



STAFF

TEAM-BUILDING & ICE BREAKER IDEAS

15-20 MINUTES TEAM BUILDING

THE HUMAN KNOT

Separate the participants into groups of eight. (Six and ten also work, but eight is the ideal number.)

Ask each group to stand in a circle.

With their right hands extended, each member should clasp hands with another participant. With their left hands, each member should clasp hands with a different participant. The result is one giant knot of hands in the middle of the circle.

Challenge the group to untangle themselves without letting go of hands. If they need a hint, remind the participants to think three dimensionally (they can climb over and under hands). For advanced groups or groups who finish quickly, ask them to do the activity again without talking.

Materials: none

The Human Knot Discussion Questions:

What was your initial reaction when you heard the task?

Did one person take over as the leader or was it a group effort?

How did you communicate and give instructions?

How does this reflect life in your journalism room? (everyone needs to work together; each person plays an equal role in production; you need to communicate things clearly without dropping what you are doing to do it for them)

How does this activity relate specifically to your job or position?

10-15 MINUTES ICE BREAKER

I LIKE PEOPLE WHO...

Ask all of the participants to form a circle with their chairs.

As the leader, begin the game by standing in the middle of the chairs.

Explain that the person in the middle must introduce himself in the following format: "My name is ____ and I like people who..." and they will fill in the blank with something like "are wearing blue jeans" or "have an older sibling."

Anyone in the circle who fits the description must stand up and move to a different chair.

The last person standing continues with "My name is ____ and I like people who..." and so on.

Encourage the participants to be creative and look beyond physical aspects of the group.

Materials: a chair for each person

I like to use this game as an introduction to a workshop or when some members of the group are new. Rather than spotlight the new people, this game makes everyone the center of attention at some point and also requires that everyone introduce themselves in a fun format. This is a good energizer since it gets everyone moving around.



As the leader, you can manipulate the direction of the game by purposely stalling until you are the last person standing in the center. Do this if the group is getting too silly or too boring. You can always use “I like people who haven’t been in the center of the circle yet” as a way to get new people involved. When you are ready to end the game, this is also gives you an easy way to conclude and provide instructions before your next event.

5-10 MINUTES TEAM BUILDING

THE GROUP SIT-IN

Ask the participants to form a circle, turning one direction so that each person gets toe-to-heel with the person in front of them.

Explain to the group that on the count of three, everyone will ease back to sit on the lap of the person behind them. (Be sure to tell them that this is not like plopping on the couch to watch TV; this should be an easy lean backwards. Also note that this activity often does not work well with young participants.)

Usually, some portion of the circle will lose balance and fall, probably laughing hysterically. For advanced groups who can hold the sitting position for some period of time, try the next step—walking. Once in the sitting position, instruct the group to shuffle their feet on command: left, right, left, etc. The result is nothing short of hilarious.

Materials: none

The Group Sit-in Discussion Questions:

I like to use this game as a conclusion to a seminar, and thus, without any serious discussion. You could go into what it takes to work together and why it is important to trust the other staff members, but I prefer to leave it at simply a fun... and funny...game.

Yearbook Discoveries