

# Breaking The Ice



# Ice Breaker Manual

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***Medium or Large Group***

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## ***Zippity Do Da:***

**Group Size:** Any Size

**Time:** 5-10 Minutes

**Location:** Outside

**Items:** None

**How to play:** Students stand or sit in a circle with one person in the center. The student in the center points a finger at one of the students in the circle and says, "Zippity do da, zippity yea, what a wonderful day." Before they have finished saying this, the student whom they are pointing at must call out the name of the player to their right. If they do not call out a name because they cannot remember it, they switch spots with the person in the center of the circle. If the student does call the correct name of the person to their right, the person in the middle has to try again with someone else.

## ***Interview:***

**Group Size:** Any size

**Time:** 15-20 Minutes

**Location:** Anywhere

**Items:** None

**How to play:** Ask them to take five minutes to interview 2-3 people in a group. Each interviewer has to find 3 interesting facts about their partner. Bring everyone back to together and ask everyone to present the facts about their partner to the rest of the group from their group of 2 or 3.

## ***Ninja:***

**Group Size:** Any Size

**Time:** 15-20 Minutes

**Location:** Outside or inside with enough space provided

**Items:** None

**How to play:** Playing with both hands in a ninja like stance. Congregate in a big circle trying to eliminate neighbors by taking one swing or jab trying to hit their hands acting like a ninja.

## ***Card Statements:***

**Group Size:** Any Size

**Time:** 20-30 Minutes

**Location:** Inside

**Items:** Cards made ahead of time- make sure we have a set number

**How to play:** Create cards and put them on the attendees' table or hand them out as they're arriving with the first part of a statement written on one side. For instance, one card says "My favorite band is..." Next the card-holder reads their card aloud and the rest of the group completes the statement with their own answer at the same time.

## ***Let's Draw:***

**Group Size:** Any Size

**Time:** 5-10 Minutes

**Location:** Anywhere

**Items:** Paper, pencils, crayons, markers

**How to play:** Have the students draw pictures about what they like to do, what their favorite foods are, and what is their favorite subject in school. Have each student come up and show their pictures to the class. See if the students can guess what each student drew that tells a little bit about themselves. For instance, if a student draws a yellow M, can anyone guess that she likes McDonalds

## ***Generating Words:***

**Group Size:** Any Size

**Time:** 10-15 Minutes

**Location:** Anywhere

**Items:** Paper and Board

**How to play:** Generate a list of words related to the topic of your event or training. For example, in a health and safety workshop, ask participants what words or phrases come to mind relating to "hazardous materials." They might then suggest: "danger," "corrosive," "flammable," "warning," "skull and crossbones," and so on. Write all suggestions on the board, perhaps clustering by theme. You can use this opportunity to introduce essential terms and discuss the scope (what's in and what's out) of your training or event.

## ***Marooned on an Island:***

**Group Size:** Small

**Time:** 3-5 Minutes

**Location:** Anywhere

**Items:** None

**How to play:** Give people a minute or two to think about this question: If you were marooned on a deserted island, which three people would you want with you? They can be dead, alive, or imaginary. Ask participants to introduce themselves and share their choices with the group

## ***Keep the Story Going:***

**Group Size:** Small

**Time:** 10-15 Minutes

**Location:** Anywhere

**Items:** None

**How to play:** The facilitator starts by picking a word or phrase out of a bucket and they will start the "story". It continues with each person doing the same thing.

## ***Guess the Artist:***

**Group Size:** Small

**Time:** 10-20 Minutes

**Location:** Anywhere

**Items:** Paper and drawing utensils

**How to play:** Have your students draw themselves. After they have done this, collect the papers. Now have students try to guess who the artists were for each picture.

## ***Famous Post-It:***

**Group Size:** Small

**Time:** 5-10 Minutes

**Location:** Anywhere

**Items:** Post It Notes with a safety pin

**How to play:** Write the names of famous people (or places) on post-it notes and put the post-it notes on the back of the participants. Have the participants go around to different people and have them ask each other yes/no questions to figure out who their person is. The person who finds out who they are first wins.

