car Driver * Pediatrician
* Professional Wrestler * American Idol winner * Movie Star * Teacher * Coach * Olympic
Gold Winner * Bull fighter ect.

Debrief:

What was challenging about this activity?

What did you notice about the kinds of questions you or others asked?

Categories: Icebreakers/Warmups | Communication | Breaking Down Stereotypes |
Diversity | Medium | Large

Giants, Wizards, Elves:

Objectives: This activity is the group version of "Rock, Paper Scissors" combined with tag. Icebreakers/Warmups, Tag Games

Group Size: Large or Medium

Materials: No Materials Necessary

Set Up: Draw a line in the center of the space to split the space into a center space (with enough room for the group to run around) and then draw a line on each end for safety zones.

Categories: Icebreakers/Warmups | Tag Games | Involves Running | Large | Medium | No Materials Necessary

Directions: Split the group into 2 teams and explain the directions and show the actions. Each team huddles and picks a character for the round choosing from giants, wizards, or elves. The team must agree on a character and everyone on the team must act out the same character for that round.

Each character has an action:

Giants put their hands up over their heads (to make them look taller), and make a roaring sound.

Wizards put their hands out straight in front of them wiggling their fingers (as if they are casting a spell) and make a buzzing sound.

Elfs take hands and push their ears out and make an elfish sound like wickie, wickie, woo.

And each character beats one other character:

Giants beat Elves

Elves beat Wizards

Wizards beat Giants.

If both team picks the same character it is a draw.

Once each team has decided what character they will be for that round, the teams come up to the center and line up face to face. * On the count of 3, everyone does the action of their team character.

The team whose characters win that round chase the other team, trying to tag as many members on the other team as possible before they reach the safety zone. e.g. if team one picks giants and team 2 picks elves, team one chases team 2 and tries to tag as many of the elves as they can before they reach the safety zone.

Members from the team that are tagged become part of the winning team, so one group grows and the other group shrinks.

You then repeat the process, giving the new teams a minute to decide what character they want to be, and then call them back to the middle to begin again.

The game ends when one team has completely absorbed the other team, or when you run out of time.

Group Push-Up

Objectives: To have the group communicate and find a way to get the entire group safely off of the ground with only hands touching ground. Communication, Collaboration, Team Strategy

Group Size: Small, Medium, Large

Materials: None

Set Up: None

Directions: Tell the group that their goal is to raise the whole group off of the ground with their hands being the only things with contact to the ground (I sometimes give a time to be off the ground to sway them from trying to do simultaneous handstands). They may use each other (if you want to limit trial and error further and your group can be split into groups of 3 or 4 as those work best for the push-up) but may not use any other props. I have seen this accomplished 2 ways, the first is a group (4 works best) where each person's feet are on the lower back/thighs of another person and in the box formation they are able to do a push-up. The second way the group starts sitting in a circle (groups of 3 or 4 work best for this) and crosses their ankles, putting them on the shoulder of the person next to them and then their hands are used to lift.

Alternatives: Talk about communication, whose ideas were heard, what challenges were there, etc. You can also ask them initially how hard they expect it to be and at the end ask why it was harder/easier than expected.

Categories: Communication | Collaboration | Team Strategy | Small | Medium | Large

Group Spot:

Objectives: Icebreakers/Warmups | Communication | Collaboration | Circle Games | Trust Activities |

Group Size: Small, Medium, Large

Materials: None

Set Up: None

Directions:

Participants stand in a circle with one person in the center. The physical skills necessary for spotting are simple – ask participants in the outer circle to develop a firm, flexible stance by placing one foot in front and one foot behind with feet about shoulder-width apart. Members of the circle place hands up at shoulder height with the person in center in catching position. The person in the middle then has 3 opportunities to “fall” towards members of the circle. The person in the center starts the activity by stating “spotters ready”, members of the circle respond “ready”. Center person says “falling” and waits for outside circle to respond with “fall on”. If the person in the center is confident, he or she can ask the group members to take a step back, creating a larger circle and greater distance between the faller and the spotters. Regardless of direction, everyone should go to catch.

