Why Icebreakers?
· Makes everyone feel at ease
· Creates community
· Allows others to get to know each other
· A great introduction for ongoing team builders
· Icebreakers aim not only to break ice but also to warm the atmosphere?therefore, icebreakers may also be referred to as Warm Ups!
· Breaking ice and warming up is not limited to activities at the beginning?activities can be used whenever ice has frozen communication and needs to be made warm again!

Icebreakers You Can Use

· **A What?**: In a circle, the firsts person hands an object to the person to their right, saying "this is a cat." The person receiving the object says "This is a what?" The person who handed the object of says "This is a cat." Then, the recipient has the same conversation with the person to his/her right as s/he passes the object on. Once the group has completed the circle, the object continues to be passed around while a new object begins to be passed around the OPPOSITE DIRECTION. Keep adding objects for more fun, going in opposite directions each time.
· **Airplane**: Two people are chosen out of a group. One is blindfolded and they become an airplane, the other stands on a chair, they are the navigator?.everyone else gets all jumbled in the room and the navigator has to get the plane from one side of the room to the other without touching any of the obstacles (people) by only word of voice.
· **Animal Introductions**: Have each member of the group introduce him/herself first with an animal name that starts with the same letter as his/her first name, then their name. For example, ?Hi, I?m monkey Michele.? Each person must say everyone else?s animal/name first, and then add their name to the end. Through repetition, the whole group begins to learn everyone?s names. You may add actions to this as well.
· **Awww!**: Have everyone bring a baby picture of themselves and have an identification contest within the group to guess who is who. Give a prize to the person who gets most correct.
· **Balloon Toss**: Bring in several different balloons and start a balloon toss. The object is for the group to work together to keep the balloons up in the air.
· **Birthday Line Up**: The group must line up in order (month, day, year) of their birthdays without speaking, writing, using licenses, etc. This is a game of speed. It shows the importance of communication and ingenuity. You can also do height, etc.
· **Book of Questions**: This book or other books with ?sentence stems? are great for facilitating discussion. Have people randomly call out the number of a question or specifically select questions, then have the group members answer the questions in small or large groups.
· **Butt Writing**: Everyone must introduce themselves by spelling their name with their derriere, by pantomiming writing the letters. It?s a great way to get your group to open up!
· **Candy Lottery**: Have group members bring their favorite candy and compile all together. Put all names in hat and have a candy lottery. Winner receives all the candy. Also works well with pop and money.
· **Charades**: Everyone has played charades, but have you ever used this simple game as an icebreaker? Divide your group into two teams and give each team phrases that go along with ideas for your organization.
· **Collages**: Members can work on individual collages or as a group on one project. Collages can be constructed from magazines?group members can cut out pictures, words, articles that somehow reflect a theme. The collage can symbolize the goals/purpose of the group, it can be a personal collage, or how we want to work together, or our accomplishments, etc.
· **Complete the Puzzle**: Put together two words that go together on index cards (ex: duct tape, lawn mower, etc?) and

then cut the cards in half in puzzle shapes. Give the group a few minutes to interact and determine what cards go together and then have partners say why they are like their words.

· **Crayola Time**: Give each person a crayon and paper and encourage them to draw a quick sketch in response to a questions you ask. (ex: What is the best thing that happened to
you today?) Go around the group and share answers and drawings.

· **Crazy Time Relays**: Group is divided into two teams. Each team is given a set of crazy tasks to complete. These tasks can be anything from applying a whipped cream beard to a partner to singing the national anthem on a chair. Get creative! The team with all their people finished with their tasks first is the winner.

· **Distance Relay**: Divide the group into teams with 4 or 5 people on each team. Give each team a sack with 4 or 5 things (i.e., rubber band, penny, sack, pencil, paper, cotton ball). Using those items, see which team can go the furthest.

· **Duct Tape Tip O? The Day**: Have every person share their favorite duct tape incident. For inspiration, bring along The Duct Tape Book and/or some of the miracle adhesive itself!

· **Fire Drill**: Tell the group that there is a fire (yes, right now!) and they only have time to save one thing from their rooms. Have them run to their room, rescue their most cherished item, and bring it back to the meeting. Have people share what they selected and why.

· **Food Game**: Everyone sits in a circle and one person starts. They say their name with a food item first that starts with the first initial of their first name. For example, Mostaccioli Michele. Then the next person has to repeat the names before them and then say their name. Thus, Mostaciolli Michele would be said, then Beet Bob, and so on. The last person would have to say all of the people with their food.

· **Fun With Stickers**: Each person is asked to take a sticker from a sheet. When all stickers are taken, have them answer different questions about themselves, according to their sticker colors. (Ex: Red stickers answer who their favorite celebrity is, blue stickers answer what they ate for breakfast?)

· **Guess Who I Am?**: Ask each person to write something unique about themselves along with their name on a note card. If possible, they should write something about themselves
that others in the group will not know. Gather all the cards. Select one card and three people (one of the three people chosen must have written the card you selected). Read the card. The three people must answer questions from the rest of the group and pretend that the card is theirs. The rest of the group tries to guess who the ?real? person is.

