

## **TEAMBUILDING**

### **STRETCHES, ICEBREAKERS, WARM-UPS AND DEINHIBITIZERS**

#### **PARTNER STRETCHES**

Stretch

**Needs/Numbers:** No props, any even number of people

**Directions:** Find a partner...someone you don't know very well. Quickly introduce yourself to your partner and stand side by side.

Head rolls: Relax your shoulders. Slowly and gently roll your head around clockwise. Be careful not to hyper-extend your head back. Now, switch directions and roll your head counter clockwise. Try not to fall down.

Side Stretch: Stand side by side with your partner. Place your hand on your partner's closest shoulder. While both facing forward, reach your outside hand upward and try to touch your partner's outside hand. Now bring your outside hands back down and reach down to touch the lowest point on your outside leg. (Repeat) Switch sides with your partner and repeats the steps above.

Facing Stretch: Stand facing your partner. Place your hands on their shoulders (not around their neck!) Slowly bend at the waist and lower your head to form a table top with your upper body. Feel the stretch in the back and back of your arms. Slowly straighten up to your original position.

Quad Stretch: Stand side by side with your partner. Place your hand on your partner's closest shoulder. While both facing forward, bring your outside foot up behind you and grab your foot. Use your partner for balance. Slowly pull your foot upwards and lean forward slowly. Straighten up and release your foot. (Repeat) Switch sides with your partner and repeat the steps above.

Abs, Back, and Legs Stretch: Stand back to back with your partner, then take a half step forward. Spread your feet should width apart. Slowly reach your hands over your head and try to touch the fingers of your partner. Now slowly reach down through your legs and try to touch your partner's fingers. (Repeat)

#### **WHERE IN THE WORLD**

Ice Breakers

**Needs/Numbers:** A nice large area to play, 20+ players

**Directions:** Determine, with your group, the area on the floor or ground you will be using for your State, US, or Global map ^set up the boundaries and the directions ^ North, South,... The leader will then call out a statement and the job of each player will be to go to the place on the map that will make the statement true for that person. When you get there, notice who is around you and find out from them where they are and any other information you can about them before the next statement is called out. Here are several examples: Where were you born? Where is you favorite place to visit and relax? Where is your favorite place for adventure? Where does you closest (to your heart) relative live? Create questions that work with your group. Play the game as long as the interactions are engaging.

## **SWITCH, CHANGE, ROTATE**

Warm Up

**Needs/Numbers:** No props needed, 3 to 60+

**Directions:** Ask your player to get into groups of 3 or 4 and stand in a line facing in the same directions, one behind the other. When you say Switch, the front and back players change places ^ practice. When you say Change, the line of players turn 180 degrees to face the opposite direction ^ practice. When you say Rotate, the player at the front of the line peels off and goes to the back of the line ^ practice. Spend a little time practicing while the groups are stationary. Then, ask the groups to start walking around the room (boundary area) in their line formation ^ the head of the line being the leader. Now, call Switch, Change and Rotate as the groups are walking around. (If you have some music to play during the activity it gives the group some beat to walk to)

## **PROMENADE**

De-Inhibitizer

**Needs/Numbers:** Music would be nice for this one but not needed, 10 to 50 + players ^ an even number is needed

**Directions:** Ask players to partner up, stand next to each other should to shoulder. From here have them get into a promenade position ^ Holding right hand to right hand and left to left. When you say "promenade" (start the music if you have some) have the pairs start walking forward. Any time a pair encounters an obstacle in the room they must change directions by carefully pulling hands ^ the left player pulls the left hand and the right pulls the right hand. This pulling will spin the pair around to face a new direction. When pointed a new way the pair starts to walk forward again.

## **STEERING IN TWOS**

Trust

**Needs/Numbers:** No props needed, 2 to 50+ players ^ you'll need an even number of players

**Directions:** Pair up all the players and have them face each other. Ask the pairs to place their hands on each other's shoulders. Each pair will need to choose who will close their eyes first. (Safety!) The pairs will then walk in the direction that the sighted player is facing ^ the player with his or eyes close will be walking backwards. The objective is for the pairs to move about the room without bumping into anything or anyone. When the facilitator calls "Switch", have partner change roles. Add music for more fun. Don't forget to stop any misbehavior.

## THE CAPTAIN IS COMING

Icebreaker/Energizer

**Needs/Numbers:** No props, 20+ players

**Directions:** The facilitator plays the role of the captain and is the person who calls out the orders. The following order are several actions that the group does during the game depending on what the captain calls out:

“The captain is coming”: Everyone stands at attention and salutes the captain

“Swab the deck”: Everyone acts like they are mopping the floor

“Lighthouse”: Everyone gets into pairs and. They stand facing each other, then turn in a circle while saying “boop, boop, boop”

“Man Overboard”: Everyone gets into groups of three. Two people hold hands to form a circle while the third person stand in the circle looking for the man overboard

“Row ashore”: Everyone gets into groups of four. They line up single file and act like they are rowing a boat together.

