Energizers & Icebreakers

Project of



Urban Program for Livelihood Finance and Training

The Use of Icebreakers and Energizers

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Rationale:

When people come together to take part in a workshop of training, it is important to make everyone feel well and part of the group. Introductions are particularly important in helping to set a warm and friendly tone for workshop. When people meet for the first time, there is often some nervousness and shyness. Icebreakers and energizers should offer participants the following:

- some action, body movements and laughter whenever possible to relieve the tension
- Give opportunities to get to know each other
- Raise the energy level of participants
- Encourage everyone to participate and learn
- Introduce an element of fun that removes stress.

Objective:

Learn how to use icebreakers and energizers effectively.

What you need:

Choose one icebreaker or energizers you want to use as demonstration for session.

⌛ **Duration:**

An energizers/icebreakers should not last more than 15-20 minutes.

Icebreakers

‣ **Here are some examples of icebreakers, to be use to reduce inhibitions and help participants to overcome shyness and self-consciousness, established trust; energize participants**

☼ Fruit Salad

Ask the participants to sit on chairs in a circle, and tell them that they are going to make a fruit salad. The facilitator also take part of the game but musts stand so there is one chair less than the number of people playing the game. Write the name of four fruits on the board for example, APPLE, PAPAYA, BANANA, GUAVA. Participants are now going to become a fruit. Ask participants to call out the name of the fruit listed on the board one by one, each participant is an “Apple” the second “Papaya” and so on. After the fourth participant has called out “Guava” the next start with “Apple” again.

Tell the participants that they have to quickly change their seat if the name of their fruit is called out. For example if it calls out “Apple”, all the persons who are “Apples” have to change their seats. If the facilitators shout “fruit salad” then all the participants change seats with each other. The facilitator also takes part and tries to get a seat after calling out. Whoever gets left without a seat makes the next call.

☼ Rutabaga Rutabaga!

Group stands in a circle and each player is given the name of a veggetable. The main rule of this game is that you are not allowed to show your teeth at all. You then must say the name of vegetable and the name of another person’s vegetable. That person then must say the same thing. If you make a mistake or show your teeth in any way at all then you are out.

☼ **Knots of People**

Divide the group into teams of 8 to 12 members. Have each person join right hands with another person in the group, but it has to be someone who is NOT standing immediately to the left or right. Then have each person join left hands with another person in the group, but it has to be someone who is NOT standing immediately to the left or right and someone other than before.

Now the groups have to untangle themselves without letting go of hands. They may have to loosen their grips a little to allow for twisting and turning. They may have to step over or under other people. The first group to untangle their knot is the winner.

NOTE: There are four possible solutions to the knot.

-- One large circle with people facing either direction.
-- Two interlocking circles.
-- A figure eight.
-- A circle within a circle.

☼The Telephone

Participants should sit or stand in a circle. The facilitator quickly whispers a message to one participant. This participant passes the message in a whisper to the next person and so on. The last person shouts out the message. Chances are the final message will be different from the original. Here is an example of an initial message (note how two different activities are blended into the initial statement, a sure cause for confusion when whispered quickly: “I had rice for dinner and then dressed in blue to go dancing”. It could end up in something like “I had blue rice and the danced”!).

☼Fish and the Net

The group needs to be split into 2 groups. One group is the "net" and the other is "fish". The net stands in a circle holding hands in the air. The leader of the "net" should not be facing the group. When the "net" holds up their hands the groups must say "fish, fish, fish" and so on. The fish have to run through the net. When the leader yells "fish net" the traps lower their arms. Whoever is inside the trap at this point is caught and becomes a part of the trap. The last "fish" left is the winner; at this point the 2 groups should switch roles.

Variations:

☼Mouse Trap

The group needs to be split into 2 groups. One group is the trap and the other is mice. The trap stands in a circle holding hands in the air. The leader should not be facing the group. The mice have to run through the trap. When the leader yells, "Mouse Trap", the trap lowers their arms. Whoever is inside the trap at this point is caught and becomes a part of the trap. The last mouse left is the winner at this point the 2 groups should switch roles.

☼Group yourself into…

Form a circle and walk on while the group is singing. The facilitator will be also part of the group and shout out "group yourself into…" any number but not more than the number of participants. And the group split and must group themselves as the facilitator said. The participant left without a group is out. Continue the game till only 2 people remain.

