



Unit: Ground Rules

Skill 29: Breaking the Ice

Activity B: Fortune Cookie Icebreaker

Activity Skills:

Small group discussion.

Leadership Skills:

Learn about icebreakers as a technique to get people comfortable and start to build teamwork.

Suggested Level:

Beginning

Time:

20-30 minutes

Supplies needed:

- Hat, basket or bowl for quotes
- Quotes

Do Ahead:

- Cut up quotes

Source:

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BACKGROUND:

Getting a group of relative strangers to be comfortable with each other can be a tough assignment. How can leaders build a sense of “teamwork” within their group? Team building is one of the challenges that many leaders face, getting people to work together and respect each other along the way.

There are a variety of ways to foster teamwork. Simple exercises where the group has to accomplish something together can help. Sometimes, “icebreakers” can be used to just get people talking. Icebreakers are structured activities designed to relax people, introduce them to each other, and get them more comfortable in what is a new or unusual situation. Icebreakers are not normally related to the subject matter, where as “openers” are related to the subject matter that is to be discussed. In addition, they often help to break up the cliques and invite people to form random groupings in a non-threatening and fun way.

The term “icebreaker” comes from special ships that are designed to break up ice in the arctic regions. And just as these ships make it easier for other ships to travel, an icebreaker helps to clear the way for learning to occur by making the learners more comfortable by helping to bring about conversation.

WHAT TO DO:

Have you ever gone out for Asian food and shared your fortune from inside the cookie? This activity uses the same premise, only using famous (and not so famous) quotes about leadership instead of fortunes.

Have participants break into small groups of 4-6 people, and have everyone pick a quote from the container. Then have participants share their quote and discuss it with their small group.

- What strikes people about the quote?
- Do they know the person being quoted?
- What leadership principles does the quote refer to?

TALK IT OVER:

Reflect:

- Did members of your group have similar or opposing thoughts about the quote?
- Did people share thoughts or experiences that helped illustrate their ideas about leadership?
- What did you learn about the people in your group?

Skill 29: Breaking the Ice

Activity A: What's In A Name?

Notes:

Apply:

- How does conversation lead to familiarity?
- How have you gotten to know people in other groups?
- Did shared experiences over time help you feel connected?
- How can leaders foster a sense of team?

BEYOND THE BOX:

Optional Homework:

Have participants research an icebreaker activity that they could share with the group at a future session. What techniques or strategies does the activity use to get people working together as a team?

Resources And Web Links:

<http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/icebreak.html>

<http://www.wilderdom.com/games/Icebreakers.html>

<http://honolulu.hawaii.edu/intranet/committees/FacDevCom/guidebk/teachtip/breakice.htm>