“Grub time”: Everyone gets into groups of five. They stand in a tight huddle and act like they are spooning food into their mouths while quickly saying “grub, grub, grub”

For people who cannot get into a group during the game, they must “walk the plank”. These people walk over to a designated area and sing a pirate song.

“Oheeh, a pirates life for me” (Repeat over and over)

The game is over when all but 2 have “walked the plank”.

## 6-COUNT

Ice Breaker

**Needs/Numbers:** No props, any number of players

**Directions:** Does anyone know how to do a 6-count. It goes 1,2,3,4,5,6. Count from 1 to 6 with everyone at the same time. (Do it again with “feeling”) Put movement to the count by raising your left hand above your head and down to your side. Your hand should go up on 1,3,5 and down on 2,4,6. (Repeat with feeling) Give your left arm a rest and let’s give a moment to your right arms. It goes up on 1, straight out to the side on 2, down on 3, up on 4, straight out to the side on 5, and down on 6. It makes the shape of a triangle. (Repeat with feeling) Now as if you hadn’t guessed, we will put both the arm actions together with the count. Your left arms still goes up and down while your right arms goes up and out. (You may go slow at first, don’t expect many people to get right the first time)

## **AH-SO-KO**

Ice Breakers

**Needs/Numbers:** No props needed, 8 to 16 players

**Directions:** The game is played just like Ah-So-Ko in FUNN Stuff, Vol. 1, by Karl Rohnke. In brief ^ sitting (or standing) in a circle, players use three motions in order. The first is hand open on the chest fingers pointing to the left or right. Second motion is an open hand on the head fingers pointing to the left or the right. Third motion is arm out hand open fingers pointing. After making the motion the player must say the name of the person the fingers are pointing to. That person then makes the next motion saying the name of the person pointing to, that person points to anyone in the circle and says his or her name. The game continues with the first motion again. If a player makes a mistake, he or she must find a new place in the circle and start the game again with the first motion. This game is meant to be played with gusto!

## **ZIP, ZAP, ZOE; variation Speedy Rabbit**

De-Inhibitizer

**Needs/Numbers:** No Props needed, 10 to 50 players in a circle

**Directions:** Ask your group to form a large circle. Ask for one volunteer for every 8 players in the group to step into the middle of the circle. The center players are acting independently of each other and move around the inside of the circle, "Zip"ping players who are forming the circle. If an inner player points to nay player who is forming the circle and say "Zip" that player should duck down quickly and the players on both sides of the ducker try to turn towards each other, point a finger at each other and say "Zap" as quickly as possible. The last player to point and Zap the other takes the place of the inner player who started this whole thing. The inner player will determine who was last and takes that player's place as part of the circle. If the player pointed to doesn't duck down, the players on either side turn and Zap the unDucker who then switches places with the inner pointer. An inner player can also point to someone of the circle and say "Zoe". The player pointed to should freeze ^ making no motion at all. If this "pointed to" player makes a move to duck; he or she switched places with the pointer. The game is meant to be fast paced and active.

## **MONTH BY MONTH**

Initiative

**Needs/Numbers:** No props, 20+ players

**Directions:** Ask the players in your group, standing or sitting, to raise their hand when you call out their birth month. Then call out each month again in order and have the players respond with energy to the month they where born. "Challenge the verbally assembled monthly groups to see how quickly they can vocally get from January to December" (Rohnke, p. 99). Time the first trial for the benchmark, then see if the group can break their own record. It will be up to you whether you let them move around or not. Try starting with July and ending with June!

## **Quick-Line Up**

Energizer

Need/Numbers: No props, 15+ players

**Directions:** First have the group form the best circle they can around you (applaud, YAY!), then have them form the best square they can; ask them, “what makes a square” 4 corners, equal sides, etc. once they have completed task, (celebrate! YAY!) Now, once they have formed a square, and everyone is on a side (there shouldn’t be any corners) have them take one step back, then, explain that you have temporarily broken them into 4 teams, and that each team is responsible for a side of you (front, right, left, and back)

NOTE: from this point on it is important that you don’t turn your body too much, it can confuse people. Explain to them that you will begin moving (either to right or left) the objective is for each team to find their side. DO A SLOW MOTION ROUND, ALSO BE PRICISE WITH YOUR MOVEMENT, then once everyone understands, explain the rules. The object of the game is to find your teams side first, once you find your side, you grab your teammates hands, raise them up, and the first team to yell quick line up wins that round. PRACTICE RAISING HANDS AND YELLING QUICK LINE UP AS A GROUP.

