Introductions

Tell us:
RED: Something about yesterday
ORANGE: Something you do well
YELLOW: Something about your childhood
BLUE: Something you learned last week
BROWN: Something you cannot live without
GREEN: Something you watch/listen to
RECIPE OF ME

OBJECTIVE:

This humorous icebreaker allows students to use self-reflection as they begin to explain themselves to one another.

PROCEDURE:

Give participants a copy of the worksheet on the next page and tell them to fill it out according to how they perceive themselves.

After everyone has filled out the worksheet, each participant takes a turn to tell the others about his/her recipe.

(For example, a student might write, “3 cups of honesty, love, or humor and a pinch of negativity, sensitivity, or enthusiasm, etc.”)

DISCUSSION:

- Was it hard for you to come up with your recipe?
- How do you feel about yourself after seeing your recipe?
- Would you change anything about your recipe?
- How might this experience mirror asking consumers to reveal parts of themselves to us as helping professionals?

TIME & MATERIALS:

20 to 30 minutes.

Copies of worksheet, found on the next page, for each participant.

SOURCE:

Angelia S. Bryant, MEd, CPC, NCC
Lindsey Wilson College, Columbia, KY
Combine all ingredients, and blend well.

3 cups:

1 cup:

1/3 cup:

2 tablespoons:

1 1/2 teaspoons:

Pinch of:

Dash of:

Secret ingredient:
(what makes you unique)
CREATIVE CONGRATULATIONS

Purpose
Getting to know you; Physical energizer; Pure fun; Especially for big groups

Group Size
10-500

Level of Physical Activity
High

Estimated Time
2-5 minutes

Props
None

In this activity, participants meet one another and then have fun creating congratulatory comments for each other that, most likely, are not true. Use this quick activity to warm up a group without their having to disclose quickly. It works best with groups that you know enjoy having some fun.

Wouldn't it be great if each time we met a person for the first time we knew something great about that person so we could begin a conversation with that knowledge? Instead, we sometimes walk away from five minutes of small talk, thinking, "I hope I never have to talk with that person again because I have nothing worthwhile to say."

Instructions

1. Gather participants in a space where they can stand and move around.

2. Explain that there is a certain joy we share when we can offer someone genuine congratulations. And what a good feeling for the receiver! But since these participants don't know one another yet, they do not know what congratulations to express. This activity will allow them to capture those good feelings without even knowing anything about one another.

3. Instruct them to take two to three minutes to walk around meeting as many people as they can. After they introduce themselves, they should make up a congratulatory greeting to offer the other person. Some examples might include: “Congratulations on your 30th birthday” or “Congratulations on having your first book published” or a humorous “Congratulations on being the first person to make it into the Olympics without trying out.”

4. Explain that after the exchange of names and congratulations, both persons should move on to the next person and do the same.

5. Explain that they may use the same creative congratulations or different ones for each person.

6. After they begin, allow about two to three minutes for the activity.
Variation

Ask participants to write humorous congratulations before they begin the activity to use during the activity.

Tips

1. To model the activity, ask a participant to come to the front of the room. You should congratulate that person using a humorous congratulation. I once congratulated a man in his 20s for receiving the Golden Handshake from the company for 25 years of service in the same position he currently held. The look on his face was worth the entire experience.

2. This activity needs to be combined with laughter.

Notes
PREDICTIONS

OBJECTIVE:

Students get acquainted while discussing the role of first impressions in professional work.

PROCEDURE:

Form subgroups of three or four students (who are relative strangers to each other). Tell students that their job is to predict how each person in their group will answer questions you have prepared for them. Some possible questions include:

- What are some of your favorite leisure activities?
- How many siblings do you have and where are you in the sibling order?
- Where did you grow up?
- What were you like as a child?
- What jobs have you had?
- What famous people do you admire?
- What qualities do you have that will make you a good helping professional?

Have each subgroup begin by selecting one person as its first subject. Urge group members to be as specific as possible in their predictions about that person. Tell them not to be afraid of bold guesses. As they guess, ask the subject to give no indication of the accuracy of the predictions attempted.

When others finish their predictions, the subject should reveal the answer to each question about him or herself. Move on to the next person until everyone has had a turn.

DISCUSSION:

After the exercise, lead a discussion about how professionals should and should not use first impressions in assessing consumer needs.

- What did you base your predictions on?
- How was it to hear what others imagined about you?
- How do we use observations about others in our work?
- What should we avoid in terms of generalizing from first impressions?
- What can you learn from this exercise that relates to the helping professions?