Categories: Icebreakers/Warmups | Communication | Collaboration | Circle Games | Trust Activities | Small | Medium | Large

Have you Ever?

Objectives: Icebreakers/Warmups, Circle Games , Involves Running

Group Size: Small, Medium, Large

Materials: 1 spot marker (e.g.a carpet square or a post it note or piece of tape) for every member in the circle (one person is 'it' and they will be in the center of the circle, with no spot)

Set Up: Have everyone except the facilitator form a circle and stand on their spot markers.

Directions:

Start with the group standing in a circle, with their feet on a spot marker. The facilitator stands in the middle of the circle and presents the rules of the game. Whomever is in the middle of the circle is "It." "It" will ask a question "Have you Ever?" followed by something they have done. EXAMPLE: "Have you ever worn shoes?" Anyone in the group who has done the thing that was asked, must move to a different, empty, spot. No one may move to the spot right next to the spot they were standing on. The person who was "It" must move onto an empty spot. Whoever is unable to get to a spot before all spots are full, becomes "It."

Categories: Icebreakers/Warmups | Circle Games | Involves Running | Small | Medium | Large

Human Spring

Objectives: Icebreakers/Warmups | Communication | Collaboration | Trust Activities | Partner Activities

Group Size: Small, Medium, Large

Materials: None

Set Up: None

Directions: In pairs, ask participants to stand facing one another with arms positioned elbows in, palms facing partner (like patty cake). Participants should start standing approximately 1 foot apart. With hands out, partners lean forward so that hands meet flat against one another with no interlocking fingers (keeping elbows in) and push against one another creating a springboard. Partners then take small steps back, repeating the activity at increasingly further distances apart. The objective is for partners to complete the activity, standing as far apart as possible while maintaining safety and a sense of trust.

Safety Check: All Trust Activities require the facilitator to pay extra close attention to physical and emotional safety. Introduce safety before starting any activities in this series. Challenge by Choice is especially important for Trust Activities: Each participant has the right to decide his or her own level of participation. It is recommended that you re-introduce Challenge by Choice before starting any Trust Activities.

Impulse

Also Known As "Pass the Pulse"

Objectives: Icebreakers/Warmups

Group Size: Medium

Materials: A Coin and a Ball

Set Up: Divide the group into two teams. Each team should stand in a straight line, shoulder to shoulder, facing the other team.

Directions: The Facilitator should sit at the back of the lines, flipping a coin so that only the last person in each line can see it. If the coin lands on heads, the two people watching squeeze the hand of the person in front of them. This sends an impulse down the line. No one may talk or make any noises. When the person at the front of the line receives the impulse, they grab for the ball, which is positioned evenly between the two teams. The team that successfully sends the impulse most quickly and obtains the ball can send the person from the front of the line to the back, and the process begins again with a new coin flip. If someone grabs the ball without heads being flipped, then they must send the person from the back of the line to the front, so that the team has to win one more round in order to rotate through. Once one team has rotated all members through, it wins.

Variation: The two lines of participants sit facing each other and close their eyes. The facilitator takes hold the hands of the people at the front of the line. The facilitator will start the pulse by squeezing both hands at once. When the pulse has reached the last person in the line they open their eyes and grab for the ball.

Categories: Icebreakers/Warmups | Medium

Jedi Mind Trick:

Objectives: Icebreakers/Warmups | Communication | Circle Games | Running Games |

Group Size: Medium

Materials: None

Set Up: None

Directions:

Stand in a circle with one person in the middle. The goal of the person in the center is to take another participant's place in the circle. Members of the outer circle attempt to switch places without losing a spot in the circle to the person in the middle. To switch places, a participant on the outside makes eye contact with another member of the circle and then both members run across the circle and switch places. No talking or additional gestures can be used.