☼Bahay, Tao, Bagyo

Players are divided into groups of three, two of the three for a "BAHAY" by facing each other and joining hand on the air. The third one will be the "TAO" and will simply stand in this center of home. In addition to these groups of three the facilitator should be the extra player, a homeless one. When the facilitator shout out "PEOPLE" the "PEOPLE" inside the "BAHAY" must find another home, when facilitator shout out "HOME" the two pairs of "HOME" must find another pair of home and joined their hands and "PEOPLE" still stand on place. When facilitator shouts "BAGYO" all their position was change. The facilitator also takes part and tries to be part of the group after calling out. Whoever left without a home makes the next call.

Energizers

Here are some examples of energizers, to be used to help to concentrate and focus

☼7-up

Ask the group to stand and form a circle. In this game they are going to count and shout one number from 1 to 7 with a particular hand motion. Participant who count number 1-6 must put his/her hand on its own shoulder, either the right or the left shoulder, to indicate who's next to count.

Example: the facilitator chooses one participant who's to begin and the chosen one start to count number 1 and put his/her hand either right or left shoulder. This hand pointing indicate whose next to count number 2 and perform same as number 1, process is same from 1-6. While the participants who point to count number 7 must shout "SEVEN-UP" and put his/her hand on top of its own head pointing again either right or left side to indicate who's next to start counting from 1-7 and if someone makes a mistake, he/she must perform a jig.

☼Tell a Story

The participants should stand in a circle. The purpose of this activity is to build a story with each participant contributing one sentence that must:

- Make sense and at the same time add some fun to the activity
- Build on to the last sentence and
- Be grammatically correct

For Example:

1. "I was walking to breakfast this morning"
2. "A dog came up to me"
3. "I said good morning to the dog"
4. "The dog asked me what I was going to have for breakfast"

The Activity continues until all of the participants have contributed or until the facilitators feels that the group has been energized.

☯ Ying Yang Yoo

Each word corresponds to a different action.

- Ying: hand on top of head, pointing in one (either left or right) direction.
- Yang: hand under chin pointing in one direction.
- Yoo: regular pointing action.

These three words may only be spoken in the correct order; it always must be "Ying Yang Yoo". The first person starts and says Ying, doing the motion. The person that was pointed at must say Yang and and point to anyone in the circle who says Yoo and point to someone else. That person then starts again by saying Ying.

☼ Catching Change

Split participants into 2 groups and put participants in pairs with the other group and ask them to stand facing each other, group 1 on the right side and group 2 on the left side. In pairs, one partner is asked to close their eyes while the other changes 5 moves something (clothes, hairstyle, glasses etc.) about him/her physical appearance.

When the change has been made, the partner other partner is asked to open their eyes and guess the 5 changes and the facilitator list down on the board the answer of one group of pairs and it will be answered later after the next group made their changes. The group with a highest guess will win the game

☼ Alive, Alert, Awake, Enthusiastic

Divide the participants in 4 teams and name them – Alive, Alert, Awake, Enthusiastic. The members of the team sit together. All the members of the team will stand together (at the same time) when the name of their team is called. If the members do not stand at the same time or if members of a team stand out of turn (for example "Alive" team stand when "Alert" is called out), they lose a point. The team that loses four point's first is the loser I'm the game and must perform a jig.

Note to facilitator: The facilitator should be enthusiastic and energetic while calling out the names of the teams and should proceed at a fast pace to try and confuse the teams.

☼Numbers Change

Players sit on a chair and form a circle, and numbered 1, 2, 3, 4 the leader call's out two numbers. These players must change seat quickly, while the leaders tries to secure a seat. He continues until he succeeds. The one left out becomes the leader.

‣ Semi-review and wake-up exercise

☼Ball Toss

Announce a topic (things associated with a topic, a holiday, the course content, etc.) then, toss around a ball. When someone catches the ball, they shout out something related to the topic and then toss the ball to someone else. Continue the exercise until everyone has had a chance to speak.

Variations:

When they catch the ball, each person tells what they thought was the most important learning concept. Continue the exercise until everyone has caught the ball at least once and explained an important concept of the material just covered.

People tell one-step o a process or concept when the ball is tossed to them. The instructor or learner, in turn, writes it on a chalkboard or flipchart. For example, after covering "client assessment," the trainer would start the ball toss by having everyone give one step in the client assessment process.