**The rules:** players can not hold hands or clothing while finding their side, also they can not yell “Quick-Line Up” until they find their side and all of their team is there. Watch out for running, make them speed walk. Do 2 rounds of just quarter turns, then one round of a 180 degree turn, and then, for the last round. you can run off a short distance and have the group chase.

### **The Trust Run:**

Two people stand holding hands on one side of the room. Another person is about 25 yards away and closes his/her eyes and starts jogging towards the pair holding hands. Everyone watching must cheer the jogger on so that he/she doesn't slow to a walk. The two people holding hands must catch the jogger.

Moral of the game:

The jogger will always slow down if he or she feels that no one is supporting them. But because the audience cheers them on, they will continue no matter how scared they are.

### **Fingertip Hula Hoop**

In groups of around four, have students all put the tips of two (fingers of each hand) under the hula hoop. The object is for the group to be able to lower the hoop to the ground without anyones fingertips coming off. Their fingertips MUST be in contact with the hoop at all times. To make this even more challenging, you can have the students try it WITHOUT ALLOWING ANY TALKING. This activity takes a lot of team work and cooperation. It is also a lot of fun for the kids.

### **Tiger, Martian, Salesman:**

All Teambuilders use this game. You get in groups of three, turn your backs to each other and on the count of three, you turn around and act out either a Tiger, a Martian, or a Salesman. The object is to match your team, so all three get the same thing.

Moral of the game:

Sometime to achieve your goal, you may have to put your idea to the side. You must think what's best for the team in order to achieve the goal. And once the goal is achieved, and your team celebrates, are you really sulking over the fact that you had to let your idea go?

### **I AM:**

This one is more risky, but it is pretty safe, and kids REALLY like it. One person lays down in the middle of a circle formed by the rest of the group. They tell everyone their name. The person in the middle shouts "I AM..." while the rest of the group responds "... (name)." This keeps repeating while the circle converges on the person. Everyone lifts the person in the middle up into the air, and gently brings them back down.

Moral of the Game:

Support. And BTW A group of mine of 22 people lifted a guy 350 pounds EASY. It was a trip.

### **Similarities and Differences**

Are you more like summer or winter? a station wagon or a sports car? etc.

### **Similarity Charades**

Divide into smaller groups. Each group discusses their similarities and acts out for other group to guess.

### **Trolley Walk**

Group coordinates efforts to walk while standing on wooden trolleys (long boards with ropes to hang on to every few feet).

### **Group Jump-Rope**

Given long piece of rope, group tries to jump rope simultaneously (again, easier to start with simple task - one or two people - and work up to larger goal gradually)

### **Human Knot**

Each person grabs hands with two different people across a circle. Group works to untangle itself. (leadership, everyone important)

## **Blind Shapes**

Group is blindfolded or with eyes closed. Have group form themselves into a square or a triangle, etc. Can use a rope with everyone holding on.  
(communication, leadership)

## **Crossing the Line**

**Equipment:** 25 foot length of rope, masking tape. Place rope on the floor in the shape of a circle. Tape a line down the middle of the circle to create two halves.

**Time:** 5 - 15 minutes.

Outcomes: Introduces participants to cooperation verses competition. Many organizations evidence a culture which rewards employee competition verses employee cooperation (i.e. review your sales compensation strategies). This initiative is excellent to begin a discussion around the strengths and weaknesses of a competitive culture.

**Set-up:** Select two "volunteers" from the group. (Try and pick the two most competitive individuals - each should have high ego strength). Have them enter the circle and face each other. Tell them this is an initiative around power and influence and the goal is to use all their considerable powers of influence, including but not limited to, arguments, lecture, bribery and trickery to get the other person to cross completely over the line.

### **Rules:**

1. They may not touch each other physically.
2. Audience members may not contribute suggestions. However, they can lay bets on who will win.

**Facilitation:** The group leader (facilitator) acts as the referee. You can have them shake hands and shout "Begin!". The more you set the atmosphere up like a wrestling match the better. You can throw in comments such as, "John, good point! Randy are you convinced?" and other comments to reinforce the best way to get someone to do what you want is to persuade them. Of course the fastest way to reach the goal in this exercise is to give the other person what they want, not demand what you want. A very good debrief can follow as you explore who really won. Was it the person who crossed the line first or was it the person who crossed the line first in order to get the other person to cross the line?

**Facilitator note:** The power of these exercises rest not in the games themselves, but in the debrief afterwards. The debrief must make the link back to issues the participants are facing at work or the games are pretty much a waste of time. The real value of team building comes alive when concrete business problems get solved.