

Team Building Exercises

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Me, Myself and I

- Objective:** For participants to communicate about anything but themselves.
- Materials:** None
- Description:** Have performers pair up where one partner begins to speak for 3 minutes nonstop with no pauses. You can choose any topic or even several topics. The one rule is that you can never say the word "I." The listening partner may not speak at all, not even to say "uh-huh." After the 3 minutes are over, reverse roles and repeat.
- Discussion:** How did you feel speaking without checking in with your listener?
How did you feel listening without asking questions or putting in some feed back?
Which role was easier, the listener or speaker? Why?
What creative ways were you able to use to not say "I?"

Gossip Time

- Objective:** An activity where team members share fun and complimentary gossip about each other and then try to guess who said what.
- Materials:** Paper and pen
- Description:** Choose first person to be the Target. Have everyone else write one thing about the target. Collect then select one and read a loud. The Target has one chance to guess who wrote it, if incorrect continue to the next one. Once the author is correctly guessed, he/she takes the place of the Target and the process is repeated.
- Discussion:** What made it difficult to guess the author?
When the Target were you proud or embarrassed?
How much did you learn about each other?

My N.A.M.E.

- Objective:** A game of introduction where your first name or team name is used as an acronym.
- Materials:** None
- Description:** Give the group about five minutes think of facts about themselves which match the letters of their first name. Share your acronym with the group.
- Discussion:** How hard (or easy) was it share things about yourself to others?
Why is it important to know more then just a name from your teammates?

Ready, Set, Reorganize!

- Objective:** An activity in which participants organize themselves based on various pieces of information about themselves.
- Materials:** None
- Description:** Split the group in 1/2 and stand in lines facing each other like "The Soul Train." Call out a category (an example is first name). Both teams must reorganize themselves alphabetically by their first name as quickly as possible. Try a new category (another example is birth city). Reorganize yourself alphabetically in this new order.
- Discussion:** How difficult (or easy) was it to share information about yourself with others?
Why is it important for us to know each other?
What surprises did you have when reorganizing yourself?



Machines

Objective: An activity in which participants create a human machine and then have to change the machine per the teacher's request.

Materials: None

Description: Divide the group into teams of 6-10. Give each team 10 minutes to plan a human machine. Everyone must be a part of this machine. Demonstrate the machines. Select a couple of players from each machine and share with everyone that these "machine pieces" are obsolete. Give each teams 5 minutes to adjust or reinvent their machine.

Discussion: How did you decide on the machine design?
How did you handle disagreements in the team?
How did you feel when your original design was rejected?
How do we typically react to change?
How can this creative process enhance your choreography?

One-Worded Stories

Objective: A dance activity in which participants construct a dance together by contributing one movement/step at a time.

Materials: None

Description: Explain that the group will create a dance together, one move at a time. The step used must be as interesting as possible, and it should flow to follow the work of the preceding dancer as well as possible. Select a few participants to demonstrate how "the dance..." might come out with each of you alternating adding a movement.

Discussion: How many felt the person after you made the "wrong" moves because that is not what you envisioned next?
Who did not like where the dance went? Why not?
How can we incorporate this activity into our team practices?

The Human Spider Web

Objective: To warm up a team and break down their inhibitions while providing an opportunity for members to work as a team and explore the dimensions of teamwork.

Materials: None

Description: Divide your group into 6-8 individuals and form a circle. Extend left hands across the circle and grasp the right hands of the other members who are approximately opposite of you. Then extend right hands across the circle and grasp the left hands of other individuals. The task is to unravel the spider web of interlocking arms without letting go of anyone's hands. See who finishes first.

Discussion: What was your first thought when you heard the nature of the task?
What member behaviors distracted from the group's success?
How difficult was it to control chaos if there was any?

Chinese Tag

Objective: Not to get tagged or be able to tag everyone.

Materials: None

Description: Select a person to be "it". Then have them stand still and count to five while the rest of the people scatter around. The person who is "it" needs to try and tag the others. When a person is tagged they need to stop and stand with their legs spread apart. They can be unfrozen if someone who is not frozen crawls between their legs. If the person who is it freezes everyone then they win and a new person becomes "it". The new person is usually the last person who was tagged.

Discussion: Did you find your part (tagger or taggee) to be fun or work?
Was your goal to avoid getting tagged and leaving your friends frozen?
What team lesson did you get out of the exercise?