· **Ha!**: Have everyone lie down on the floor with their heads resting on each other?s stomachs. The person at the start of the line begins by saying, ?Ha.? The next person follows by saying, ?Ha, ha.? For each new turn, an additional ?ha? is added. The winner is the person who can do this game without bursting into laughter.

· **Halves**: Prepare pictures of objects on cards. Cut each card in half and give each person a half as they walk in. When told, they are to mingle and find the other half of their picture.

· **Hello Game**: Form a circle, and then one at a time each person takes two steps forward and says hello and their name, while doing this they make an unusual face or movement. Then everybody repeats the hello with the unusual face movement or gesture, then the next person goes. This is continued all the way around the circle.

· **Hide and Seek**!: Hide an object in the room where you are meeting and by giving your group clues (written or verbal) slowly guide them to where the object is. The first person to discover the object wins it.

· **Highs and Lows**: Have each person share a high point in their lives and a low point. Can be over a specific time span: day, week, month, etc.

· **Hometown**: Get an Iowa map. Post map and have each person write in their first name and hometown and tell something about their town.

· **Human Poker**: Use a deck of cards, one for each person. Toss the cards in the air and have each person choose one. Then group according to combinations you call: red/black, two of a kind, straights of three, four, five, flush, suits; three of a kind; groups which total 21.

· **I Believe?**: Give everyone some poster board with the words ?I Believe? at the top. Ask them to write down their values, beliefs, etc., and then share them.

· **ICE Breakers ? Literally!!:** Everyone stands in a circle. One person has a block of ice or handful of ice cubes. The person next to them talks until they pause, say and, ah, um, or
other pausing word. The person must hold on to the ice until the person is done talking. Then the ice is passed to

another person and someone else begins to talk. This activity continues until everyone has had a chance to introduce themselves and hold the ice.

· **Knots**: Form small circles and join hands?be sure not to grab the hand of the person next to you or both hands of the same person. Now, untangle the mess, without letting go of the hands. You can end up in one circle.

· **Lifelines**: Each member draws a line on paper to represent the highs, lows, significant events, turning points, etc. of his/her life to date (can also project into future). Members share their lifelines with other members. Members ask questions about each other?s lifelines. This exercise can also be done with pipe cleaners and verbal explanations.

· **M & M Game**: Each person takes a handful of M & M's ? tell them not to eat them yet ? and then introduces him/herself, telling one thing about him/herself for each M & M in his/her hand. Whoever takes the most can talk for a long time. (Other kinds of candy can also be used.)

· **Meal Game**: Everyone introduces themselves by saying what they had to eat at the last meal they had. Then, they share what other things about themselves.

· **Name Dropper**: Have everyone in a circle introduce themselves by name. Then, give three individuals toss something (ex: tennis ball) one other person in group, as they say the
recipients' name. So, several people will be saying names and tossing balls at the same time, facilitating people learning names.

· **Name Game**: The first person introduces him/herself with an adjective that begins with the first letter of his/her first name, ex: "Hi I'm Marvin and I'm Marvelous." Each person introduces him/herself the same way, and then introduces all others who have previously introduced themselves, ex: "I'm Dean and I'm Dynamic. This is marvelous Marvin."

· **Nature?s Secrets**: During the next five (5) minutes, get away from everyone else and find two objects which you feel would describe you. Return to the group, and explain what objects you chose and your reasons for making those choices.

· **Object O? Fun**: Tell each group member to bring one object that describes themselves. To make it more challenging, mix the objects up and try to guess which object belongs to which person.

· **Pixie Sticks**: Divide into pairs. Have team members tape a pixie stick to their partner (anywhere). Then tell them the catch: they must now put their hands behind their back and attempt to open and eat the pixie stick taped to their partner without touching the other person. Watch the fun.

· **Revealing Your Questions**: Each person writes three adjectives describing each of the following: (a) an animal (don't name the animal), (b) another animal, (c) yet another animal, (d) how you would feel climbing Mount Everest, (e) how you would feel if you were walking through a forest and came to a massive wall blocking the path you see on the other
side, (f) the ocean, and (g) yourself in the morning after waking up. The facilitator breaks everyone down into smaller groups, and each person reads his/her adjectives. Meanwhile, the facilitator informs everyone on what his/her adjectives 'really' describe: (A) is how you see yourself, (B) is how you think other people see you, (C) is how other people see you,
(D) is how you feel about the world, (E) " " about death, (F) " " about love, and (G) " " about sex.

· **Reverse the Topic:** Write name and (floor, hometown, school, or some other describing information) on a sheet of paper and then ask them to name a topic which disgusts them and why, then change their topic to sex and ask them to read their answer as to why they dislike ?sex.?

· **Room for Wonder**: Introduce yourself. Tell something you are proud of having accomplished. Only rule: it doesn't have to be true. Finally, guess who was telling the truth.

