

Builders Club Icebreakers and teambuilders

ICEBREAKERS

SHARING SOMETHING MEANINGFUL

Purpose: To give members an energizing and authentic way to open up to teammates and get to know one another.

Time: 15 minutes.

Supplies: Personal items of importance to each club member.

Instructions: In advance of the meeting, ask members to bring an item that means a lot.

Divide members into groups of 4 to 5. Everyone has two to three minutes to talk to the group about their meaningful item and why it is important to them. After everyone is finished sharing, thank club members and ask the reflection questions if there is time.

Reflection: What was most difficult about sharing your meaningful item with others? How did others receive the information shared? How did you react to others who shared?

BUILD A BRIDGE

Purpose: This activity is energizing and helps club members get to know one another.

Time: 15 minutes

Supplies: 6 large packages of straws, 6 large bags of gum drops.

Instructions: Separate club members into groups of 3 to 4. Ask club members to work together to build a sturdy bridge. Separate two desks and show the distance the bridge must span. Let participants work together to build. Conversation will develop naturally. Self-discipline is needed for this activity as some participants will eat the gum drops leaving less building resources for the bridge.

Reflection: How did the group come to an agreement on the best way to build the bridge? What interesting facts did members learn about each other while trying to build the bridge? What would you do differently if trying again?

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

Purpose: This activity invites everyone to participate in establishing rules about how to treat one another when at club meetings. Club members create a safe and accepting space where all feel welcome, and they take part in identifying what they want their club meeting to look like.

Time: 25 minutes.

Supplies: Post it notes, easel paper and markers to record discussion points.

Instructions: Separate club members into groups of 3 or 4. Provide each group with a pad of post-it notes and markers. Assign one member per group to record responses on the post it notes. Ask club members to identify ten adjectives that describe how members should behave when attending club meetings. Share examples of what these adjectives might be, such as Friendly, Accepting, Energetic, and Inclusive. Give members 5 minutes to write then ask them to place their post-it notes on the easel at the front of the room. Now work with the group to identify what needs to be added or deleted. When the final list is complete ask each club member to sign the easel. Post the Rules of Engagement in a prominent area at each club meeting.

Reflection: Ask club members – ‘Who created these rules?’ This reminds them that everyone has a role in identifying welcoming behaviors when in this meeting space.

TALLEST TOWER

Purpose: This activity is energizing and helps club members get to know one another.

Time: 20 minutes

Supplies: Index cards (50 per group) and enough markers for each group.

Instructions: Separate members into groups of 3 to 4. Instruct everyone to talk to one another and find things they have in common. When members discover a commonality the group recorder writes it on an index card. Explain that the goal is to build the tallest tower using index cards. The challenge, only cards with writing can be used to build. The group that builds the tallest tower within the allotted amount of time wins.

Reflection: What did you learn about others that surprised you? How did the group work together to identify things they have in common? How did the group identify how to build the tower?

TEAMBUILDERS

From my perspective

Purpose: To highlight the importance of good communication between club members.

Time: 15 minutes.

Supplies: Paper, markers, and an easel.

Instructions: Divide club members into pairs and ask them to sit back-to-back, with one person facing the front of the room and the other facing the back of the room. The individual facing the back of the room receives a sheet of paper and a marker.

Create a drawing on an easel sheet and display the drawing at the front of the room, only after all club members are seated so those facing the back of the room can't see the drawing.

Share the following instructions. When I say begin, the person facing the front of the room viewing the drawing must describe the drawing so their partner with the paper and marker can draw the picture. The challenge is to try and create a drawing that closely resembles the drawing displayed.

The person drawing the picture isn't permitted to ask questions, now begin. After five minutes have passed, let the pair know that the person doing the drawing can now ask questions while continuing to draw. Allow 3 minutes of drawing in this way.

Now announce that there is only one minute left. Now the advisor begins adding additional doodles to the picture. Instruct participants that the drawing needs to include all additional modifications.

After one minute of doing this conclude the drawing time and ask drawing partners to face forward and view the drawing with their partner. Ask everyone to hold up their drawings. Encourage everyone to look around the room to see how everyone fared. Which pair mirrored the drawing in the front of the room the most closely?

Reflection: Ask club members to share the most difficult aspect of the activity. Was it tough listening to instructions without being able to ask questions? How did this impact outcomes? Share how information was mis-interpreted? What aspect of the activity was most challenging? What would you do differently?

MAKE A MACHINE

Purpose: This activity will energize club members by activating their creativity and by getting them moving.

Time: 15 minutes.

Supplies: A room with space for club members to move.

Instructions: Divide club members into 2 or 3 large groups. Share that the object of the game is to create a machine out of a group of people. Machine suggestions: A computer, a snowblower, or a ceiling fan. Each person is responsible for one noise or one motion of the machine. The group has 5 minutes to create their human machine. After 5 minutes allow each group to demonstrate what their machine does.

Reflection: Ask club members how the group decided on a machine to mimic? What was the most challenging part of figuring out what to do? What would you do differently?

RUMORS

Purpose: This activity stresses the importance of good listening and communication.

Time: 20 minutes.

Supplies: Easel and markers.

Instructions: Place an easel and markers at the front of the room. Divide the club members into two groups. Have the two groups move to opposite sides of the room. Instruct each group to sit in a long line so that one can turn to the other and whisper a message in their teammate's ear. Have each group identify a team leader. Send team leaders to a different room where the faculty advisor will give each team leader a message to relay to the group. Tell the team leader to whisper the message in the ear of the first person seated in the line. The message is whispered from one person to the next until the last person sitting in line receives the message. This person then goes to the easel and writes the message received. After all groups reach this point the team leaders share their true messages.

Reflection: Ask club members to share the most challenging part of doing this activity. Ask them how it would have helped if the person receiving the whispered message could have asked questions? If there is time, the club can repeat the activity only this time allowing those receiving whispered messages to ask questions.

SNOWBALL

Purpose: This activity spreads positivity and helps club members understand that everyone feels stress and that's okay.

Time: 15 minutes.

Supplies: Construction paper and markers.

Instructions: Give each member a sheet of construction paper and a marker. Ask club members to write down one thing that causes them stress when working in a group or on a team. Share examples such as: I really get stressed when no one listens to me, or I get stressed when I don't have enough time to complete a task. After everyone writes their one stressor on the sheet of paper ask members to crumple the paper up into a ball, so it looks like a snowball.

Invite club members to gather in a standing circle and instruct them to throw their snowballs across the room. After three minutes of throwing snowballs, ask club members to stop and open the crumpled paper in hand. Each member then reads what's written on the paper. Encourage everyone to click their fingers or clap their hands if they too are impacted negatively by this stressor.

Reflection: Ask club members what they learned about each other? Encourage them to share techniques they use to relieve stress. Remind them that we all live with stress, and that small amounts of stress can motivate us, but when stress becomes overwhelming it's time to act and reach out for help.