

TEAM WORK GAMES

Mnemonic Name Game

Directions

Sit or stand in a circle. Then you start the game... One person starts by using his or her first name followed by using the name of a food with the same letter as his or her first name (Ex. Christopher Carrots or Sylvia Sea Salt). The next person repeats the first person's name and then adds his or her own. It goes around the circle, each person repeating all of the names that came before. In a small group, go around the circle more than once, adding additional information such as an adjective beginning with the same letter as the first name or an action. Continue to have participants repeat all information that has been previously shared.

Alternatives

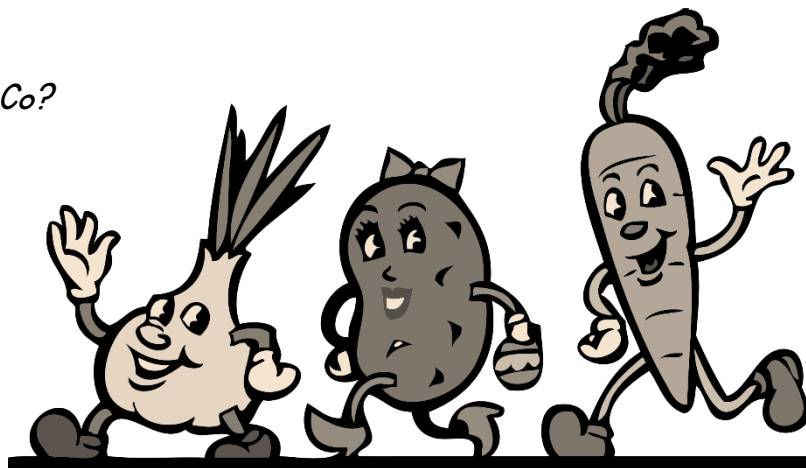
Have each participant give his/her name and something s/he likes that begins with the same first letter. Each subsequent participants does the same and repeats the name and like of everyone that went before e.g. (First person says "I'm Christopher and I like cabbage... the next person says "He's Christopher and he likes cabbage... and I am Sylvia and I like swimming)."

You can also try it with things the participants do not like.

You can also have each participant give his/her name and an animal that begins with the first initial.

With some groups try using a word that describes them beginning with the same letter or sound as their first name. Positive Phil or Flipping Phil... Have the group act out their word.

Paddy Potato and Co?



Who I Am - by Lineage

Set Up

Sit in a circle. Ask everyone to think about their matrilineal family - the names of their mother, grandmother, greatgrandmother . . . Give them a few minutes to recall names.

Directions

In turn, each person introduces herself, e.g., "I am Ruth, daughter of Mary, who was daughter of Helen, who was daughter of Polly, who was daughter of others . . ." Go as far back as you can, and then say "of others."

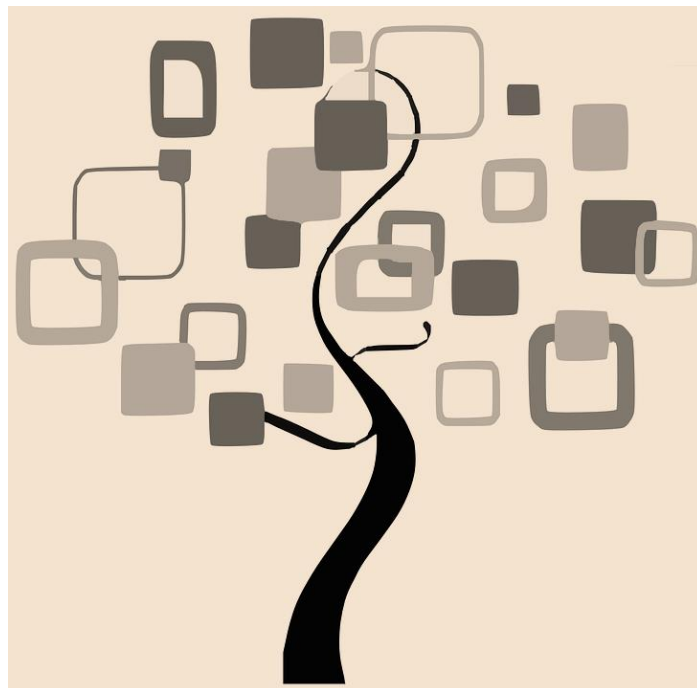
Debrief

Does this arouse curiosity about yourself? Give interesting information about each other? How can you use insights from this activity in your regular team projects?

