GETTING ACQUAINTED (Ice-breaker Games)

Name Game

1. Organize the group so that all the members sit in a circle or in some way so that they may all see one another.

2. Explain to the group members that they will each in turn receive an imaginary "duck" from the person next to him. The facilitator starts by saying, "My name is John (the name for the facilitator), and this is the duck which I gave to Jim (The name of the first group member)."

3. The first group member says, "My name is Jim, and this Jim, and this is the duck which John gave to me who gave it to Joe (the name of the second group member)."

4. Each group member then states his name and the names of each of the group members as he tells how the "duck" was passed from person to person until it reached him who in turn passes it to the next group member.

5. The "duck" proceeds around the circle until it reaches the facilitator again who then proceeds to repeat the name of each group member in proper order. (Remember: A leader cannot ask a group member to do something he himself would not do.)

6. It is not necessary for the members to pass a "duck." They may pass any imaginary object of something concrete such as a car key or coin.

Fill in a Friend

1. This exercise involves more preparation on the part of the facilitator. A list of attributes which can apply to the group members must be compiled and a copy given to each member.

2. Examples of attributes:
   
   - "I read Garfield"
   - "I squeeze the toothpaste in the middle"
   - "I love Beach music"
   - "I have more than one pet"
   - "I like to play monopoly"

3. The group members then mingle and ask each other if a particular statement applies to them. If it does apply, the member to whom it applies signs the sheet belonging to the asked next to the applicable statement (leave blanks).

4. No one may sign one person's sheet more than two (three? four?) times.
5. This continues until a "winner" is established, the person having completed the sheet first.

**Word Associations**

1. While giving each participant a strip of masking tape and a piece of paper with a previously selected word printed on it, the trainer explains that the group members will be paired off by using word associations (i.e., ham and eggs, ice cream and cake, peanut butter and jelly, Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, etc.).

2. While the participants take their papers to their chests, the trainer explains that each of their words matches or compliments another word.

3. Each participant is then given a short period of time to find his or her partner. The associated pairs are then to spend five minutes learning about each other.

4. When the allotted time has elapsed, the group leader reassembles the group, and the partners are then responsible for briefly introducing each other to the entire group.

**Human Bingo/Human Scavenger Hunt**

1. The leader of the group is to make up a "bingo card," with the number of squares on the grid corresponding directly to the number of members in the group

2. Each member writes down on a separate sheet of paper a characteristic of an interesting fact about himself.

3. The leader takes up all of the "Interesting facts" and compiles them on the bingo grid that he has made. He then passes out a bingo card to everyone and each member must fill in the person's name that goes with each fact on the sheet.

4. Through mingling and talking with one another to find out who goes with which fact, each person completes the card he/she says "Bingo."

**BIRTHDAY PARTY**

(medium activity level - the more the better) Explain to all that they are to pretend that this is a huge birthday party in their honor. People have come from all over and that because it's your party, that you know who everybody is, but that they don't know anybody else, so, of course, it would be their responsibility to introduce everybody to everybody else. The challenge is that they will be given only 3 minutes to do that! Make sure they find out who it is they will be introducing, and make sure the people being introduced shake hands and greet each other warmly!
INCORPORATION

(medium activity level - the more the better) This game is about grouping and regrouping as fast as possible. The idea is to meet as many people as you can. Carefully listen to the leader's instructions and then run, organize and find your appropriate group. Every time you hear a whistle, or the lights are turned off, or a cowbell rings, FREEZE where you are and don't say another word while new instructions are being said. Don't worry if you haven't found one group when the signal to stop and freeze is given; just go on to the next grouping, Ready? Instruct!

Find a group of 3 people you don't already know.

Find a group of 5 so that everyone has one item of clothing the same color.

Find another group of 4 who have the same last digit of your phone # the same,

Find 5 who have the same number of brothers and sisters as you do.

Group of 3 all born during the same season as you were, AND CREATIVELY FORM THE LETTER "H" USING YOUR BODIES!

