

icebreakers and teambuilders

(ɪsˈbrɛɪkərs and tɪmˈbɪldərs)

n. activities for getting to know your fellow group members so you can become a team

What is the difference between an icebreaker and a teambuilder? An icebreaker is an activity designed to help people get to know each other and usually involves sharing names and other background information. A teambuilder is a higher risk activity that is designed to help groups form bonds and become a team.



You're OK

Good for ending a seminar or an end of the year meeting. Distribute a 3x5 index card to people and ask them to write their name on it. Cards are passed around the group; at which time everyone write a positive comment about the respective individuals. The cards are then returned to each person



Alternative for time purposes (for a very large group) – Play music and pass cards around. When the music stops, they jot comments on the card they are holding at the time.

The 4 C's

Personality insight – name a Cartoon character, Color, Car and Cuisine that best describes your personality and explain why.



Interviewing and Introducing

Split the group into pairs. Have the pairs interview each other for a few minutes (2-5 minutes usually works best). After the brief interviews, the pairs introduce each other to the larger group.

Names and Adjectives

Ask each participant to take a few moments to think of an adjective that starts with the first letter of their first name (e.g., Merry Marilee). Start by modeling it yourself, then proceed with the group doing the same. Each person then starts with their own name and then gives the adjective and name for all the people preceding them.



define yourself. get involved.

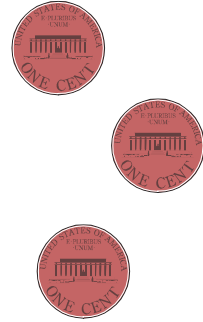


Hometown

Post a large outline of the country on the wall. Leave border space for those born outside of the USA. Have participants put their hometown and first name on the map. Then ask them to share about their hometown and how they decided to go to Wash U.

Penny for Your Thoughts

All participants are given a bag of pennies (each participant should have one penny for each member in the group – if there are 20 people, participants should each have 20 pennies). Participants go around the room to each other and trade “a penny for your thought.” Participants trade pennies – and positive thoughts about what they think of one another. What an incredible activity and a wonderful way to end an experience! The activity continues until all participants have shared with every member of the group and has a new bag of “pennies for thoughts.”



Two Truths and a Lie

Tell each person to make up two truths about themselves and one lie. Encourage them to be as tricky as possible. They should then go around the circle and say all three. The rest of the group has to guess which was the lie.

Piece of the Puzzle

Facilitator should cut a puzzle out of poster paper ahead of time. (There should be one piece for each member of the group). Have participants decorate their piece to represent who they are and what they feel they can contribute to the group. Once participants are done, have them share what they have on their piece. Participants should then assemble the puzzle. The facilitator should initiate a discussion on the power of everyone coming together, how much more of an impact a put together puzzle can have than separate pieces, and how a final product could not be reached without a contribution from every piece of the puzzle.

People BINGO

Make a 5x5 grid (like BINGO). Write “FREE” in the center space. In all the other spaces, write things such as “born in another state,” “youngest in the family,” or “wears glasses,” etc.



The group is then responsible for finding people that match that criteria and having them sign a space on the grid. The first person with a completed card wins! (A person can only sign each card once.)

Additional icebreaker and teambuilder activities are located in the OSA Leadership Library



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