Categories: Icebreakers/Warmups | Communication | Circle Games | Running Games | Medium

Lap Sit:

Objectives: Icebreakers/Warmups | Circle Games | Collaboration | Trust Activities |

Group Size: Small, Medium, Large

Materials: None

Set Up: None

Directions:

Stand in a circle side by side (close enough so that your shoulders touch). Instruct the group to turn 90° to the right so that everyone is facing the back of the person in front of them. Have participants put both hands on the shoulders of the person in front of them. Then ask everyone to sit down slowly on the count of three. They sit back on the knees of the person in back of them forming 1 continuous sitting circle. Assuming no one gives up, the group should be able to hold itself up. Once the group has held the position for a 30sec or a minute, have everyone stand up at the same time. Note: if not everyone sits or stands at the same time many people could end falling to the ground.

Note to Facilitators: Be aware that depending on the group, this activity can be somewhat high risk. It is possible to do this with people of all sizes mixed into the same group, but no matter how big or small, short or tall, some people are likely to feel uncomfortable with the idea of getting so close to other people - literally sitting in their lap (or at least on their knees). For some people this can be an issue that they are self-conscious about their weight, they are uncomfortable about other people's personal hygiene, they have a crush on the person whose lap they are about to sit on, or they just don't like people "all up in their business." For activities like this it is important to practice challenge by choice and not force anyone to participate if they are really uncomfortable. A good role for anyone who chooses not to participate is to ask them to be a spotter to help make sure that before the group sits down they are lined up correctly and once the group does sit that no one falls.

Variations:

For added challenge - once everyone is seated, you can then have them raise their hands above their heads, and for additional extra challenge, you can have everyone walk in a circle, once they are in the seated position (e.g. "on the count of three everyone take a step with the right foot...")

For the truly adventurous, simply give the group the following directions: "I need to see everyone sitting in someone else's lap." When they start to sit down on the ground or on a bench or chair, simply ask the bottom person "Whose lap are you sitting in?" Though it may take some coaching to reach the final goal, this variation allows you to speak about pre-conceived notions and listening in different ways.

Categories: Icebreakers/Warmups | Circle Games | Collaboration | Trust Activities | Small | Medium | Large

Life Map

Objectives: Icebreakers/Warmups

Group Size: Small Medium

Materials: paper and pencils and pens

Set Up: Pass out materials

Directions: Each individual in the group draws a "map" of their life starting from birth to the present, using map symbols (e.g. stop signs, do not enter, curves ahead, etc.) to represent significant periods in their life. Share as group. This is a great one for bringing small groups closer together.

Categories: Icebreakers/Warmups | Small | Medium

Make it Rain:

Objectives: When put together, this sounds like a rainstorm, and is a good way to get a group to settle down. Warmups, Circle Games

Group Size: Large, Medium, Small

Materials: None

Set Up: Have the group sit in a circle

Directions: Start with a few people in the circle and ask them to follow you as you do the following actions. Then make your way around the circle. And when you get back to the first group, do the next action on the list: Rub your hands together, snap your fingers, clap your hands, slap your thighs, stomp your feet, slap your thighs, clap your hands, snap your fingers, rub your hands, rest your hands on lap.

Categories: Icebreakers/Warmups | Circle Games | Large

Minefield

Objectives: Communication | Collaboration | Team Strategy

Group Size: Small, Medium, Large

Materials: Rope or orange ribbon to mark the boundaries. Cones or other random toys/objects to be obstacles. A few squeaky toys. Blindfolds

Set Up:

Outline an hourglass type shape about 10-15ft long, with straight lines on ends to serve as "start" and "end" lines, and a narrow part about center. Randomly place cones or toys around in the hour glass to serve as obstacles. (Note in placing objects, go back to the end and make sure there is not easy straight path through from start to finish) Line the narrow center with cones/objects (so everyone must cross over). Leave 3 squeaky toys in there as well.

Directions: The object is to get the entire team from the "start" to the "finish" going through the minefield. Everyone must go through. While participants are in the minefield, they must be blindfolded. If a participant steps on a "mine" or on or outside the boundary line, he or she is frozen. Someone else in the field may unfreeze that person by stepping on a squeaky toy. (Participants may unfreeze more than one person, but one person may not "hover" at a squeaky toy. Teammates outside the minefield may only verbally guide the blindfolded people. They may not physically touch them!