Alternatives

Name the patrilineal (father's line) family; or each person can choose.

Or give your lineage by major life influencers/inspirers.



Zip Zap Zop

Set Up

None

Directions

Stand in a circle. Someone begins by pointing to another person in the circle and saying "ZIP!" That person then points to yet another person and says "ZAP!" That person points to another person and says "ZOP!" This continues, but the words must be said in order: ZIP, ZAP, ZOP. If someone makes a mistake and says a word out of order, that person is out of the game.

Alternatives

-This version makes it a Name Game: Someone begins by pointing to another person in the circle and saying "her name". That person then points to yet another person and says the previous name and "her name". That person points to another person and says the first 2 names and "her name". This continues, but the names must be said in order: Lisa, Sharon, Katie. If someone makes a mistake and says a name out of order, that person is out of the game.

-Instead of putting someone out of the game, make the whole group yell "WRONG!" and point at the one making a mistake. The participant that made the mistake has to step into the middle of the circle and say "I made a mistake". Notice the difference in the way people tell they made a mistake. Do they say it laughing, are they a bit angry, do they protest, are they confident or shy, do they say it like a little child that did something naughty, etc...

- Sit in a circle. One person starts by turning to the person (either direction) next to them and saying Zip. The Zip is passed around in the same direction until someone says Zap, which acts as a reverse. The Zoop is used for anyone in the circle, said and directed using eye contact and body language for the other person to pick up and respond with a Zip, Zap, or Zoop!



Balloon Kebabs

Can you make a balloon kebab?

Materials

Skewers

Balloons

Set Up

Inflate balloons to a diameter 2 inches smaller than the length of the skewers

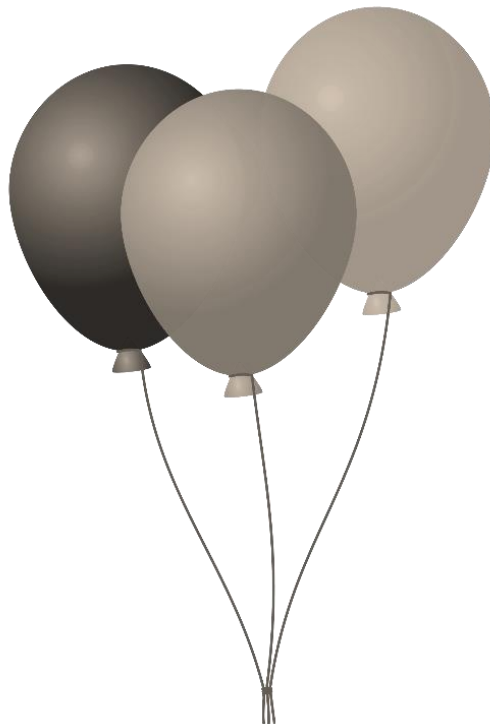
Directions

Can be done as individuals or as small teams.