SOURCE:

From Silberman, M., Active Learning, page 40. Copyright © 1996 by Allyn & Bacon. Adapted by permission.
**How Quickly They Forget**

**Purpose**
Getting to know you; Physical energizer; Especially for big groups; Pure fun

**Group Size**
8-100

**Level of Physical Activity**
Medium

**Estimated Time**
2-5 minutes

**Props**
How Quickly They Forget cards, one per participant; pencils

Participants will see how difficult it is to recall the details of a face they were introduced to just moments before. This activity works best in the beginning of a session with people who do not know one another.

*Recently I had an experience that I’ve never had before. A person I had been introduced to on two other occasions didn’t remember me when standing face-to-face the third time. His apology included, “I forget faces, but never names.” With me it’s the opposite; I forget names, but not faces. Which is the greater insult?*

**Instructions**
1. Instruct participants to stand and find one participant they do not know and introduce themselves to that person.
2. After about ten seconds, tell them to remain standing and arrange themselves back-to-back with the person they just met. Explain that they are not to look back at their partners.
3. Pass out How Quickly They Forget cards and pencils.
4. Instruct participants to take thirty seconds to write what they remember about their partners on their cards.
5. After thirty seconds, ask them to turn around and see how many of their answers were correct.

**Variations**
1. Don’t use cards. Just ask them to name what they remember about their partner, with the partners letting them know if they are right or not.
2. Give participants blank cards and ask them to write what they remember about their partners.
3. Give participants blank cards and ask them to sketch their partners.

**Tip**
Keep this one short and snappy. It doesn’t have enough value to keep it going for a long time.
HOW QUICKLY THEY FORGET
ACTIVITY SHEET

Please complete the following items.

Eye color _____________

Hair color ______________

Hair length/style ______________

Height ______________

Description of clothing ______________

Wearing glasses? If so, describe ______________

Jewelry? If so, describe ______________

Job title/position ______________

First name ______________

Last name ______________

Other distinguishing features ______________
Name/Intro Games

Ball Toss: Group into a circle. Have everyone say his/her name. Then as someone throws a ball to someone he/she says that person’s name. The receiver calls another person’s name and throws the ball to him/her and so on.

Name Sign: Group into a circle. Each player makes a motion or physical sign to illustrate his name. As each player must demonstrate the signs and names of those before him and then his own. The last person demonstrates all the signs and names.

Peek-a-Boo: Group into two teams. Use a sheet, tarp, etc. to divide the groups. Facilitators hold the sheet up as one to three people come up to the sheet on each side. As the sheet is dropped the players must say the name of the person opposite them. Then a new group comes up to the sheet and so on.

Adjective Name Game: Everyone thinks of an adjective that describes them and starts with the first letter of their name (example: Terrific Tiffany). Everyone says the names and adjectives of those before them and then their own.

Getting to Know You Games

Barnyard Call: Group into two facing limes. The facilitator blinds all players and takes each line in opposite directions and disorients them. Pairs try to find each other using only their animal sounds.

Three Truths and One Lie: Everyone writes 4 different things about themselves down, 3 of which are true and 1 that is a lie. Players take turns presenting their 4 items while others guess which one is the lie.

Neighbors: Everyone circles up with a sheet of paper (home) under them. Facilitator starts in the middle of the circle and asks someone what he likes about his neighbor. The player picks a quality (hair color, sneakers, gender, etc.) and everyone (including that person) that has that quality must move to a new home. The new home cannot be directly beside the old one.

Celebrities: Facilitators put nametags of celebrities on every person’s back. Players then move around the room asking other players questions to find out who they are.

Rumors: Get into a circle. Whisper a sentence into the ear of the person beside you. Continue around the circle. The last person says the sentence. See how different it is from the original.

Musical Chairs: Play music. Have enough chairs for everyone except one. Every time the music stops, people sit down. The one without a chair is out. Remove a chair before starting the music each time.
Rabbit, Elephant, Giraffe: Group into a circle. One person stands in the middle. That person will point to anyone in the circle and call out the name of one of the animals. The person pointed at must make a certain gesture according to what animal is called out. The two people on either side must also make a certain gesture according to the animal. Any of the three that do not correctly complete the gesture by a count of three trade places with the one in the middle.

RABBIT: The person in the middle makes bunny paws by holding his hands in front of him. The people on either side make ears by holding up one finger on each side of the middle person’s head.

ELEPHANT: The person in the middle makes and elephant trunk with his arm. People on the sides make huge, round elephant ears with their arms.

GIRAFFE: The person in the middle stands up straight and puts arms straight up in the air. People on either side bend over and touch their toes.

You can also add others:

BEAR: The person in the middle puts his hand up as claws. The side people make his ears by cupping their hands.

FIRE HYDRANT: The person in the middle stand up straight, arms at his side. The side people lift their legs (to pee!).

DONKEY: Nobody moves. (This is called to confuse everyone!)

Autographs: Make up a sheet of different personal qualities (examples: I’ve lived in 4 states. I have a tattoo. I wear contacts, etc.). Everyone moves around the room getting signatures of people who have done those things. The first to get all the signatures wins.