## ***Take as Much as You Need:***

**Group Size:** Medium

**Time:** 15-20 Minutes

**Location:** Outside/ inside with decent amount of space

**Items:** Toilet Paper

**How to play:** Every one tears off “how much” they need on a roll of toilet paper. Once everyone has done so, for every square they tore off they must share a fact or something interesting about them. (Game could be played with candy, cards ranging numbers 1-4, or roll a dice)

## ***The Clue Game:***

**Group Size:** Medium

**Time:** 15-20 Minutes

**Location:** Anywhere

**Items:** None

**How to Play:** Each member of the group thinks of a place they have been or want to visit. Once they have figured out their place, they give three clues about the place. People in the group guess the city, country or state.

## ***Categories:***

**Group Size:** Medium

**Time:** 5-10 Minutes

**Location:** Anywhere

**Items:** None

**How to play:** Naming brands of anything, Clothing, food, cars etc. if you repeat something someone already in the group then you lose or are disqualified.

## ***Atlas:***

**Group Size:** Medium

**Time:** 5-10 Minutes

**Location:** Anywhere

**Items:** None

**How to play:** The leader of the group starts by saying a destination or place, Minnesota then the next person has to say a place or destination starting with the last letter in the previous word, continue this around the circle.

## ***Colorful Meaning:***

**Group Size:** Medium

**Time:** 15-20 Minutes

**Location:** Anywhere

**Items:** Skittles or M&M'S

**How to play:** Take a bag of M&M's or Skittles candy and tell everyone to grab a handful...Assign a different meaning to each color, blue= family, green=hobbies, yellow=animals, brown= work or school etc. Participants must tell one thing about themselves for how many candies they have in their hands using the colors as their guide. They may also eat them as they share their information. ("Blue...I have two sisters.", then eats the candy.

"Yellow...I have a dog named Kodi.", and eats the candy etc.)

## ***Card of Death:***

**Group Size:** Medium

**Time:** 10-15 Minutes

**Location:** Anywhere

**Items:** Cards

**How to play:** Ask the group to sit in a circle. Choose a number of playing cards to match the number of young people in your group. Be certain your selection contains an ace. Each young person then draws a card. They must not comment or show it to anyone else. The player who chooses the ace is the murderer and he kills his victims by winking at them! The game begins quietly with players sitting looking at each other. When someone catches the eye of the killer and is winked at, they are killed, and can die in any manner they choose. Some prefer to die quietly with a whimper, some opt for the blood curdling scream technique, while others might fall off their seat and lie prone on the floor. The object is to identify the murderer while trying not to be killed in the process. An incorrect guess results in instant death!

## ***Magical Ward:***

**Group Size:** Medium

**Time:** 5-10 Minutes

**Location:** Anywhere

**Items:** Wand, Stick

**How to play:** If you had a magic wand and could change anything, what would you change? This is an ice breaker that opens minds, considers possibilities, and energizes your group when discussion is dead.

## ***Finish the Sentence:***

**Group Size:** Medium

**Time:** 10-15 Minutes

**Location:** Inside

**Items:** Whiteboard markers

**How to play:** Write the start of a question on the board (i.e. My Favorite job was, My Hobby is.) and go around the room with each person finishing the sentence. When the group is finished, post another question and start again

## ***Picture Story Time:***

**Group Size:** Medium

**Time:** 15-20 Minutes

**Location:** Inside

**Items:** Pictures ahead of time

**How to play:** A group tries to create a unified story from a set of sequential pictures. The pictures are randomly ordered and handed out. Each person has a picture but cannot show it to others. Requires patience, communication, and trying to understand from another's point of view in order to recreate the story's sequence.

## ***Organize Your Commons:***

**Group Size:** Medium

**Time:** 10-15 Minutes

**Location:** Anywhere

**Items:** Paper

**How to play:** Ask a group to organize themselves into smaller groups, based on different criteria (such as number of siblings, favorite color, etc.) Then have groups identify what the group had in common.

