



ISN'T THAT CRAZY?

ENERGIZER

APPROXIMATE TIME: 10-15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: NO MATERIALS NEEDED

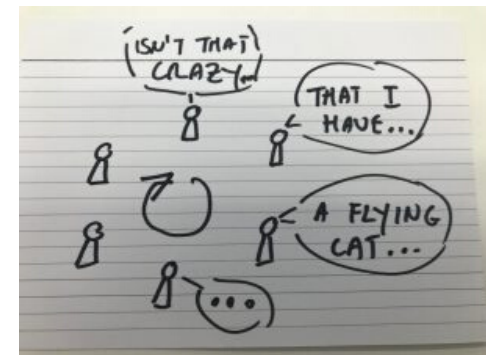
How it Works

This energizer is amazing for getting people talking and collaboratively creating a story (usually a funny one). It fosters engagement and everyone's participation while being very easy to deliver as it is done verbally.

- Ask everyone to enter their name in a chat or on a shared whiteboard and identify the order (e.g. from top to bottom) in which the communication will flow.
- One person starts by saying "isn't that crazy?"
- The next person has to continue the story by adding 3 words.
- Then the next and so forth until the story ends.

It can go like this:

"Isn't that crazy?"
"That birds fly"
"but I know"
"a flying cat"
"that has superpowers"
"and laser eyes"
"freezes mobile apps"
"but not ours"
"because of kryptonite"...



This is a really fun and simple activity. Another variation is to start with "Once upon a time" and ask each person to add four words.



BUILD A STORY

ENERGIZER

APPROXIMATE TIME: 10-15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: NO MATERIALS NEEDED

How it Works

With this energizer, you'll take some time to connect to one another through telling a shared story and be encouraged to have fun while improvising too!

The first person begins the story with one opening sentence and another incomplete one. For example: "On Mark's first day at his awesome new job, his car broke down. At first, he felt helpless, but then he..." The next individual completes the previous line and adds another incomplete sentence. This keeps going until everyone's contributed to the story. Aim to develop a comprehensive story structure by the end of the game!

Have someone write down the story as it develops - either in Google Docs or your online whiteboard tool.

This exercise can be used just for fun or with a purpose in mind. If you want people to explore a certain topic such as company communication, start the story with an appropriate line. If you want them to just have fun and be energized, you can start with something ridiculous!



CONVERGENCE

ICEBREAKER

APPROXIMATE TIME: 10 MINUTES

MATERIALS: NO MATERIALS NEEDED

How it Works

The goal of this activity is to converge on a single word after starting with two random, unrelated words.

To play:

- Two people volunteer to start. They count down from 3 and then say one random word each.
- The first two people who think of a word related to both previous words say "Got it!" and say their words simultaneously after counting down from 3.
- Eventually, two people will say the same word, and the group has converged!



6 WORD MEMOIRS

ICEBREAKER

APPROXIMATE TIME: 15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: PENCIL / PEN AND PAPER

How it Works

Challenge your team to tell the story of their life using just 6 words!

Whether it's humorous, or profound, or somewhere in between, this exercise will give you an idea of events or memories or emotions that have some type of meaning in your life.

Once asked to write a full story in six words, legend has it that novelist Ernest Hemingway responded: "For Sale: baby shoes, never worn." Below are some other examples of 6 word memoirs from famous people:

"Life is one big editorial meeting" - Activist Gloria Steinem

"Danced in fields of infinite possibilities." - Deepak Chopra

"Acting is not all I am" - Actress Molly Ringwald

Try These Tips!

- Create a "you" list – fill the page: List as many words as you can about yourself – things you like, feelings you have. Don't cross out, change, or rewrite anything. Don't worry about spelling – just write. You are going for quantity, so write as much as you can for at least 3 minutes.
- Circle 3 items that inspire you to say more: Pick words from your list that, if heard aloud, would make you think about something that happened in your life, a story or an idea, or something that was important to you.
- From those items you circled, select one: "Free write" about it for at least 2 minutes. "Free write" means you just start writing about that idea, object, role or event. The only rule is: don't stop writing for at least two minutes. Whatever comes to mind is fair game.
- Synthesize: Develop a 6-word phrase that captures the essence of what your topic means to you.



