

“Group Introductions” Get-Acquainted Team Building Activity

Source: Cox, Kathryn J. 2004. (revised 2005). “Group Introductions” Get-Acquainted Team Building Activity. Columbus, OH: OSU Extension.

Background:

This activity resulted when a group misunderstood the directions for the “20 Questions” Activity, and started asking their own questions rather than waiting for the group facilitator’s questions. It worked so well that we have continued to use this new version in other settings, especially when only limited time is available for introductions.

Objective:

As a result of participating in this non-strenuous, interactive team-building activity, group members hear the names of all group members, learn some information about each one, and get better acquainted with several they previously did not know well.

Time Required: Allow at least 1 minute per group participant. If time is limited or groups are very large, divide participants into sub-groups of 10 to 25 people per group.

Materials: Each participant needs an index card or piece of scrap paper, and a pen or pencil.

Directions:

- Have participants stand or be seated in a circle, so that everyone is facing everyone else.
- Ask participants to write a question (on an index card or sheet of scrap paper) that they would ask to get acquainted with another person. Provide examples, such as “What do you like to do for recreation?” and “If you could spend two weeks anywhere you wanted, where would you go?”, with instructions that they cannot use the sample questions.
- Then ask for a volunteer to go first. The first person:
 - tells the whole group his/her name and where he/she is from (or some other “standard” identifier you want everyone to know about each other), and
 - asks the question he/she wrote, for the next person to answer
- The next person in line:
 - tells the whole group his/her name and where he/she is from (or the other “standard” identifier requested),
 - shares his/her response to the previous person’s question, and
 - asks the question he/she wrote, for the next person in line to answer.
- The process continues until all participants have been introduced and answered & asked a question. The first person may answer the question posed by the final respondent, in order to complete the circle of questioning.
- Wrap up the activity by asking three or four of the reflection items listed below. If time permits, allow all participants to respond verbally to each reflection item. But if time is limited, allow a minute after each question for participants to quietly think to themselves how they would answer, and then ask one or two to share verbal responses. This reflection and processing period is the most important part of the activity. It allows participants to “process” and evaluate the activity, and in the process realize what they gained from the experience and the extent to which they achieved the objectives.
- Close the activity by directing participants to get in a group with two or three other people they do not know well, and give them a few minutes to get better acquainted before beginning the next activity. When it is time to begin the next activity, encourage participants to introduce their new acquaintances to others.

Reflection Items: (*Important! Be sure to ask several of these questions at the end of the activity.*)

1. Which questions prompted answers that really helped you to get to know the people who responded?
2. Which people do you think/feel are most like you? Which people seem very different from you? Why?
3. Why is it important for group members to know each other’s names and something about each other before beginning other tasks?
4. What are some advantages and disadvantages of involving similar and different people in group tasks?
5. What are the most important things you like to know about other people before you start working with them?
6. Is there a question you are likely to ask to get to know people you work with in other groups in the future?
7. In what ways did this activity help you get acquainted with others in the group? Was it helpful for learning each other’s names and something about other people who are here?