Competition between different teams can be made by keeping score of the number of "mines" each team hits (both on the way to the finish, **and** while backtracking back to the start), or by keeping track of the amount of time it takes to get the whole team successfully across. If in a competition, each team should do the exercise separately with a different "safe route" (although the facilitator should make each "safe route" similar enough to the other as to not create an advantage for one team).

Mnemonic Name Game

Objectives: Name Games | Icebreakers/Warmups

Group Size: Small

Materials: None

Set Up: None

Directions: Sit or stand in a circle. Then you start the game... One person starts by using his or her first name followed by using the name of a food with the same letter as his or her first name (Ex. Christopher Carrots or Sylvia Sea Salt). The next person repeats the first person's name and then adds his or her own. It goes around the circle, each person repeating all of the names that came before.

In a small group, go around the circle more than once, adding additional information such as an adjective beginning with the same letter as -the first name or an action.

Continue to have participants repeat all information that has been previously shared.

Alternatives: Have each participant give his/her name and something s/he likes that begins with the same first letter. Each subsequent participants does the same and repeats the name and like of everyone that went before e.g. (First person says "I'm Christopher and I like Candy... the next person says " He's Christopher and he likes candy... and I am Sylvia and I like swimming)."

You can also try it with things the participants do not like.

You can also have each participant give his/her name and an animal that begins with the first initial.

With some groups try using a word that describes them beginning with the same letter or sound as their first name. Positive Phil or Flipping Phil... Have the group act out their word. It is a great way to read investment and energy level of the group.

Categories: Name Games | Icebreakers/Warmups | Small

Moving box:

Objectives: This is a great energizer that requires little to no supplies and doesn't force participants to do anything that may embarrass them! Icebreakers/Warmups | Circle Games | Running Games

Group Size: Medium

Materials: None

Set Up: One person should be the facilitator. Have the group stand in a circle, or any shape they may want and ask them to count off in four. Ask each team to come up with some sort of signal, preferably a loud noise or word which will later mean they have completed the task.

Directions: Ask the groups of similar numbers get together and form a straight line shoulder to shoulder, tell them to remember who is to their left and who is to their right. Have the four lines of people surround you making a square, with everyone facing inward, so that one group is directly to your left, right, front and back. Inform the group that you are going to move around, while you move they are not allowed to move.

Explain that once you stop they must move and rearrange themselves in the same order facing the same part of your body they had when you started the game. Once the group has arranged themselves properly they need to announce it to you by doing their signal. Which ever group is the fastest wins! To tease things out you can run far away from the group, you can wander around, you can throw them off by simply not leaving the square at all and just turning directions.

Categories: Icebreakers/Warmups | Circle Games | Running Games | Medium

Name Boogie:

Objectives: This is designed to help warm up a new group of people who don't yet know each other's names. Name Games, Icebreakers/Warmups, Circle Games

Group Size: Small, Medium

Materials: None

Set Up: Stand in a circle

Directions: The facilitator starts by describing the activity and then demonstrating. Each person will say his/her first name followed by a dance move. The rest of the group imitates the move, while repeating the person's name 3 times. The kinesthetic motion and repetition help people remember the names, and everyone ends up laughing.

Most groups are a little shy about this, so it's important the facilitator do a fun move to demonstrate.

Categories: New Activities | Name Games | Icebreakers/Warmups | Circle Games | Small | Medium

Peek A Who

Objectives: Name Games

Group Size: Small

Materials: A sheet or tarp big enough for half of your group to hide behind.

Set Up: None

Directions: Split the group into two teams. The group must either be introduced or be somewhat familiar with the other names in the group (although this is a good game to quickly reinforce name/face recognition). Each team sits behind one side of the sheet so that they are out of the view of the other side. One person from each side will sit facing the sheet. When the sheet is lowered, the team that says the name of the person on the opposite side first gets that player on their team. The game ends when everyone is on the same side.