HOW DO YOU DO TAG

(medium activity level - up to 24) Group is in a circle formation. "It" walks around the outside of the circle and taps someone on the shoulder. He says, “Hi, my name is ___.” The person responds likewise. Repeat two or more times. They run in opposite directions around the circle and meet halfway, exchanging the same greeting 3 times. They then continue in the same direction and race back to the original spot.

NAME TRAIN

(low activity level - up to 12) Players stand in a circle, facing in, and one volunteers to be the locomotive. The locomotive chugs around the inside of the circle a bit before stopping to exchange introductions with one of the players in the circle: “Hi, I’m Mary.” “Hi, I’m Bob.” Mary the locomotive repeats Bob’s name then cheers “Bob! Bob, Bob, Bob! While alternately raising her arms and extending her legs like a semaphore. Mary then turns around, and Bob puts his hand on her waist and becomes the caboose. They chug to another player to introduce themselves. “Hi, I’m Charlie!” says their choice. Each of them repeat Charlie’s name and do the semaphore cheer “Charlie! Charlie! Charlie! Charlie!” Then Bob becomes the locomotive, Mary puts her hands on his hips, and Charlie becomes the caboose, and they all go to meet another car!
FACT OR FICTION

Materials needed: paper and pen/pencil

1. Participants sit in a circle with paper and pen/pencil.

2. In turn, each states their name and tells a short story about their life. The story they tell may be factual or fictional.

3. The listeners record each person's name and their guess as to whether the story was true or false.

4. After each person has told their story, go around the group again to find out the correct answers.

It is helpful for the facilitator to write down the topic of each story next to the names so that they can lead the answer round with thorough recall. This activity is encouraged name familiarity, in that names are written down by all group members.

PIPE CLEANER INTERVIEWS

Materials: Pipe cleaners

1. Participants are paired and are given time to interview their partner. This interview could be guided with questions provided, or it could be open-ended, based on the level of the group.

2. At the end of a designated time period (approximately five minutes) participants form a symbol from a pipe cleaner that represents some aspect of the person they interviewed.

3. Participants take turns introducing their partner to the group and presenting them with the symbol they created.

It is interesting to note and discuss the depth and symbolism that can be created by a bent pipe cleaner.

BEAT THE PAN

Materials: Saucepan and wooden spoon

1. Participants stand as the facilitator hits a metal pan with a wooden spoon. The number of "beats" determines the size group the participants must form. (Example: If the pan is hit five times a group of exactly five must grab hands and sit on the ground.)

2. While in the group students quickly introduce themselves to the other group members.

3. Participants then stand as individuals while the facilitator repeats the pan beating and a new group forms.
4. Repeat until students have had the chance to group with many different people.

5. A variation includes elimination of groups who sit down with the wrong size group. Play continues until only a few students remain.

**GRAB BAG**

Materials needed: Grab bag with at least 30 different small items

Prior to the session the facilitator collects an assortment of items in a grocery bag. (Items might include a rubber band, pin cushion, kitchen utensils, hand cream, desk and office supplies, fishing line, etc..... )

1. Participants blindly reach into the grab bag and select an item.

2. Individually, they explain to the group how that item in some way reflects their personality.

**NAME GAME**

1. This name association game begins with the facilitator picking a topic, i.e.- Foods, Places, Animals.

2. Participants sit in a circle. The first person begins by stating their name and a word that fits them and begins with the same letter as their first name. (Example- Food Theme - Brian Blueberry)

3. The second person repeats the name and item of the first person and then adds their own. The third person repeats the first two and adds their own, etc.....

A great game for quick name familiarity. Easily facilitated in groups of up to 30 people.

**Shoe Match-up**

1. Have people take off one of their shoes and throw it in a pile.

2. Have everyone take a shoe from the pile (other than their own) and find its owner.

3. When people have found one another, have them ask each other specific information in order to start to get to know one another. (Example: Have them find out the person’s name, major, and the farthest and most interesting place their shoe has ever been.)

Note: This program can also be done with Student ID’s. You can take everyone’s ID and have them draw out IDs to get to know someone else.