Tried and True Icebreakers for meetings, classes and presentations
ICEBREAKERS

These are ice breakers that are easy to do, engaging, and generally appropriate or acceptable to groups in the university.

Updates

- What has changed since last we met?
- What are you working on?
- What results are you getting?
- What do you know (or are doing) that affects others present?
- What help do you need?
- What have you learned?
- What did you get out of attending a conference, class, program, etc.?
- What progress are you making on your assignment/project/goals?
- Success stories.

Activities

- **Q&A**: Put questions in a basket. Each member selects a question and responds to it. Questions may be personal, professional, whimsical, or practical, but should always be appropriate.
- **Principles of Community**: Read one of the *Principles of Community* and ask each person to comment.
- **Mission**: Read the group’s mission once a month/quarter/year and ask each person to comment.
- **Show and Tell**: Bring something real to illustrate what you are working on or the results you have gotten. (pictures, charts, graphs, products, tools, letters, brochures, customer feedback, etc.)
- **Unfinished Business**: Ask what is leftover from last time that the group needs to process or finish. Then finish it.
- **Vitality Checks**: How are we doing/feeling? What is our energy level or source of vitality?
- **Role Clarification**: What is your role/job/function? How is what you do like/different from/related to what others do?
- **Visitors**: Invite a client, customer, sponsor, supplier, or counterpart to visit the group for the first half hour so that they can educate the group about their roles, work, concerns, etc.
Questions

1. What is your biggest?
   a. Challenge
   b. Opportunity
   c. Problem
   d. Mistake
   e. Accomplishment
   f. Source of pride

2. What is your most important/recent _____?
   a. Insight
   b. Accomplishment
   c. Relationship
   d. Talent
   e. Function

3. What difference would it make if _____?
   a. We were successful/unsuccessful?
   b. We changed/failed to change?
   c. We took a risk/avoided risks?
   d. We grew?
   e. We did more/less of _____?

4. What _____ bests describes you/your job/our group?
   a. T.V. show
   b. Movie title
   c. Character
   d. Game
   e. Food
   f. Car
   g. Song

5. Why did you _____ ?
   a. Take this class
   b. Join this group
   c. Make this move

6. If you had three wishes for this group, what would they be?
notes

7. What would you do if _____?
   a. You won the lottery
   b. You were in charge
   c. Only good would result
   d. You had enough staff/money/resources

8. What is one thing we think we know about you, but probably don’t?

9. What is one thing you want us to know about the work that you do?

10. If bragging was allowed, what would you brag about?

Celebration

- Recognize birthdays or other milestones
- Appreciate accomplishments
- Mark endings and beginnings
- Surprise parties
- Welcome newcomers

Checklists and Bingo Cards

- Give participants a checklist or a Bingo card, and ask them to find people who have had experiences or have attributes like those on the card. For example, the checklist could include favorite activities, work experiences, travel, etc.

Interviews

- Give participants a question, or list of questions, and ask them to interview one another and then report on what they learned.
- Give participants a list of categories of favorite things (color, car, food, movie, book, leisure activity, famous person, etc.). Match participants with a partner. Then ask them to write down what their partner would say was their actual favorite for each category, but do not allow them to ask each other until after they have guessed what their partner would say.

Name Tags

- Put colors or pictures on name tags. Ask people to find others wearing tags with the same color or picture, and then give them a question to ask or a fact to find out.
Put the names of famous partners on name tags (one name per tag) e.g., Thelma and Louise, Bonnie and Clyde, Laurel and Hardy, etc., and ask people to find their partner and then give them an assignment to do.

Put names of pairs (see previous example) on stickers (one name per sticker) and put them on each person’s back. Ask them to find the person who is their partner without knowing what name is on their own back. This involves asking yes or no or specific factual questions.