Categories: Name Games | Small

River Crossing (Also known as Acid River)

Objectives: Communication | Collaboration | Team Strategy

Group Size: Small, Medium, Large

Materials: Spots or 1' x 1' squares of cardboard (half to two-thirds as many squares as people in the group) 2 pieces of rope (or masking tape or 4 cones)

Several Blindfolds (optional)

Set Up: Create a river by marking two river banks with the rope. Make the river wide enough to be a challenge for the group to get from one side to the other (look at about 15 – 25 ft.). Distribute the Spots – 1 piece for every 1 to 2 people.

Directions: The object of the activity is to get all members of the group safely across the river. They must go as one big group, not multiple smaller ones. Also stress that everyone must be on the river before anyone can get off the river, forcing the entire group to be engaged at once. Participants cannot touch the water (floor/grass) and therefore must use rafts (cardboard squares) to cross. The water is filled with piranhas. Therefore if someone loses their balance and touches a hand in the water it gets eaten (put behind the back). Same goes for a foot. If a person completely comes off the raft they are gone and since this is a team exercise everyone must start over. I recommend using this motto with the group, "start as a team end as a team." You can also be creative and add challenges in as the group crosses. For instance you can say a fish jumped up and tail slapped someone in the eyes so now they cannot see (blindfolded). Tell them the river is acidic and when two people share a raft it tipped and now their legs are fused together (tie ankles together).

Use these tools to help take away the natural leaders or more outspoken participants and it forces the others to step up and take on more substantial roles. No scooting or sliding on the squares. This can be a safety issue and it emphasizes individual work versus teamwork. Rafts must be in contact with a human at all times or they will be swept away with the current. Once the group has started the process, your role is to take cardboard squares that are "swept away by the current" and to watch for safety issues. Use this to your advantage as well. The participants will invariably slip up and leave some rafts here or there with no one contacting them, those you should steal. When the first group members get to the other side immediately start to encourage them to hurry and get off the river. Nearly every time the first few people will rush off the rafts leaving them unattended for you to steal and stranding some of their team-mates. Work this into your debrief, when working with a team you can't forget about your mates. Just because you have made it to the finish line someone else may not have.--

Debrief Questions:

What happened during the process? What worked? What didn't or what hindered the process?

What leadership was demonstrated during the process? How so? What did you observe? What were the individual roles people played? Were members comfortable with their roles?

Who knew what the process for crossing was? Who didn't? How did you communicate the plans to group members?

What might the different aspects of the exercise represent in your group: the squares, the river, the loss of squares, the facilitator, etc?

When the first people rushed off the river and stranded some of you how did that feel?

Slappin' Hand Circle

Objectives: Icebreakers/Warmups | Communication | Circle Games |

Group Size: Small, Medium

Materials: None

Set Up: None

Directions: Stand in circle with elbows in, arms out to the side. Stand with left palm facing up and right palm facing down. Now connect the circle so that palms facing up are flat against the palms facing down of the person on both sides. Using the bottom hand, the object is to gently tap the top of the person's hand resting on yours. Simultaneously, the object is to avoid being tapped on the hand you have facing palm down. Compete in tournament style until it is between two final challengers.

Categories: Icebreakers/Warmups | Communication | Circle Games | Medium

Snappy Names:

Objectives: Name Games, Icebreakers/Warmups, Circle Games, Rhythm Games

Group Size: Small, Medium

Materials: None

Set Up: Sit or stand in a circle

Directions: Have everyone start slowly with the rhythm: slap, slap, snap, snap. The slaps are on the knees with both hands at the same time, and the snaps are on the right hand then the left hand.

One person is designated as the leader, and s/he sets the pace. The object of the game is to get to the leader's spot.

The leader begins the rhythm, and on one set of snaps says his/her name on the first, and someone else's on the second (your name MUST always be said on the first snap, and someone else's name on the second snap).

The person who's name is called must respond on the next set of snaps by saying his/her own name and then someone else's. If the person does it correctly, the game continues. If the person does not do it quickly enough or loses the rhythm, s/he must move to the end (the seat to the right of the leader) and the rest of the group moves up a seat (toward the leader's spot) to fill in the seats. Game continues until group has learned names well.