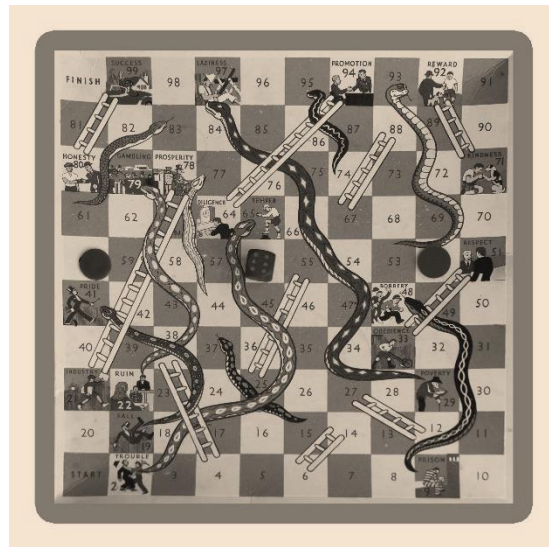
The idea is to push the skewer through the balloon so that it passes through the centre of the balloon and out the other side. They are not allowed to put anything on the balloon or skewer (no sticky tape) and they are not allowed to deflate the balloon, pierce it then re-inflate the balloon.

Debrief

There are two thick spots on the balloon, one at the neck and one opposite at the top of the balloon. Gently push the skewer through the neck and then gently push it out through the thick spot on the top of the balloon. Ta Da, a Balloon kebab!



Box games



Materials

Box games for small groups: Pictionary; Scrabble; Boggle; etc.

Set Up

Have people bring their favourite box games. Set up several tables with chairs.

Directions

People break into small groups to play one of the games of their choice. Several games can be going on simultaneously. At certain intervals, the organiser indicates that it's time to switch - each person takes another's place at a different game, mixing up the groups.

Debrief

Did the game have any lessons applicable to the group's normal activities? How does collaborating as a team feel different from competing in a game? How did switching to take on another's play change the dynamics of competition? What did you learn about each other through playing together?

Alternatives

All play one game at the same time.

Appreciation

Objectives

Inspiration, encouragement, celebration, appreciation of what has "gone right," getting to know each other, upliftment . . .

Materials

None

Set Up

Sit together where everyone can hear and see all others. Ask people to think about good things that have happened in the past week/month/year related to their involvement with a team's activities. (if team has been together for a while, they can speak of good experiences from this) The successes can be important or trivial, long-term or temporary, big or small.

Directions

Each person in turn tells his/her "bright spot." The descriptions can be very brief. All others listen and then applaud. The organiser can decide whether to invite comments after each report or not.

Debrief

The group can discuss the value of mentioning good experiences.



Common experiences

Materials

chairs, sweets or something similar (with wrappers!), prize

Set Up

All sit in circle/ around tables. The moderator distributes sweets to each person - if there are 10 in the group, distribute 9 sweets to each; 8 in the group, distribute 7 sweets to each.

Directions

One person stands and tells of some experience they've NOT had that they guess most people HAVE had (e.g. I have never been to Wexford). Every person who HAS had this experience has to relinquish a sweet (The meeting moderator goes around and collects the relinquished sweets)

The next person in the circle says something about themselves that they guess they share with at least one other person in the group (e.g. I have never gotten sick eating too much chocolate), and the process is repeated - all who HAVE gotten sick from too much chocolate surrender a sweet to the moderator.

The last person to retain any of their sweets (and thus has not shared as many experiences) is the winner, and is given a prize.

Alternatives

Distribute more sweets so the process can be repeated all around the circle.