ROSE/THORN

ICEBREAKER

APPROXIMATE TIME: 10-15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: NO MATERIALS NEEDED

How it Works

Start your virtual huddle by having everyone share their rose (any positive that makes them feel grateful, happy, etc.) and also their thorn (a challenge). A rose can be work or non-work related along with their thorn.

For example...

Work Related:

- Rose: I got an event partner to give me a refund today!
- Thorn: A different event partner won't give me a refund.

Non-Work Related:

- Rose: I found time to go for a walk today today.
- Thorn: The coffee maker broke before I could brew a cup.



LEMONADE

ICEBREAKER

APPROXIMATE TIME: 10-15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: NO MATERIALS NEEDED

How it Works

Start with someone describing a “lemon” - a bummer about their day or week (e.g. “I spilled coffee on my pants this morning”).

The next person turns that into “lemonade” by looking on the bright side (e.g. “But now you have a great new pattern on your pants!”).

The next person states a new “lemon,” and the cycle continues around the circle.



THIS OR THAT

ICEBREAKER

APPROXIMATE TIME: 10-15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: NO MATERIALS NEEDED

How it Works

"This or That" asks players to choose between two options, even if they do not like either of them. This activity is a great way to get to know each other better & find out what you have in common!

When the question is asked, you can either have participants raise their hands to indicate which option they prefer, write their choice down on a piece of paper & hold it up to the camera, or ask them to sit or stand.

Here are some sample questions to help get you started!

- Coffee or tea?
- Cats or dogs?
- Rain or snow?
- Friends or Seinfeld?
- New York or LA?
- What's worse: laundry or dishes?
- Being too warm or too cold?
- Spring or Fall?
- Mountains or ocean?
- Video games or board games?
- Introvert or extrovert?
- Books or movies?
- Late at night or early in the morning?
- Ability to fly or ability to read minds?
- Go forward in time or go back in time?



ARTICULATE

ENERGIZER

APPROXIMATE TIME: 10-15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: NO MATERIALS NEEDED

How it Works

Send everyone in the group a different list of 5-10 words (e.g., laughing, movie, dog etc.) in a private message.

Set a timer for one minute. The first participant begins by describing as many of their words as possible to everyone else, without saying the actual word.

The person cannot say "sounds like" or "starts with".

Each person will take turns describing their words with one minute on the clock.

The winner is the person who had the most of their words correctly guessed.



LOOKING AROUND

ENERGIZER

APPROXIMATE TIME: 10-15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: NO MATERIALS NEEDED

How it Works

Brief the participants. Ask all participants to stand up. Tell them that you are going to give them instructions on which direction to look. They have to turn their head (only their head, not the body) and look in the appropriate direction.

Explain the details. When you say, "Up", the participants should tilt their head and look at the ceiling (or the sky). When you say, "Down", the participants should lower their head and look at the floor (or their feet). When you say, "Left", the participants should turn their head to their left. When you say, "Right", the participants should turn their head to the right.

Give directions. Say the words up, down, left, and right in a random order and encourage the participants to follow your instructions. Keep giving directions at a fairly rapid pace.

Change the meaning of the words. After about a minute, tell the participants that you are going to make a change. From now on, up will mean down and vice versa. So when you say "Down", the participants should look up at the ceiling. Similarly, when you say "Up", the participants should look down at their feet. Explain that the meaning of the words left and right remain the same. Call out the four directions in a random order and ask the participants to follow instructions. Remind them, however, that they have to remember the new meaning of the words up and down. You will see many "mistakes" and lots of embarrassed laughter.

Conclude the session. Announce the end of the activity after about another minute.

Ask the participants how difficult it was to follow instructions when the meanings of words were changed. The idea behind this exercise is that sometimes you have to unlearn something old in order to learn something new.