Categories: Name Games | Icebreakers/Warmups | Circle Games | Rhythm Games | Small | Medium

Soap Opera Names:

Objectives: Name Games, Icebreakers/Warmups

Group Size: Small, Medium

Materials: No Materials Necessary

Set Up: No Setup Necessary

Directions: Don't you know how to get your Soap Opera name? You take your middle name plus the current street you live on. So if your name is Sam Joe Smith and you live on Birchwood Ave... your Soap Opera Name would be Joe Birchwood.

Speed Rabbit:

Objectives: Icebreakers/Warmups, Circle Games

Group Size: Medium

Materials: No Materials Necessary

Set Up: None

Categories: Icebreakers/Warmups | Circle Games | Medium | No Materials Necessary

Directions:

Everyone stands in a circle with the leader in the middle. Begin by teaching the group the various poses of the game, each should use 3 people. The leader points to 1 person in the circle, and that person, and the person on either side of them needs to create the stated pose. If someone messes up, makes the wrong pose, moves when they weren't supposed to, then they are out. There are tons of these poses and you can make up your own, but a few are:

- Speedy rabbit – the 2 side people face out to make the shape of the ears, and the middle person puts his or her hands in front of them like paws
- Screaming Viking – the 2 side people make rowing motions on the outside, and the middle person bangs their fists on their chest yelling
- Girl Scout – the 2 side people put their arms up on a diagonal and lean in to make a house, and the middle person crouches down and says "want a cookie?"

The North Wind Blows:

Objectives: To get participants to find commonalities amongst themselves, and to get participants comfortable with speaking to the entire group. Also lets participants run around a bit. Icebreakers/Warmups, Circle Games

Group Size: Medium, Large

Materials: N/A

Set Up: Have the entire group stand in an enclosed circle with one participant in the middle.

Directions: The participant in the center of the circle, or caller, announces "The North Wind blows for anyone who"...followed by a particular characteristic that the caller shares. Ex: "The North Wind blows on anyone who has more than one sibling" A personal favorite of mine is "The North Wind blows on anyone who has played this game in a language aside from English". Everyone to whom that characteristic applies then runs into the circle and switches places with someone else from the circle who also shares that characteristic. The caller must also find a place in the circle, and whoever is left without a place becomes the new caller. It's very easy for this game to become mundane (eg, TNWB for anyone who's wearing jeans, has glasses, etc.) so encourage participants to be creative and unique.

Debrief: Optional-ask if anyone learned something new about a fellow participant, or encourage people to start a conversation with another person about one of the issues addressed in the game.

Alternatives: Have everyone take off their left shoe at the beginning of the game, and leave it where they start. At the end of the game, have everyone put on the shoe that they're standing next to (or try to), and then meet other people by switching shoes

Categories: Icebreakers/Warmups | Circle Games | Involves Running | Medium | Large

Toe to Toe:

Objectives: Icebreakers/Warmups | Communication | Collaboration | Trust Activities |

Group Size: Small, Medium, Large

Materials: No Materials Necessary

Set Up: None

Directions: In pairs, ask participants to sit holding hands, toe to toe. The object is for the pair to stand up simultaneously and connected with toes touching. Once the pair has mastered the activity, ask the group to try with 4 people and then six, etc. still touching toes.

Variations: You can also try having the participants sit back to back and ask them to stand up. The trick is to link elbows!

Tarp Turn

Objectives: Icebreakers/Warmups | Communication | Collaboration

Group Size: Small, Medium

Materials: Tarp, Ball (optional)

Set Up: Layout a tarp on the ground and have all team members stand on it. The smaller the tarp the more challenging the exercise!

Directions: While standing on top of a completely open tarp, the group must create a plan to get everyone on the opposite side of the tarp without anyone stepping off. The size of the tarp should be defined by the number of individuals in the group.

Categories: Icebreakers/Warmups | Communication | Collaboration

Warp Speed:

Objectives: Icebreakers/Warmups | Communication | Circle Games | Collaboration |

Team Strategy

Group Size: Small, Medium

Materials: 1 Throwable Object (Small Balls, Dog Toys, Etc.)

Timer (stop Watch or Wwatch with a second hand)

Set Up: None

Directions: This activity is a good one to follow Name Juggling.

