

First Year Orientation Ice Breaking or Introductory Activities For Those Who Are Acquainted/Team Building

Name and Cartoon character

Leader asks each person to state their name and a cartoon/comic book person he or she identifies with.

Questions to ask:

1. Interests, sports, hobbies
2. If you could be someone else for a day, who would it be?
3. How do you work on a team?

Reflection Questions

1. I hope to learn from orientation
2. What they hope to get from attending Notre Dame

Reflections regarding Orientation

1. I learned that . . .
2. I realized that . . .
3. I relearned that . . .
4. I was surprised that I . . .
5. I noticed that I . . .
6. I was pleased that I . . .
7. I discovered that I . . .
8. I was displeased that I . . .

Get Up and Move (Winds of Change)

- Participants form a circle with chairs. One chair is removed and that person goes to the middle
- The person in the middle makes a statement that applies to them. If the statement is true for those who are sitting, you must get up and move to another seat, and not the one next to you.
- the person who remains standing makes the next statement
- questions may not be asked that would embarrass another or involve a rule infraction

True Confession Toothpicks

- Give each participant 10 toothpicks or other counters
- Ask the first participant to talk about something they have done, for example, I have never seen a ND football game
- Anyone in the group that has seen a ND football has to forfeit a toothpick to the kitty
- The next person shares one thing he or she has never done, and again anyone who has done it loses a toothpick
- The disclosures continue around the room until someone has lost all 10 toothpicks or other counters.

You Bet Your Life

- Begin with 12 to 15 people
- As participants enter the room, give each a poker chip with a “secret” word written on it and ask them not to share it with anyone
- Once the whole group has gathered, explain the object of the activity, which is to meet as many people as possible
- The incentive to do that is a prize awarded to the person who collects the most secret words
- To collect a word, a participant must say the word in normal conversation with the person who holds it
- When the word is said, the owner of the secret word fesses up and shows the other person the poker chip with the word on it
- Each person keeps track of his or her score
- In group discussions, the poker chips should be shown only to the individual who says the secret word
- Variations on the word do count

Cartoon

Each participant writes on a slip of paper the cartoon character that best depicts her/his personality and why. All slips of paper are put in a hat. Each person draws one slip, reads it aloud to the group and group members try to guess whom it describes.

Passing Candy

Pass a bag of candy (like M&Ms) and have everyone take some. Once everyone has taken some candy, have them share one piece of information about themselves for each piece of candy they took.

Sinking Ship

Materials: a sheet of newspaper for each group

Groups of five

Instruct the group to unfold their newspaper and stand on it as a group. Everyone’s feet must be on the paper. The first attempt at this should be a guaranteed success. The facilitator then asks the group to make the paper smaller by folding it. The group then has to stand with everyone on it. The object is to be the team with all of its members on the smallest piece of paper possible. As the paper gets smaller, groups can be more creative in how they choose to keep their members “alive.” Groups may hold people on their shoulders or lift people up in order to get everyone on their paper.

The Web of Communication

Materials Needed: A big ball of yarn

Have everyone stand in a large circle. Using a big ball of yarn ask for a volunteer to go first. Grabbing the ball of yarn, they need to tell the group what they plan to be doing ten years from now. Holding the one end of the string, they pass the ball across the circle to someone else standing in the circle. They continue this routine until everyone is holding onto the yarn. Talk to the group about the web of communication that exists in any organization. Starting with the last person to get the ball of yarn - have them return the string to the person who gave it to them - repeating what they had said about their future. Continue working backwards until everyone has completed the task.

Jeopardy

Convey facts through a jeopardy-type game. Use long strips of butcher paper for each category; write the “answer” directly on the paper. Space so answers can be covered up with colored sheets taped to the butcher paper. Write point totals on these sheets. Create your own categories (eg.: Scheduling, People on Campus, Promotion). Have Double Jeopardy & Final Jeopardy rounds and include “Daily Doubles.” Tape music from the TV show and play during Final Jeopardy.

Puzzles

Hand Participants puzzle pieces when they enter. People begin to assemble the puzzle while waiting for others to arrive. A dramatic reminder if people are missing from the group; the puzzle is never complete.

Nuggets

At the end of a session, ask participants to write down thoughts or “nuggets” of information they have learned. Helps solidify their thoughts and preserves them for future reference (i.e., I learned that the Health Center is by Zahm Hall). Can share by putting nuggets on paper leaves and pasting them to a butcher paper tree.

Newspaper Houses

- Split group into teams of six. Each group identifies 3 extroverts who may not talk during the activity; they may only do actions. The other three may verbalize instruction but may do NO actions.
- Each team is given a pile of newspapers and 2 rolls of masking tape. The task is to build a structure with walls and a roof that will house three people.
- Limitations are that you cannot tape to walls, chairs or other structures and that the people in the group cannot be part of the structure.
- After 10 minutes the participants in each team switch roles from actions to talking.
- The best house after 20 minutes wins.

Ice Cream Sundae

- Hand out blank pieces of paper to people and have them write the instructions on how to make an ice cream sundae.
- After dinner, form pairs and exchange instructions.
- People have to make their sundae EXACTLY as their partner’s instructions say.

Coat of Arms

- On a sheet of ledger paper or newsprint people draw a coat of arms and divide it into six spaces.
- The facilitator reads questions to the group and people put their answers in the designated space either using pictures or words to answer.
- The results may then be shared individually with the group or a piece of yarn may be attached to the sheet and people can wear them as giant name tags while they mingle and talk with others about their answers.

Children's Books

Reading a story is a great way to convey a point plus the stories are popular with participants. Use with topics from multiculturalism to budgeting. Some titles are **Franklin Goes to School** by Paulette Bourgeois (1995); **Will I Have a Friend** by Miriam Cohen (1967); **Spot Goes to School** by Eric Hill (1994); and **I'd Rather Stay with You** by Charlotte Steiner.

Potatoes

- Participants are each given a potato and a straw then told to put the straw through the potato. After a few failed attempts they are instructed to cover the end of straw with their thumb and try again; the straw should punch right through. This illustrates that with proper training you can achieve more than without it. Can also be used to teach people how to teach others, to illustrate the importance of follow through or for stress management.
- To review pass potato around, whoever has the "hot potato" has to state one concept that they learned today. (Note: use non-flex, heavy duty straws).

Hershey's Kiss Off

At end of session participants stand in a circle and each receives a candy kiss. Can't eat the kiss until they share with the group one thing they learned.

'AH HA' Pads

Distribute several post-its to participants and when something during the training session strikes them they can write it on a post-it and stick it somewhere in the room. Helps to show that people are learning. Note: bright colored post-it cards work best.

Sources include **Creative Training New Techniques for Fun Learning**