

Group 1: Betcha Never

Materials: None

Time: 5-10 minutes

Purpose: Challenge participants to think of unique things about themselves that other group members have likely not done, but concludes with participants finding experiences they have in common with each other, allowing the team to feel closer together.

Procedure:

1. Ask participants to come up with one thing that is true about them that they think no one else in the room can claim to be true.
2. Give each person a chance to state their name and the one “betcha never” fact about themselves
3. If someone else can claim the fact, the individual must come up with another “betcha never” fact, until each person has shared one unique fact.
4. Examples: John: I betcha never had 5 siblings. Amy: I have 5 siblings! John: I betcha never had 5 younger siblings.

Debrief Questions:

- What were some things you learned about others?
- What commonalities did you learn that surprised you?
- What was something you learned that you want to hear more about?

Good for Small or Large Groups, No Materials, Passive, Low Risk, Small Space

Group 2: Minefield

Materials: Paper plates, plastic dots, paper, or chalk (if outside on pavement)

Time: 15-20 minutes

Purpose: Improve communication among team members, and open avenues to discuss what communication means to people.

Procedure:

1. The facilitator should create a grid pattern using plastic dots, paper plates, paper, or other objects that are big enough for a person to stand on. The grid can be any size but group often do 5 x 5 grids.
2. The object of the game is for the group to cross the grid, but they can only do so by stepping on the correct places in the correct order (they must first start on 1 and then step to spot 2, etc.). Draw out a pattern of numbers on a piece of paper. Keep this pattern hidden from the participants. See Example below:

1				
	2	3		
		4		
	5	6	7	
				8

3. Explain to the group that everyone must get from one side of the grid to the other successfully, but that the grid must be crossed in a particular sequence. The next spot will always be adjacent to the current spot, but it might be connected only at the diagonal.
4. Have participants get in a single file line. Explain that each person must try the maze once before anyone repeats.
5. The first participant picks a spot to step on. If they guessed correctly and stepped on spot "1", then they can take another step. If they guess incorrectly, the facilitator makes a buzzer or other silly noise, and the participant has to go to the end of the line to try again later. If they step on a "safe" spot, but in the wrong order, they still have to start over.
6. The next participant then tries to stand on the spots in the correct order. They take one step at a time and after each step, the facilitator either tells them they are safe or makes a buzzer noise. The buzzer noise indicates that they picked a wrong spot and they have to get to the end of the line to try again.
7. Let the group continue until they get across.
8. If the group gets across quickly, you can have them go again with a different pattern.

Debrief Questions:

- What was this experience like?
- How did it feel to hit a spot that was a mine?
- What was hard about working together?
- What role did communication play in this activity?

Good for Small or Large Groups, Some Materials, Active, Low Risk, Large Space

Group 3: Secret Leader

Materials: None

Time: 5-10 minutes

Purpose: Asks participants to think about the idea of leadership

Procedure:

1. Participants form a circle and ask for a volunteer to step out of the room (wait until everything is explained to step out).
2. Explain that one person will lead the group in a motion that everyone copies. The person who is out of the room must try to figure out who the leader is. That leader can change the motion at any time.
3. Now ask the volunteer to step out and pick the leader from the group. Make sure everyone knows who the leader is.
4. Start the motion before calling back the volunteer to rejoin the group. The volunteer should stand in the center of the circle and try to identify who is leading the motion.
5. Repeat to let a few people get to be the volunteer and leader.

Debrief Questions:

- What was it like to be the new person who needed to identify the motion?
- What was it like to be the participants?
- What was it like to be the leader?
- What did you learn from this activity?

Good for Large Groups, No Materials, Active, Low Risk, Small Space

Group 4: Comfort Zones

Materials: None

Time: 15-20 minutes

Purpose: Allows participants to gauge their comfort with content, processes, or other issues. Allows participants to see how others in the group are feeling too.

Procedure:

1. Set up three zones, “comfort”, “stretching”, and “overwhelmed.” You can use ropes or string to make a bullseye pattern with comfort in the middle. You can also use landmarks in your room like a table or chairs to create a continuum. For example, far left is comfort and far right is overwhelmed.
2. Read some reflection statements and ask the participants to place themselves in the zone that most closely matches their feelings about the statement. These reflection statements can be about an activity or the state of the club or program.
3. Participants can share their feelings and why they chose that zone after the facilitator reads the statements.
4. Ask participants to look at where everyone in their group is to notice what they have in common and what might be different. You can also challenge participants to think about how they might help each other move from one zone to another.

Debrief Questions:

- Discuss how much learning process happens in the stretching zone. Ask participants how do you move from one zone to another?
- What did you notice you had in common with your group? What was different?
- How can we work together to help those that want to stretch or become comfortable with something?

Good for Small or Large Groups, No Materials, Active, Higher Risk (Depends on Statements), Larger Space

Comfort Zone

Statements/Activities

- Speaking in front of a large group
- Going to the movies
- Dancing
- Riding a horse
- Showing your steer
- Seeing a snake
- Working as a team
- Working on your own
- Flying in a small plane?
- Being in front of a video camera?
- Jumping out of a plane?
- Watching horror movies?
- Debating with others?
- Being a follower?
- Being outdoors?
- Camping Outdoors?
- Asking for help or favors?
- Interviewing for a job?
- Wearing a super hero custom?
- Writing notes in front of your peers?
- Reading in front of your peers?
- Apologizing?
- Admitting mistakes?
- Running a 5K race?
- Eating liver?
- Cooking for others?

Group 5: Rope Geometry

Materials: Rope about 20 feet long

Time: 10-15 minutes

Purpose: Challenges youth to work as a team to accomplish a shared goal. Improves trust and communication among team members.

Procedure:

1. Tie the rope to make a large loop (about 20 feet in circumference) and have the participants stand around the loop.
2. Each participant puts on a blindfold and reaches down to hold the rope.
3. Once members have the rope, tell them they are told that their hands can slide along the rope, but cannot leave the rope unless instructed.
4. Give the group the task of making different shapes with the rope.
5. When the group thinks that they have completed the specific shape, they are allowed to take off their blindfolds to see if they have completed the task.
6. All group members must consensus before taking off their blindfolds.
7. Begin with easy shapes such as a circle, square, and triangle.
8. Follow the easier shapes with more complex ones, such as a star, hexagon, heart, or plus sign.

Debrief Questions:

- How did your communication change with the blindfolds?
- What process did you use to come to consensus?
- Did anyone emerge as a leader?

Good for Large Groups, Some Materials, Active, Low Risk, Large Space