

Ice Breakers

Ice Breakers are a way to get people in your group talking and sharing at the beginning of a group meeting. Often times when a group first gathers for a meeting people are hesitant to talk or distracted by other items going on in their day. An ice breakers helps everyone focus and interact with one another. **Ice Breakers can be something as simple as a question or as involved as a pre-planned activity.**

Example Questions

1. The thing I liked best about where I grew up is...
2. Something interesting you don't know about me is...
3. Have each person state three things about themselves, two of them being true and one being a lie. Everyone should then guess which is a lie for each person.
4. Describe what your dream vacation would be.
5. What is your favorite animal?
6. Give some examples of groups (large or small) in the past you've been a part of (not just church related.) What was good about them? What was bad?
7. What was your relationship with your parents like growing up? What good qualities from that relationship do you want to have with your (future) children and grandchildren?
8. When you were a child, what dreams did you have for when you grew up?
9. Who was a hero in your life that you wanted to be like when you were young? (it could be someone you personally knew like a family member or someone famous)
10. Tell the group one or two things that you saw in your spouse while you were dating that led you to begin thinking, "This is the person I want to marry."

Example Activities

Name Tag Mixer - <http://www.smallgroupministry.com/article.asp?ID=582>

You'll need blank name tags, pens, paper, and a bowl or container.

Prepare by putting each of the following rules on a separate slip of paper. Make multiple copies as needed, so there's a slip of paper for each group member:

- You can only draw vertical lines. (For example, the letters "b," "d," "h," and "k" all have vertical parts that you can draw, but you can't draw the entire letter.)
- You can only draw horizontal lines, but you can't cross "t's." (For example, the letters "e," "f" and "z" all have horizontal parts that you can draw.)
- You can only dot "i's."
- You can only cross "t's."
- You can only draw curves, not circles or lines. (For example, the letters "c," "e," "j," and "r" all have curved parts that you can draw.)

- You can only draw angled lines. (For example, the letters "k," "v," "w," and "y" all have angled parts that you can draw.)
- You can only draw circles. You may not draw partial circles, only complete circles. (For example, the letters "a," "g," "o," and "p" all have circular parts that you can draw.)
- You can only draw capital letters. You can draw only one capital letter for each person.

Fold these slips and then put them into a bowl or other container. Give each person a blank name tag and a pen, and explain that the goal of this mixer is to have their names written on their name tags by the end of the game -- but they need to follow all the rules to make this happen.

Have each person pick one of the slips of paper. This paper describes that person's "unique ability" to complete a task. Group members will mingle to find others with unique abilities that will help them complete their names, and at the same time, they'll help others complete their names.

Introductions – introducing someone else

Take a few minutes to introduce yourself to someone in your group that you don't know very well (preferably man to man and woman to woman). Find out each other's names, about each other's family, job/vocation/academic study, and one other interesting fact. After everyone has had a chance to visit, take turns introducing each other to the group.

Common Ground - <http://www.smallgroupministry.com/article.asp?ID=538>

This is a great game to help people find out what they have in common -- and can be a wonderful starting point for new friendships!

Supplies: You'll need paper and pencils.

Form equal-sized teams of two to four players. Give each group a sheet of paper and a pencil. Tell participants their challenge is to list everything they can think of that all team members have in common. For example, group members might all work out at the same gym, prefer the same kind of music, or like the same coffee drink. The only rule is that they can't list similar body parts, such as "We all have two arms, a brain, and a nose."

Tell teams they have three minutes to create their lists, so they need to work quickly. When time is up, find out which team has the longest list and have that group share their list. Then ask teams who had similarities not already listed to share them.

Variation: Challenge teams to list things members don't have in common -- things that make each person unique. For example, players may have been born in different states, might have different pets, or might have different favorite music groups.

Famous People / City

Tape a 3 x 5 index card on the back of each person (or have partners put it on each other's back) with the name of a famous person or city. They must circulate in the room and ask questions that can ONLY be answered with a YES or NO to identify clues that will help them find out the name of the person or city on their index card. They can only ask two questions per person at a time (ex. Two people can't stand and ask each other 10 questions to find out what's on the

card.) EXAMPLES: Paris, Tom Cruise, Santa Claus, Washington DC, etc. (you can use other topics also if you think best for your group instead of people/cities)

Birthday Partner

Everyone mingles and finds the person that has the birthday closest to their own. Then bring everyone back together and the “birthday partners” can introduce their birthdates and something interesting about their partner.