Start by asking the group to stand in a circle and throw the ball back and forth from person to person so that everyone in the group gets it at least once, and it ends up back at the first person. For more info, see Name Juggling. Without telling the group, time the activity. Once the activity is complete, tell the group the time in which they completed it. Then explain: "We are now going to see how quickly we can send this one ball from start to finish through the system. The only rule is that the ball **must pass through the system in the same order that we have already established.** (IMPORTANT: how you frame this rule will define the boundaries for how this task can be accomplished.) I will start time as soon as the ball leaves the first person, and I will stop time when it returns to him/her. You may begin when ready." Time their first attempt. Applaud their attempt, whatever it is (one second per participant or longer is quite normal). And prompt them with "you can do better." Allow for planning, additional attempts and more planning. At some point the group will ask you how fast this can be done or how fast you've seen it done or what the ultimate goal is. Answer for most groups of 20 people or less - less than one second. Continue until the group attains the elusive "warp speed" or ceases to be actively engaged in trying to reach it.

Facilitator Notes:

Once the group learns of the goal (of less than 1 second), expect responses like "no way" and "are you kidding?" This will however alert them to the fact that the whole system needs to fundamentally change. Don't reveal this goal too early.

Fundamental changes that the group might progress through include movement (e.g. moving closer together, changing the position of the participants in the circle, moving out of a circle to a line or some other shape), changing how the ball moves through the system (e.g. from a toss to a hand off to a roll across hands or along the ground).

How creatively you allow the group to interpret its objective and the stipulation is a function of your assessment of the group and your learning goals. Groups sometimes ask if they can just put the ball on the ground and then touch it in succession, does this satisfy the objective? [Does it? Pause here and reflect ...] A good response in this case is usually to ask the group to answer its own question. Does the ball actually pass through the system in the correct order? Most groups usually choose to continue to seek another solution, and it is good to encourage their creative thinking even if it didn't exactly provide the solution - it shows movement in the right direction.

Debrief Questions: What went well? How did communication and planning impact the process? What major changes did you make in how you processed the ball through the system?

Categories: Icebreakers/Warmups | Communication | Circle Games | Collaboration |

Team Strategy | Small | Medium

Zen Counting:

Objectives: Icebreakers/Warmups | Communication | Circle Games |

Group Size: Medium

Materials: No Materials Necessary

Set Up: None

Directions:

Have the group count from one to ten. The larger the group, the harder this is and the longer it can take. Start by giving them instructions and letting them ask questions, but don't allow them to plan any strategy (e.g. there should be no designated order). The rules:

Only one person can talk at a time; if two people speak at once, the group must start over.

No one person can say two consecutive numbers.

If they become good at it, have them try with their eyes closed.

If they become fast at counting to Ten you can have them try using the Alphabet

Zip Zap Zop:

Objectives: Icebreakers/Warmups, Circle Games, Name Games

Group Size: Medium

Materials: No Materials Necessary

Set Up: None

Directions:

Stand in a circle. Someone begins by pointing to another person in the circle and saying "ZIP!" That person then points to yet another person and says "ZAP!" That person points to another person and says "ZOP!" This continues, but the words must be said in order: ZIP, ZAP, ZOP. If someone makes a mistake and says a word out of order, that person is out of the game.

Alternatives:

-This version makes it a Name Game: Someone begins by pointing to another person in the circle and saying "her name". That person then points to yet another person and says the previous name and "her name". That person points to another person and says the first 2 names and "her name". This continues, but the names must be said in order: Lisa, Sheree, Kim. If someone makes a mistake and says a name out of order, that person is out of the game.

-In stead of putting someone out of the game, make the whole group yell "WRONG!" and point at the one making a mistake. The participant that made the mistake has to step into the middle of the circle and say "I made a mistake". Notice the difference in the way people tell they made a mistake. Do they say it laughing, are they a bit angry, do they protest, are they confident or shy, do they say it like a little child that did something bad, etc...

Categories: Icebreakers/Warmups | Circle Games | Name Games | Medium | No Materials Necessary