## ***Famous Post-It:***

**Group Size:** Small

**Time:** 5-10 Minutes

**Location:** Anywhere

**Items:** Post It Notes

**How to play:** Write the names of famous people (or places) on post-it notes and put the post-it notes on the back of the participants. Have the participants go around to different people and have them ask each other yes/no questions to figure out who their person is. The person who finds out who they are first wins.

## ***Two Truths and A Lie:***

**Group Size:** Medium

**Time:** 10-15 Minutes

**Location:** Anywhere

**Items:** None

**How to play:** Come up with two truths and a lie about yourself. Present them to the group one at a time and have people guess which one is a lie. If they get it correct then they share theirs.

## ***Written Fears:***

**Group Size:** Medium

**Time:** 10-15 Minutes

**Location:** Anywhere

**Items:** Paper

**How to play:** Group members write personal fears anonymously on pieces of paper which are collected. Then each person randomly selects and reads someone else's fear to the group and explains how the person might feel.

## ***Snowball Fight:***

**Group Size:** Medium

**Time:** 15 Minutes

**Location:** Inside

**Items:** Paper and Pens

**How to play:** Students write their answers on pieces of paper from questions leader comes up with. Students then crumple the paper up into a ball and throw it at each other. Let the fight continue as people pick up paper balls off the floor and throw them. Yell stop and students must pick up a piece of paper and open it up. Students then ask each other questions trying to find the owner of the paper. Once they give the person their paper back, they can sit down.

## ***Ice Breaker Question:***

**Group Size:** Large

**Time:** 10-15 minutes

**Location:** Anywhere

**Items:** None

**How to play:** Why did you pick NDSCS? What scares you the most about starting/ continuing college?

## ***Paper Planes:***

**Group:** Large

**Time:** 10-15 Minutes

**Location:** Inside with space/ outside no wind

**Items:** Paper to make planes

**How to play:** Everyone makes a paper airplane and writes their name, something they like and dislike on it (You may also want to add additional questions). On cue, everyone throws their airplane around the room. If you find an airplane, pick it and keep throwing it for 1-2 minutes. At the end of that time, everyone must have one paper airplane. This is the person they must find and introduce to the group.

## ***Whatcha Have in Common:***

**Group Size:** Large

**Time:** 15-25 Minutes

**Location:** Anywhere

**Items:** Prepare questions

**How to play:** Assemble the group in a circle. Ask the group a question that they might have in common with each other. (The goal is to get the group to find common ground) Example questions: Who played a sport in high school? Who grew up in a town of less than 1000 people? If someone from the group can answer “Yes” to your question they will go to the middle of the circle with the others who also answered “Yes” and high-five each other.

## ***Three Uncommon:***

**Group Size:** Large

**Time:** 15-25 Minutes

**Location:** Anywhere

**Items:** None

**How to play:** Break the group into 3's. Their objective is for each group to find 3 things they have in common. But not normal things like age, sex or hair color. It must be three uncommon things. After letting the groups converse for 10 - 15 minutes, they (as a group) must tell the rest of the groups the 3 things they have in common.

## ***Deserted Island:***

**Group Size:** Large

**Time:** 5-10 Minutes

**Location:** Anywhere

**Items:** None

**How to play:** Go around the circle and say one thing that you would bring with you if you were deserted on an island.

## ***Coin of the Year:***

**Group Size:** Small or Medium

**Time:** 5-10 Minutes

**Location:** Inside or Outside

**Items:** None

**How to play:** Start with a handful of coins and hand out one coin to each person. You then go around the group and each person has to look at the year their coin was made (generally printed on the coin) and tell the rest of the group what the student was doing in that year. It can be something significant or very insignificant - the whole aim is to learn something about each other.

## ***Self Control:***

**Group Size:** Small or Medium

**Time:** 5-10 Minutes

**Location:** Anywhere

**Items:** None

**How to play:** The instructor explains that this exercise will take self control. Members pair back to back. On the count of three, everyone must face their partner, look each other in the eyes, and then try to remain solemn and serious. No speaking! The first to smile or laugh must sit down. All who remain standing then take a new partner and the activity continues until only one person has not smiled or laughed.