SEE WHAT I MEAN?

ICEBREAKER

APPROXIMATE TIME: 10-15 MINUTES (BUT DEPENDS ON THE SIZE OF THE GROUP)

MATERIALS: PEN & PAPER OR A DRAWING PROGRAM

How it Works

You don't need to be a master artist to have fun with this game! In this challenging team building activity one participant draws a picture using only basic shapes. A selected team member then describes the picture that was drawn to everyone else.

Without seeing the picture, each person must attempt to reproduce the picture based only on what the selected team member is saying to them! The ultimate goal is that everyone is able to create the same picture as the original.

This can be done through video chatting software and chat rooms. It's like the classic telephone game, but with art!

Try as you might, it is unlikely that anyone in the group will reproduce a carbon copy – although some pictures will be more similar than others. See What I Mean emphasizes how important verbal communication is while working with others, and also how communication can be interpreted differently by different people. You should do a few rounds at this game to really drive the point home, and also give more participants to try different roles. This exhibits how some people interpret directions and communication differently from other people, and how certain methods are more easily understood than other methods.



FOLD AND CUT

ENERGIZER

APPROXIMATE TIME: 10-15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: A SHEET OF A4 PAPER

How it Works

This energizer focuses on communication and shows how we can all interpret instructions and information differently.

Instructions:

Provide each participant with a sheet of A4 paper. Ask them to close their eyes and follow your instructions carefully.

These are...

- Keep your eyes closed until I ask you to open them
- Fold your sheet in half
- Fold the top right corner down until it meets with the left side of the paper
- Fold the bottom half of the paper up until it is halfway up the sheet
- Tear a small, thumb sized hole on the right hand side of the sheet
- Fold the sheet in half again
- Tear a hole at the top right of the sheet
- Unfold the sheet completely and fold in half once

*Keep providing instructions until you feel enough has been done

Ask participants to open their eyes and unfold their sheet of paper. They should display their sheet to the group. Ask if there are any sheets of paper that match. It is very unlikely that any of the sheets are the same. This will prompt you to discuss why everyone ended up with different results when they received the same instructions.



WORD GENERATOR

ENERGIZER

APPROXIMATE TIME: 10-15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: NO MATERIALS NEEDED

How it Works

This energizer is useful to highlight principles of innovation, creativity and development of ideas. It helps to enforce the idea that you don't always have to come up with a 'light bulb' moment and that further ideas can be generated from an existing idea.

Instructions:

Open a chat or shared whiteboard and start by typing one word. Ask each participant to create a new word from the original by changing or adding a maximum of two letters. Once they have done this, ask them to do the same with their new word and continue until you can't come up with any more words. For example:

Tree
Treat
Threat
Heat
Hear
Heart
Hearth
Heath
Sheath
Sheet
Sleet
Pleat

The participants can work on their own list of words or you can take turns and have each person add to the list one at a time.

Open a discussion about how easy it is to adapt existing ideas to create new ideas and see where the conversation takes you!



COMMON EXPERIENCES

ICEBREAKER

APPROXIMATE TIME: 10-15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: NO MATERIALS NEEDED

How it Works

This icebreaker will help you get to know each other better, have fun & learn about common experiences.

Instructions:

Take turns having each person tell of some experience they've NOT had that they guess most people HAVE had (e.g. I have never been to Hawaii).

Every person who HAS had this experience will lose a point.

Each person will start with five points and lose a point for each activity they have done. For a virtual team, these points can be represented by fingers! Start with an open palm, and fold a finger for each point you lose.

The last person standing (or who has any fingers left) wins!



2 PICTURES

ICEBREAKER

APPROXIMATE TIME: 10-15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: NO MATERIALS NEEDED

How it Works

Ask everyone to share two pictures (not related to work) about their own personal families or hobbies and spend 5 minutes talking about those pictures. Other team members are encouraged to ask them questions to learn more about their backgrounds.