Things in common

Objectives

Find things in common, talk to everyone in the group

Materials

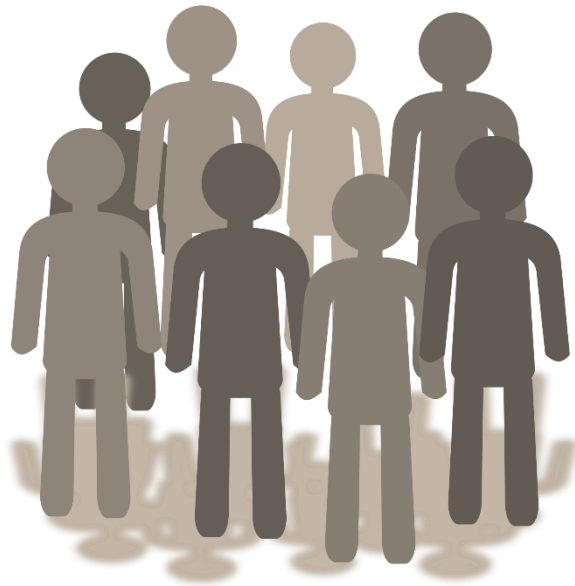
None, pen and paper helpful

Set Up

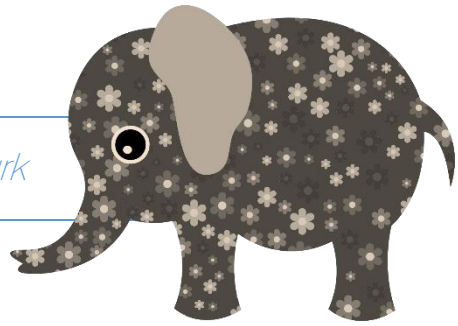
Open room

Directions

Divide large group into smaller groups. Instruct each group to find 5-10 (depending on the time frame) things they all have in common. Challenge them to think creatively; places they have travelled, TV show they have watched, some other experience. The first group to come up with the designated number of things wins, points for creativity too!



Elephants In Denmark



Objectives

Gets the group's attention, and emphasises listening to directions. Also a fun riddle.

Directions

Tell the group you can read their minds. Then follow the steps to prove it.

- 1: ask each person to think of a number from 1 to 10.
- 2: take that number and multiply by 9
- 3: take the result and add the number together (i.e. $72 = 7+2$, $9 = 0+9$).
- 4: take that number and subtract 5
- 5: take that result and equate it to the corresponding letter of the alphabet (i.e., 4 = D).
- 6: think of a country beginning with that letter.
- 7: Ask them to think of an animal that begins with the second letter of the country name.
- 8: Ask the group: "How many people are thinking of elephants in Denmark?"

This exercise works because any number they think of for step 1, will result in the answer of 9 for step 3. From that point on, the country will begin with D (there are only 5 countries that start with D - Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Dominica, Dominican Republic and Djibouti - and the majority of the group is likely to think of Denmark). There are many animals that start with E but elephants are the most likely guess.

Alternatives

Know your audience. If you are leading this at a conference on Africa, or you suspect that your group is more likely to think of Djibouti than Denmark - then don't guess Denmark.

You could ask the group to think of an animal that starts with the last letter of the country they thought of (in the case of Denmark, 'k'). Most people will think of "kangaroo." Next, ask them to think of a color that starts with the last letter of the animal, then ask "Who's thinking of an orange kangaroo in Denmark?"

Materials

A computer or phone with Internet access

Set Up

- No Setup Necessary

Directions

Have everyone in the group go to the website [Googlism](#) and search for his/her first name. This will generate a list of statements about that name pulled from Google search results e.g. for the name Francois:

- Francois is the best
- Francois is required to live in East Palo Alto or Eastern Menlo Park if he is to run for a seat on the Ravenswood Board
- Francois is right
- Francois is a first class hotel
- Francois is 9 years old and lives in Senegal
- Francois is an actor who plays his roles convincingly
- Francois is still desperately in love with his ex
- Francois is an inexhaustible improviser who entralls his listeners with his intense and original playing
- Francois is not alone in this belief that dance is also a therapeutic tool and a valuable investment for physical health and psychological balance

Go through the list and find as many that apply to you as possible and share with the rest of the group. It's fascinating!



A large, stylized, grey Google logo is centered on the page. The letters are thick and rounded, with a slight gradient from dark grey to a lighter shade in the middle of the 'oo'.