## ***Positive Feedback:***

**Group Size:** Small or Medium

**Time:** 5-10 Minutes

**Location:** Inside

**Items:** Paper/ Pen \*Should do near the end of the training

**How to play:** Everyone writes their name in the center of a piece of paper and draws a sun around their name. Pass your paper around to the person on your right. That person will write something positive about you and they do not have to sign their name. Continue to pass your name around until everyone has written something on all the papers.

## ***Pick a Shoe:***

**Group Size:** Small or Medium

**Time:** 10-15 Minutes

**Location:** Outside

**Items:** Shoes

**How to play:** Have the students stand in a large circle shoulder to shoulder. Next, have the students remove their shoes and tie them together. Have everybody run to the center of the circle and throw his or her shoes in a pile and then return to the circle at your command. Have the students take turns retrieving a pair of shoes not their own from the pile and make a statement about the owner based upon the type and style of shoes. The student to whom the shoes belong comes forward, introduces him or herself and then picks a pair of shoes. The students continue until everyone has introduced himself or herself.

## ***Never Have I Ever:***

**Group Size:** Small or Medium

**Time:** 10-15 Minutes

**Location:** Anywhere

**Items:** Prepare a list of never have I ever statements

**How to play:** Each player starts with ten fingers showing, the fingers go down if the group leader says something that they have done before.

## ***Screamer:***

**Group Size:** Medium or Large

**Time:** 10-15 Minutes

**Location:** Outside

**Items:** None

**How to play:** In a circle, everyone looks at the ground. Leader counts to three and then everyone looks up into the eyes of another person in the group. If the same people are looking at one another, they scream and are out.

## ***Heads or Tails:***

**Group size:** Medium or Large

**Time:** 20-30 Minutes

**Location:** Inside or outside

**Items:** Coin & keys

**How to play:** All players join hands with the person beside them. Everyone closes their eyes except the two players sitting by the leader (the lead players). When everyone has their eyes closed and is silent, the leader flips a coin in between the two lead players. Heads, do nothing. Tails, the lead players squeeze the hand of the person beside them. The squeeze passes as quickly as possible (remember, eyes closed) down the line. When the last person feels the squeeze, they grab for the keys which are placed in between the last two players. The team who gets the keys rotates...the head player goes to the end and everyone shuffles up one spot. If it was a false alarm, (accidental squeeze of the hands - no calling out "OOPS" allowed!) it doesn't count. Game continues until one team has been completely through its' lineup and the original head player is back at the head of the line.

## ***Birthday Lineup:***

**Group Size:** Medium or Large

**Time:** 5-10 Minutes

**Location:** Anywhere

**Items:** None

**How to play:** Have the group stand and line up in a straight line. After they are in line, tell them to re-arrange the line so that they are in line by their birthday. January 1 on one end and December 31 at the other end. The catch is that they must do all this without talking or writing anything down.

## ***People Bingo:***

**Group Size:** Medium or Large

**Time:** 30 minutes to an hour

**Location:** Inside

**Items:** Pre-made bingo cards

**How to play:** Before the meeting, make a bingo matrix and at the top of each square put something that someone in the group might have done-for example, voted for Ross Perot, served in the Peace Corps, etc. Everyone gets a copy and is asked to circulate, getting other group members to sign one square that is true of them.

## ***Chain Reaction:***

**Group Size:** Medium or Large

**Time:** 5-10 Minutes

**Location:** Anywhere

**Items:** None

**How to play:** This is a word association game. Ask the group to sit in a circle. The first person starts with any word they wish i.e. red. The next person repeats the first word and adds another word which links to the first i.e. tomato. The next person repeats the previous word and add another word link i.e. soup, and so on. To keep this moving, only allow five seconds for each word link.