Here are some ideas for pictures you can share:

- Pictures of your family (including kids and pets)
- Picture of your home office or space where you usually work from
- Pictures of your last vacation
- Pictures of your hobbies

This is a great way for team members to connect & learn more about each other and it's the next best thing to having your own personalized office cubicle where you display personal memorabilia for your co-workers to see.

As another variation, you could ask each team member to send baby photos of themselves, put these photos in a document & share it with the whole team. When you meet, everyone can try and guess who is who!



GUESS WHO?

ICEBREAKER

APPROXIMATE TIME: 10-15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: NO MATERIALS NEEDED

How it Works

Help your team learn more about each other's personal interests.

Prior to the meeting, ask each participant to send you 1-3 interesting or unusual facts about themselves that others do not know about them yet.

Compile these facts in a document or spreadsheet. During the meeting, you can then share the document on a screen and ask each team member to guess who that fact belongs to.

You can either share the document and have everyone cast their votes beforehand & discover if they got them right in the meeting, or vote as you go along. Whichever you think is best for your team!

Not only can this icebreaker game be hilarious, but it is a great way to develop successful team cohesion and camaraderie.



SKETCH YOUR NEIGHBOR

ICEBREAKER

APPROXIMATE TIME: 15 MINUTES (BUT
DEPENDS ON THE SIZE OF THE GROUP)

MATERIALS: PAPER, PENS, MARKERS OR
COLORED PENCILS, WHITEBOARD
PLATFORM (OPTIONAL)

How it Works

Begin by asking each member of your team to sketch each other – whoever is next to them on Zoom or whichever platform you are using.

Most people can't draw, so this activity levels the playing field and it positively reinforces group dynamics and builds a more open environment.

You can use an online whiteboard platform for the drawing tools or ask everyone to just use paper and pens, markers or colored pencils and hold it up to the camera.

Each person shares their drawing and you guess who it is. Lots of fun & laughter are guaranteed!



TOUCH BLUE

ENERGIZER

APPROXIMATE TIME: 10 MINUTES

MATERIALS: NO MATERIALS NEEDED

How it Works

Start by having the facilitator calling out something to touch such as “touch blue” or “touch something warm.” Each participant then has to move and touch something that is blue or warm. This might be something on their desk, an item of clothing, or something they have to go and find on their bookshelf. The last person to find an object then has to select the next attribute.

If you want to make it a little more competitive, give everyone fifteen seconds to find something and eliminate those players who don't find anything in time. Keep playing and make things more complicated or reduce the time until one player remains.

It can also be effective to do quick-fire rounds of this energizer throughout a workshop to keep participants on their toes!



WHO IS THE ARTIST?

ENERGIZER

APPROXIMATE TIME: 10-15 MINUTES (BUT DEPENDS ON THE SIZE OF THE GROUP)

MATERIALS: PENCIL / PEN AND PAPER (IF DRAWING MANUALLY), CAMERA TO TAKE PICTURE OF DRAWING AND TO SHARE IT

How it Works

How well do you know your colleagues? Encourage your co-workers to share an interesting fact or story about themselves while flexing their artistic and creative skills!

Ask every employee to draw an image which tells a unique story or fact about their lives. The catch? No words allowed - drawing only!

For example, this could be a drawing of themselves and their family, or of a hobby they partake in. It could be a drawing of their favorite item of clothing, or of what they did during the weekend.

The important factors are that:

- The item is drawn, therefore the team must deduce who the artist is
- The subject of the drawing will tell the team members something that they didn't know already

The participants can either create their drawing by hand or using their computer. They can then upload their art to a shared folder (if the uploader's name can be kept anonymous) or added to an online shared whiteboard for others to guess the artist. This can all be done prior to the meeting to save time.

The team will be shown one drawing at a time to guess who the artist was. When the correct guess is made, that person can then share their story with the group.



COME TO MY PARTY

ICEBREAKER

APPROXIMATE TIME: 10-15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: NO MATERIALS NEEDED

How it Works

Each person's task in this game is to identify the 'key' which unlocks the secret to a puzzle.