Team Builders

Multiple Tag: One person starts and begins to tag. As you’re tagged, you lock arms and form a blob/chain to try and tag the rest of the group.

Impulse: Divide into two facing lines (each holding hands). The facilitator holds the hands of the first person in each line. The facilitator sends an impulse (squeezes the hands) at the same time. The impulse moves down the lines. At the end of the line a ball is between the two teams. The first end person who grabs the ball wins a point for their team. Then the end person moves to the front of the line. The winner is the first team to get 10 wins.

Color, Car, Cartoon Character: Everyone describes themselves as a color, car, and/or cartoon character. Then, they must explain to everyone the reason for choosing that thing.

M&M Game: Pass around a bag of M&M’s. Have everyone take one (don’t eat them!). Then everyone tells something about himself or herself according to the color they chose.

Red: Something stupid you’ve done.
Brown: Something about your hometown.
Yellow: Something about your family.
Blue: A long-term goal.
Green: A special event in your life.
Orange: Why you chose Winthrop University.
**Machine:** Form two teams. Separate them. Each team creates a machine using nothing but themselves. Everyone must participate and no sounds! Give each group a few minutes to get it together. Then each group presents their machine while the other guesses.

**Commercials:** Divide into two or three groups (depending on size). Give each group a few minutes to prepare a commercial for your organization. Perform the commercials for each other. Props can be provided.

**EXTREME TEAM BUILDING**

**Lifesaver Exchange:** Get into a circle. Give everyone a toothpick to put in his or her mouth. Lifesavers must be passed around the circle using only toothpicks.

**Have A Seat:** Make a list of 30 or so things (about 20 more than the number of people). Have everyone sit in a chair in a circle. Read the items on the list one by one. For each thing on the list that a person has done, they move one seat to the right even if someone else is sitting there (they sit in that person’s lap). The goal is to make it all the way around the circle and into your original seat. (Examples of activities for the list: You’ve had a pet ferret; You’ve been to summer camp; You play a musical instrument; etc.)

**Bumper Tag:** Arrange the group into a circle and pair up into 2’s (there may be one group of three). Have the pairs lock arms. Facilitator and one volunteer start the game. The facilitator attempts to tag the volunteer while the volunteer tries to join a group and bump the person on the other end of the group off. If the facilitator tags the volunteer, then the volunteer is “it” and must tag whoever is not in a group. In summary, the odd man out tries to hook up without getting tagged. This is a fast paced game. You need lots of room and running shoes!

**Human Knot:** Get into a circle. Everyone reaches in and grabs someone else’s right hand. Then do the same with the left hand (don’t hold both hands of the same person). The object is to then make the knot into a circle without letting go of hands (difficult but possible).

**Rope Trust:** You’ll need a circular rope, tied securely at one end. Everyone stands on the outside of the rope circle and holds on. Discuss why the activity will or will not work, and then convince the entire group to keep their feet planted, hold on with both hands, and lean back. There are many variations to this activity.

**Trust Walk:** Have the group form a line. Blindfold everyone. They should grab hands or shoulders. Have them walk around while encountering small hills, rocks, etc. This activity promotes communication.

**Who’s the Leader?** Get into a circle. One person leaves the room. A leader is appointed. All those in the circle immediately follow the leader’s actions (jumping, clapping, swaying arms, etc.), but they shouldn’t directly watch him. The player outside returns and tries to identify the leader. When the leader is discovered, he goes out and waits for a new leader to be chosen.
many casual friends or few close friends

if you could give significantly to a charity... which & why?

what's the best way to spend a lazy saturday morning?

tell us about a book you've recently read you can't get out of your head

what do you love about your home- no matter how small

what chore do you loathe the most... why?

the best thing you've ever cooked?

if you were to teach a class- what would it be?

tell a funny memory you had with someone at this table

what's something you enjoy doing that most don't?

one topic of conversation that bores you to tears?

what always cheers you up on a bad day?
the funniest thing that happened this week to you?

first thing you would buy if you won the lottery?

celebrity crush

top 3 tv shows and why?

what actor/actress would play you in a film?

favourite vacation ever & why?

3 major pet peeves & why?

favourite tradition?

what's your strongest attribute?

sports or arts?

do you ever cheat when playing games?

what quality would you most like to improve in yourself?
that time I almost peed my pants...

how many concerts have you been to? & the most memorable?

public speaking or dancing?

dream job

my favourite thing about high school

#1 spot on your list to travel to

what’s your worst habit?

something you find embarrassing that shouldn’t be?

best prank I’ve ever pulled

what trait do you admire in others & why?

if you could only read 1 magazine for the rest of your life... which?

the moment you realized you’re ‘that’ family?