Green Glass Door

Materials

None

Set Up

None

Directions

Everyone sits in a circle. The facilitator introduces the game and the object (to figure out what you can bring through the Green Glass Door). The facilitator should start with an example, and then each person around the circle asks the facilitator if they can bring an object through the Green Glass Door. The facilitator answers yes or no. Go around the circle until most of the participants seem to have figured out the pattern. The pattern is that they can only bring things that are words with doubled letters in them. Examples: Jelly but not Jam, Kittens but not Cats, Apples but not Oranges, A Jeep but not a Mustang, etc. If a participant thinks he or she knows the pattern, ask him or her to give an example rather than stating the answer so that other participants can continue to play.

Variations

You can create numerous variations to this game. For example, the pattern may simply be an object with the first letter of the person sitting next to you. So if John is sitting next to me, I could take a Jacket through the Green Glass Door, but not a Coat. Harder variations may be an object that ends in a vowel or one that makes a sound (bird, ipod, drums, telephone etc.). Another variation is to only use words that start with or contain other words ('beautiful' starts with 'be,' 'pen' in 'suspend, et cetera).



Would you rather?

Objective

Discover new things about each other, assess how well you really know each other

Materials

List of questions

Set Up

'Come up with a list of Would you Rather Questions or use some of these great ones below'

- Would you rather always take a cold shower or sleep an hour less than you need to be fully rested?
- Would you rather give up your computer forever or TV forever?
- Would you rather always have to say everything on your mind or never speak again?
- Would you rather always lose or never play?
- Would you rather always wear earmuffs or a nose plug?
- Would you rather always win pie-eating contests or always win wheelbarrow races?
- Would you rather be 3 feet tall or 8 feet tall?
- Would you rather be 3 feet taller or 3 feet shorter?
- Would you rather be a deep sea diver or an astronaut?
- Would you rather be a dog named Killer or a cat named Fluffy?
- Would you rather be a giant hamster or a tiny rhino?
- Would you rather be a tree or live in a tree?
- Would you rather be able to hear any conversation or take back anything you say?
- Would you rather be able to read everyone's mind all the time or always know their future?
- Would you rather be able to stop time or fly?
- Would you rather be an unknown minor league football player or a famous professional badminton star?
- Would you rather be born with an elephant trunk or a giraffe neck?
- Would you rather be forgotten or hatefully remembered?
- Would you rather be gossiped about or never talked about at all?

- Would you rather be happy for 8hrs/day and poor or sad for 8hr/day and rich?
- Would you rather be invisible or be able to read minds?
- Would you rather be rich and ugly, or poor and good looking?
- Would you rather be stranded on an island alone or with someone you dislike?
- Would you rather be the most popular or the smartest person you know?
- Would you rather be the sand castle or the wave?
- Would you rather eat a stick of butter or a gallon of ice cream?
- Would you rather end hunger or hatred?
- Would you rather find true love or 10 million euro?
- Would you rather forget who you were or who everyone else was?
- Would you rather get even or get over it?
- Would you rather give bad advice or take bad advice?
- Would you rather give up your computer or your pet?
- Would you rather go to an amusement park or to a family reunion?
- Would you rather go without television or junk food for the rest of your life?
- Would you rather have a beautiful house and ugly car or an ugly house and beautiful car?
- Would you rather have a kangaroo or koala as your pet?
- Would you rather have a missing finger or have an extra toe?
- Would you rather have one wish granted today or three wishes granted in 10 years?
- Would you rather have x-ray vision or bionic hearing?
- Would you rather kiss a jellyfish or step on a crab?
- Would you rather know it all or have it all?
- Would you rather live without music or live without T.V.?
- Would you rather love and not be loved back, or be loved but never love?
- Would you rather make headlines for saving somebody's life or winning a Nobel prize?
- Would you rather meet an alien visitor or travel to outer space?
- Would you rather never use the Internet again or never watch TV again?
- Would you rather not be able to use your phone or your e-mail?
- Would you rather only be able to whisper or only be able to shout?
- Would you rather own a ski lodge or a surf camp?
- Would you rather spend the day surfing the Internet or the ocean?