## ***Let's Start a Convo:***

**Group Size:** Medium or Large

**Time:** 15-25 Minutes

**Location:** Anywhere

**Items:** Paper, pen or pencil

**How to play:** Each person is given a sheet of paper with a series of instructions to follow. This is a good mixing game and conversation starter as each person must speak to everyone else. For example; count the number of brown eyed boys in the room. Find out who has made the longest journey. Who has the most unusual hobby? Find the weirdest thing anyone has eaten. Who has had the most embarrassing experience?

## ***Card Facts:***

**Group Size:** Medium or Large

**Time:** 15-20 Minutes

**Location:** Anywhere

**Items:** Blank cards, pen/pencil

**How to play:** Divide into two teams. Give each person a blank piece of card. Ask them to write five little known facts about themselves on their card. Include all leaders in this game too. For example, I have a pet iguana, I was born in Iceland, my favorite food is spinach, my grandmother is called Doris and my favorite color is vermilion. Collect the cards into two team piles. Draw one card from the opposing team pile. Each team tries to name the person in as few clues as possible. Five points if they get it on the first clue, then 4, 3, 2, 1, 0. The team with the most points wins.

## ***Spiders Web:***

**Group Size:** Medium or Large

**Time:** 20-40

**Location:** Inside or Outside

**Items:** Nothing

**How to play:** Divide your group into teams of 6-8. Each team forms a small circle. Ask them to extend their right hand across the circle and hold the left hand of the other team member opposite them. Then extend their left hand across the circle and hold the right hand of another group member. The task is to unravel the spider's web of interlocking arms without letting go of anyone's hands. Give them a three-minute time limit to complete the task.

## ***Assemble a Song:***

**Group Size:** Medium or Large

**Time:** 20-40 Minutes

**Location:** Inside or Outside

**Items:** Prepare Note Cards with song lyrics

**How to play:** Write out the first lines from several well-known songs, but write down only one line on each piece of card. Make sure that only enough songs are used to cover the number of people present. The cards are then scattered on the floor. Once the game begins each person grabs a card and tries to find the holders of the other cards which will complete the verse or section of the song. The winning group is the first one to correctly assemble and sing their song.

## ***Extreme Rock, Paper, Scissors***

**Group Size:** Medium or Large

**Time:** 10-15 Minutes (Depends on the size of the group)

**Location:** Somewhere where it is acceptable to be loud.

**Items:** None

**How to play:** Ask players to spread out and find a partner. Each pair plays a best of three round of *Rock, Paper, Scissors*. The losing player then stands behind the winning player and enthusiastically cheers for that player. This new team then finds another team to play a new round of Rock, Paper, Scissors. Each time a team wins, it collects the other team's players, and they line up behind the unbeaten leader. At the end, there will be two large teams, led by the unbeaten leader in front. After the final match, the celebration begins!

## ***Quick Change:***

**Group Size:** Medium or Large

**Time:** 10-15 Minutes

**Location:** Anywhere

**Items:** None

**How to play:** Line up the students in two lines facing each other. If there is an odd number of students, you can play the game, too. Give students 30 seconds to look each other over really good, paying attention to all details about their partner. The students in one line now turn facing the other way while the other line of students changes something about themselves. For example, a girl might take off a hair bow, or a boy might un-tuck his shirt. When the kids in the first line turn back around, they have to guess what their partner changed. Now switch and let the first line make the change and the second line guess the difference.

## ***Mess of Yarn:***

**Group Size:** Medium or Large

**Time:** 5-15 Minutes

**Location:** Outside

**Items:** Yarn

**How to play:** The facilitator begins with a ball of yarn. Keeping one end, pass the ball to one of the participants, and the person to introduce him- or herself and what program they are in. Once this person has made their introduction, ask him or her to pass the ball of yarn onto another person in the group.

## ***Imaginary Line:***

**Group Size:** Medium or Large

**Time:** 10-15 Minutes

**Location:** Outside

**Items:** Create question cards

**How to play:** Create an imaginary line from one end of the room to the other. Instruct people to move to a point on the line to indicate where they stand on a particular issue. For example - move to the left hand side of the room if you like chocolate, the right hand side if you like strawberry. Fold toilet paper or Scrunch? Sleep in or Get up Early? Big party or intimate dinner?

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