· **Sculptor and Clay/Rock**: Pair people up. One is the sculptor and one is the medium. The facilitator will ask the sculptor to model certain feelings (happiness, joy, frustration) out of the medium. If enough people are present, you can have folks walk around and admire the artwork. Have the participants change roles.

· **The Shoe Game**: Everyone places their shoes in the middle of the circled group and then everyone picks a pair of shoes and describes the person who owns them because of observation of the shoes.

· **Sign Your Name**: Use adjectives to describe you using all the letters of your name. Decorate a poster and share with others.

· **Skittles**: Pass around a bag of skittles and have everyone take as many as they want - at least five. Each person shares

something for each Skittle of a given color and category: red = angry when..., orange = good habits, yellow = bad habits, green = fear of..., purple = sensitive to... (Can use other kinds of candy (i.e. M&Ms).

· **Soda Cracker Name Game**: Everyone chows down on ten soda crackers without water and then has to say their name. It is messy as everyone spews cracker crumbs all over, but very funny!

· **Spider Web**: Everyone gets in a circle. A ball of string is passed randomly around the circle. As the string is passed, each member answers a question and holds on to the string before passing it on. After everyone is involved, you can discuss how the web is symbolic of the group and support. You can pull on some strings or drop a person and talk about how, when one person is out, everyone else must pick up the slack, etc.

· **Stand Up/Sit Down**: This can be used in a very light way or a serious way, depending upon the statements you select. Have persons stand up or sit down if the statement applies to them. You can use it as a way to get up/down motion or to see who stands up the longest. Sit down if: You did not brush your teeth today; You write well; You dislike kids; You have a hole in your sock; You are on a diet.

· **Story Completion**: Ask each person in your group to write down a sentence. Put them all in a hat and draw them out one at a time to make up a progressive, crazy story line.

· **Tapehead**: The group is divided into two teams. Each team is equipped with a pair of pantyhose and a roll of masking tape. During a given period of time, the two teams race with each other to pick up all kinds of small objects placed on the floor in front of them (ex: gum wrappers, paper clips, etc.). The team members must put the pantyhose over the top part of their heads and then wrap the tape around it, sticky side out. The team that picks up their team?s objects first wins!

· **Telephone**: Everyone sits in a circle. A person whispers a word or short phrase in the person?s ear next to them, this word is passed around in the circle and the last person in the circle says it out loud, to see how far the word would go before it was changed.

· **The Tinker Toy Competition**: The group leader brings a box of tinker toys and divides the pieces into two equal groups. The people in the group also divide into two equal groups. Each group of people is given the tinker toys, and given the following instructions:

1. You have 5 minutes to create the tallest structure you can with the pieces given to you.
2. You then have an additional 5 minutes to build the longest structure.
3. The ?winner? gets a prize.

· **Tissue Issue**: Pass around a roll of toilet tissue and ask each person to take as much as he/she wants but at least 2 sheets. After everyone has the tissue, announce that they are to tell one fact about them for each sheet taken.

· **Trust Walk**: Pair people up, blindfold them and let them go.

· **Two Truths and a Lie**: Each person tells the group two truths about themselves and one lie. The group must try to guess which of the three things was a lie. You can have members write down their three things. Variation: Each person writes three truths about themselves and turns in a list to leader. The leader calls up three people, reads a ?truth? and the group must decide who it is.

· **Wallet Sharing**: Have everyone select one item from his/her wallet (or person) to share with the group something about him/herself.

· **Who Am I?**: Each person in the group assumes the identity of a celebrity, written on a card taped to their back. The object of the game is for each person to determine whom he or she is by asking only ?yes? and ?no? questions. A variation is for each group member to be assigned another group member?s name instead of a celebrity?s for a group more familiar with each other.

· **The Winds are Blowing**: Everyone sits in a chair in a circle, with the exception of one person who is standing in the middle. The person in the middle then says ?The Winds are Blowing for anyone who?? and they finish it with some characteristic about people from what they are wearing to what they have done in the past like skinny-dipping, etc. This way it can be as deep or non-deep as people want. Whoever fits that category gets up and must change seats. They cannot sit down in their same seat or the seat to their left or right. One person will be left standing and this person says the next category or characteristic. One final option is for the

person in the middle to yell tornado and everyone must move.

· **Would You Rather??**: Go through the Would you Rather? Book and ask questions to the group. If you don?t have the book, make up your own questions and have people answer accordingly. (ex: Would you rather travel with the circus or work at a zoo??)

· **Zip-Zap-Zog**: Everyone stands in a circle. Each person must learn the name of the person to their immediate left and right. Then, someone in the middle starts. S/he moves around the circle at random, pointing to people saying zip, zap or zog. If it's zip, the person to whom they are pointing must say the name of the person to their right. If it's zap, the person to their left. If it's zog, their own name. It someone messes up, they go to the middle. The faster the pace, the more fun.

Community

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