

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

ACTIVITIES



Diversity and Inclusion activities are simple ways to get people talking and listening to one another. It is only through understanding each other that we truly gain knowledge and can move forward together.

While we can't always walk in someone else's shoes,
we can take the time to inquire about how the shoe fits and
if its path is smooth or riddled with pebbles.

OBJECTIVES

There are many reasons you may choose to use an icebreaker or activity: to warm up or relax your group, to bring your group back together after a break or intense session, to introduce the next segment or to present your group with challenges that, as a team (together or divided into small groups or teams), your group must either overcome or address.

AGE & APPROPRIATENESS

Icebreakers and activities are adaptable to your group and situation. When considering an icebreaker or activity, be sure to keep specifics about your group in mind, such as age and meeting focus. Please don't overlook an icebreaker or activity because you think the group is too mature for it. Many groups, once aware that it's ok to relax and have fun, will enjoy the experience of "being able to let go," if only for a moment.

ICEBREAKERS

Icebreakers are exercises that are intended to help a group of people begin the process of forming and working with a team.

Icebreakers are commonly used at the beginning of a meeting and presented in a game format to "warm up" the group and help them get to know each other. However, icebreakers can be used at any point during a meeting and for many reasons: to keep the group on track; to provide the group with a mental or physical break; after lunch to get the group back into the mindset of the meeting.

You should not limit the use of an activity just because it is referred to as an icebreaker.

When planning the use of an icebreaker, or any activity for that matter, keep your audience in mind. You don't want to inadvertently use an activity that excludes members of your group.

DIVERSITY

Sometimes you will need to have a specific diversity activity to shed light on problems you may be having, potential problems you may face or as just a refresher to help bring your group back together.

Everyone should be able to feel wanted and valued during the meeting, so make sure to set ground rules before conducting any activity, including icebreakers.

Diversity is not a sometimes issue that only needs to be addressed sometimes. Diversity is an always issue that needs to be cultivated, supported and reinforced. By recognizing people's similarities and differences, we can become better employees and stronger leaders. In order to strengthen the sense of teamwork in the workplace, it is vital that people have an understanding of diversity and to be able to communicate about it. In order to help people learn how to recognize and correct stereotypes, to find common ground and to be able to work with and celebrate difference within the team, open communication about diversity must be fostered.

DIVIDING LARGE GROUPS

If you're facilitating to larger groups, you'll often want to divide them into smaller work groups. Small work groups can be very beneficial and achieve the task or goal much quicker and more efficiently. You should want to create as much of a diverse small group as you can. Generally, when the same people work together time-after-time, new results don't happen often.

While there are many quick and easy ways to split a group, they are generally routine and over used: counting off, splitting the room in quarters, tables working together, etc. Granted, by using these methods you achieve the goal of splitting the group, but you should question the overall outcome of the method. Have you accomplished anything beyond splitting the large group? How diverse are the small work groups? Are the same people sitting together who always sit together?

Many people tend to sit with friends and the same people at each meeting so, having tables work together or splitting the room won't split the friends. Likewise, counting off may not achieve the most diverse small work group based on where people are sitting and the number you use to split them.

It's important to mix the large groups in different ways because you want the group to be able to generate new ideas, problem solve and discuss issues deeply and from various viewpoints. You should also want to provide the participants with the opportunity to experience different opinions, a wider range of options and to be able to really consider the positives and negatives of the issue.

There will be times when you assign people to specific groups so that you can create a specific mix within the small work group. Most times, however, you will probably be able to mix the groups more freely and be able to provide a bit more fun and humor to "lighten" everyone up.

There are many fun and easy ways to divide large groups, including:

- Hair color
- Morning, afternoon, evening people and even night owls
- Those wearing jewelry (by type and where (rings/bracelets can be on either hand/wrist)
- Types of shoes (color, strings/no strings, sandals/dress/sneakers/loafers)
- Birthdays (by month(s) or seasons)
- Coffee drinkers (regular, decaf, non)
- Favorite dessert/fruit (these can also be available during the meeting)
- Hand out candy as people enter and then separate by flavor
- For cynics: by what they would rather be doing (napping, playing golf, shopping, gardening, reading, hiking, family, etc.). Be creative but limit the choices by the number of groups you need.

Don't be afraid to be creative or think outside of the box when separating the group.

Strategies for Inclusion

- Communication
 - Without communication, strategies for creating the most inclusive atmosphere are unknown.
- Person-first language
 - Make sure to put the person first, not the disability
 - Say “the PERSON/CHILD with a disability” not “disabled child”
- Avoid using labels
 - Labels are debilitating
 - Labels make people more aware of the difference
- Positively acknowledge differences
 - Find ways to celebrate/include differences when appropriate and possible
- Accessibility
 - Ensure that facilities are accessible to everyone
 - Be sure to provide reasonable accommodations
- Prior assessment
 - Make sure to assess participants’ needs before they arrive
 - Ask for as much information as possible on registration forms to ensure that you are prepared
 - Questions can include:
 - Do you have any dietary restrictions
 - Do you need any special accommodations
- Seek help
 - Do not be afraid to seek help
 - Contact your HR or Social Justice Office for assistance



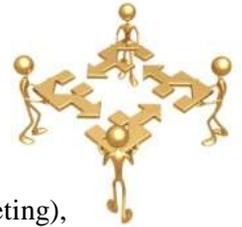
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First Impressions

<u>Type:</u>	Icebreaker (individual perspectives, emotional triggers, respecting personal differences)
<u>Level:</u>	Low
<u>Space:</u>	Usual meeting room
<u>Time:</u>	15 minutes (can vary depending on group size)
<u>Purpose:</u>	To help participants get to know each other better.
<u>Team size:</u>	Open
<u>Needs:</u>	Note cards/Post Its (Post Its are better because they can be displayed during the meeting), pens/pencils/markers



Instruction:

- Sit all participants in a circle. Each participant writes one fact about his background, interests or history that most people don't know.
- Participants then fold up the cards and put them in the middle of the circle.
- A group leader opens the cards and reads them one at a time.
- Participants write down which person in the circle they believe the card addresses.
- Each person then reveals his/her guess and then the writer reveals him/herself.

Reflection:

- Discuss with the group why they associated certain traits with certain people.

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Getting to Know You

<u>Type:</u>	Icebreaker
<u>Level:</u>	Low
<u>Space:</u>	Usual meeting room
<u>Time:</u>	15 minutes (can vary depending on group size)
<u>Purpose:</u>	To learn more about each other.
<u>Team size:</u>	4-10 members per group
<u>Needs:</u>	Flip chart paper, markers



Instruction:

- Provide each group a large sheet of flip chart paper and markers.
- Have them to draw a large flower with a center and an equal number of petals to the number of participants in their group.
- Through discussion within their group, have them find their similarities.
 - They should fill in the center of the flower with something they all have in common.
- Each member should then fill in his or her petal with something about them that is unique - unlike any other member in their group.
- Participants should be instructed that they cannot use physical attributes such as hair color, weight etc. This encourages them to have more meaningful discussions with their group members).
- Encouraged to be creative in their ideas and drawings.

Reflection:

- Ask the small groups to share their flower with everyone
 - They should discuss similarities and differences
 - If it was easy or difficult for them find similarities
- Discuss the importance of talking with others and the value in finding both similarities and differences with one another.

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