Announce that you're hosting an imaginary party and everyone is invited. To attend, every person must bring some 'thing' with them. It can be a food, a prop or even a person.

Next, invite individuals to either (audibly) name the object they want to bring to the party or type it into the chat. Often, as the list of permissible objects is viewed visually, the key will become more obvious to some people.

Here's the key: the 'thing' must be spelled with two consecutive letters that are the same to be acceptable. Unless a person brings the correct thing, eg beer, strawberries, Darren, they cannot attend the party.

As each person makes an attempt to uncover the key, congratulate those who get it, and encourage those who do not. Continue to offer more and more obvious clues until everyone has identified the key.

If possible, add the names of the objects which can be brought to the party on a shared whiteboard. This may assist those who have not yet cracked the code.

There are many variations of the key that can be used. Stick with this one or come up with your own!



TWO TRUTHS & A LIE

ICEBREAKER

APPROXIMATE TIME: 10-15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: NO MATERIALS NEEDED

How it Works

This is a classic get-to-know-you icebreaker in which each person says two truths and one lie. The goal is to figure out which statement is actually the lie!

Instruct each player to think of three statements about themselves. Two must be true statements, and one must be false.

Each person then shares the three statements (in any order) to the group. The goal is to determine which statement is false.

The group votes on which one they feel is a lie, and at the end of each round, the person reveals which one was the lie.

An interesting variation of this game is "Two Truths and a Dream Wish". Instead of stating a lie, a person says something that is not true — yet something that they wish to be true.

For example, someone who has never been to Hawaii might say: "I visited Hawaii when I was young." This interesting spin often leads to unexpected, fascinating results, as people often share touching wishes about their lives.



QUIZ BREAKER

ICEBREAKER

APPROXIMATE TIME: 10-15 MINUTES (BUT
DEPENDS ON THE SIZE OF THE GROUP)

MATERIALS: NO MATERIALS NEEDED

How it Works

Prepare 2-3 icebreaker questions ahead of time. The group leader poses the questions to the group one at a time. After each question is asked, the group members send their answers to the leader through a private message. The group leader then reads the answers to each question aloud. After the answers are read, the rest of the group must guess who on the team said which answer(s).

Sample Questions:

- What's your favorite TV show of all time?
- What was your favorite childhood movie?
- If you had a time machine to take you back into any period of time, where would you go and why?
- What is something that most people don't know about you?
- Name two things you think you are really good at.
- What is something you are really afraid of?
- When you were a kid, what did you want to be when you grew up?
- Why do you like living in this town/city?
- What has been the greatest invention in your lifetime?
- If you could spend a day with anybody from history, who would it be?
- If you knew you could do anything and not fail, what would you do?
- What super power would most want to have and why?
- If you could have a room full of any one thing, what would it be?
- What do you value most in other people?
- What 3 words would you use to describe yourself?
- What is something that you like about yourself?
- If you had to move and take only three things with you, what would you take?
- If you could be any animal what animal would you be and why?
- If you could be any super hero: what super hero would you be and why?
- If you could describe yourself by picking a color, what color would you pick and why?



DESERT ISLAND SCENARIO

ICEBREAKER

APPROXIMATE TIME: 10-15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: NO MATERIALS NEEDED

How it Works

Group members are given a scenario where they're stranded on a deserted island, but they can choose three items from a list of survival tools.

Provide a list of tools for everyone to choose from. The longer the list, the more interesting the game will be. You also don't have to design your list to be sound from a survivor's standpoint; you simply want everyone to think creatively.

Some examples are:

- a compass
- knife
- matches
- rope
- plastic tarp
- lighter fluid
- athletic shoes
- a bag of fruit and vegetable seeds
- a bedsheet
- a bucket
- pen and paper

You can make the items you choose as obscure and challenging as possible so that your team members are forced to really use critical thinking and planning.

Have everyone share which items they picked and also explain why. Allow time for each speaker to answer questions about their selections.