- Would you rather sit next to someone on a bus, who looks at you then moves seat, Or have someone in a car look at you, then turn around and lock their door?
- Would you rather watch a horror movie with 10 friends, or try and survive a horror film with your 3 closest friends?
- Would you rather be a child forever or an adult?



Directions

Get together with a group of friends and take turns asking each other the questions above. If you have extra time try to come up with your own questions.

Pick your artist

Set Up

- No Setup Necessary

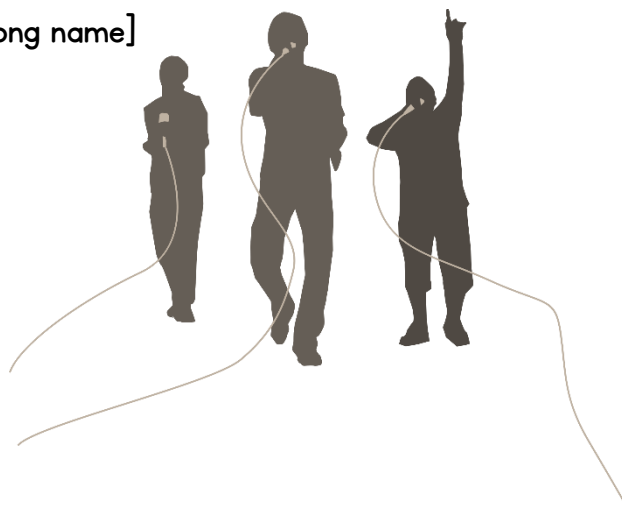
Directions

Answer the following questions using only the song titles of one musical group or artist... tougher than it looks!

- Pick Your Artist: [enter artist name or name of musical group]
- Are you male or female: [enter song name]
- Describe yourself: [enter song name]
- How do you feel about yourself: [enter song name]
- Describe where you currently live: [enter song name]
- If you could go anywhere, where would you go: [enter song name]
- Your favourite form of transportation: [enter song name]
- Your best friend is: [enter song name]
- Your favourite colour is: [enter song name]
- What's the weather like: [enter song name]
- Favourite time of day: [enter song name]
- If your life was a TV show, what would it be called: [enter song name]
- What is life to you: [enter song name]
- What is the best advice you have to give: [enter song name]
- If you could change your name, what would it be: [enter song name]
- Your favourite food is: [enter song name]
- Thought for the Day: [enter song name]
- My soul's present condition: [enter song name]
- My motto: [enter song name]

Alternatives

- Come up with your own questions



Photography from Different Views

Objectives

Enhance creativity; get to know each other better; reflect on different perspectives; see a place in a new way

Materials

Some kind of digital camera for each person
- easiest with cell phones.

Set Up

Make sure each person knows how to use their camera. Identify a location. This could be the team's regular meeting place or a location unfamiliar to all. It could be inside or out.



Directions

Everyone gathers at the location, with their camera. People can move around, but all stay within sight of each other. Each person is to take as many photos as they'd like. Instruct that they can take any kind of photo - color or black and white; wide angle or extreme close-up; from any angle. Designate a time period for creating photos, e.g., 20 minutes. After 20 minutes, signal that it is now time to stop photographing, but not to converse yet. Give five minutes for each person to select five of their photos. All gather to show their selected photos to each other. (If possible, show them on a screen for everyone at the same time to easily see.) Possibly make a display of the photos.

Debrief

How were the views similar? How were they different? What influenced people's choices? What can you learn from each other's perspectives? How might this learning inform future team collaborations?

Alternatives

The time period can be any length - try "Everyone take one photo right now"; or "During our afternoon retreat, take as many photos as you'd like." Ask everyone to make each photos something that symbolises an aspect of the group's mission, and then explain their choices. This activity can be done with any size group. Try collaborating as partners: each team of two shares one camera, and has to decide how to collaborate on their photo choices.