

## The Effective Use of Icebreakers

By their very nature, icebreakers help create an atmosphere that reduces the participants' inhibitions and increase their awareness. However, the group leader must keep in mind that any structured activity can be misused. To minimize the risks and maximize the benefits of icebreakers, the leader should keep in mind the following guidelines.

1. Group members should never be forced to participate in an activity. Although the group leader may encourage total participation, each learner must understand that he or she has the right to refrain from engaging in any icebreaker that appears too uncomfortable or awkward.
2. Unless otherwise agreed, the information generated during an activity must be confidential. In particular, the exercises that solicit any personal information should be treated with care.
3. The group leader serves as an important role model for the participants. The leader will find that his/her active participation in the icebreaker may help reduce some of the participants' initial inhibitions and thus promote moderate risk taking.
4. Before implementing any activity, the group leader needs to consider carefully its appropriateness. The overuse or premature use of an icebreaker can lead to group members feeling that the structure is too contrived or manipulative. The leader needs to keep in mind that an icebreaker is simply a learning tool, not an end in and of itself.
5. Although icebreakers unlike some other forms of structured activities, do not require formal debriefing, the group leader should be aware of the attitudes and development of the participants of the group as a whole. Issues regarding disclosure, trust, team building, risk taking, control, and dependence should be monitored continuously.

These general guidelines can help a group leader to make the most out of icebreakers. When used with sensitivity to individual and group needs, icebreakers can be unusually flexible and potent aids for learning.

## **Icebreakers**

### **Who Am I?**

Each participant will have a note card taped to his or her back with a person or character either past or present. Their mission is to figure out who they are. They accomplish their goal by introducing themselves to another person, showing that person the card on their back and then asking two questions that can only be answered yes or no. They can ask each person only two questions and can approach each person only once. When everyone comes together, they introduce themselves as that person and say one or interesting things about that character.

### **Psychic Shake**

The leader gives everyone a number (1, 2, or 3). Then the leader instructs the group to separate into groups based on those numbers by shaking hands with one another until they find matches. Ones shake once, twos shake twice and threes shake three times. There's only one rule: No talking allowed!

### **Concentric Circles**

This exercise is designed to give group members a chance to meet each other and to briefly interact as they discuss a topic. The exercise should be conducted in a room large enough to accommodate a circle large enough to encompass half the participants in the group.

The leader instructs the group to count off by twos (i.e., one, two, one, two) until everyone has either a one or a two. The leader then instructs the "ones" to form circle in the center of the room. He then instructs the "twos" to form another circle around the circle of "ones", both circles should turn and face each other.

The leader then gives the participants a topic to discuss after they introduce themselves. After a brief period of discussion, the leader directs the circles to turn (i.e., inner circle move four counterclockwise, outer circle move... etc.) so that different participant can line up with each other. Each time group members should introduce themselves prior to discussing the topic the leader gives.

### **Possible Topics**

Name and year in school

Student organization/organizations you're a member of

If you could go anywhere in the world right now, where would it be? (anywhere but here is not acceptable!)

I relax by..?

Who do you see as a role model and why?

If I had a million dollars, I would ..?

What are the traits of your organization's best/worst members? (no names please!)

Which policy or administrative practice at BGSU is your least favorite?

What is greatest challenge your group faces at BGSU?

What is your leadership style? How do you work with a group?

## **Will you be my neighbor?**

This exercise is designed to help a big group begin to get know one another by learning some basic likes and dislikes in an interactive exercise that will get the whole group moving and allow for some creative responses.

The group sits in a circle, with chairs provided for all but one group member, who is instructed to stand in the center of the circle. The person in the center selects one person from the circle to come to the center to meet their potential "new neighbor."

The players meet and say their full names while shaking hands. The original player in the circle asks the other player, "so \_\_\_\_\_, would you like to be my neighbor?" The response can be one of two choices.

If the player says "yes," then both players go the seat left unoccupied in the outer circle and send up the players to the left and right of that empty seat. Those two players repeat the introduction process, with same two choices.

If the player says "no," then that player must follow up with a statement that says,

"and I don't want any neighbors that [have them fill in the blank - i.e. wear brown shoes, have a name starting with the letter M, etc)".

With that statement, all players who fit into that category must stand up from their seats and find another seat in the circle that cannot be directly to left or right of the one they are leaving. At that point, either of the two potential neighbors can also leave to find a seat if they fit the question. The player left without a seat then becomes the new player in the center of the circle and the process starts over. Encourage the group to be creative in their "no" answers!

Important: Make sure that players continue to introduce themselves as the exercise continues!

## **Discussion**

What did you learn about someone else in this exercise?

## **Polarization Exercise**

This exercise is intended to help group members get to know the various types of people in the group. It requires a room where the group can distribute themselves along a line. The leader instructs the groups that one end of the room represents one extreme of a situation and the other end represents the other extreme and that object of the exercise is to physically place yourself along the line to represent how they yourself in that continuum. The leader then reads a list of opposite beliefs or situations, points out each extreme, and instructs the group members to move to where they see themselves, with the center of the room being neutral.

The leader should stop at times to ask personal opinions of members and why they chose to stand where they did to allow the group members to get to know more about each person.

I came to college to study vs. I came to college to party  
I plan out everything in my life vs. I just let things happen  
I am a reflective person vs. I am an action-oriented person  
My bark is worse than my bite vs. my bite is worse than my bark  
I talk to everyone at the party vs. I talk to a small group of friends  
I participated in everything in high school vs. I participated in nothing in high school  
My room is an important place for studying vs. my room is an important place for socializing  
I am good at budgeting my money vs. I spend-spend-spend  
I like to make group decisions vs. I like to have be directed when I'm in a group  
I deal directly with uncomfortable situations vs. I tend to avoid confrontations  
I love icebreakers vs. please let this be the last one

## Mural Painting Exercise

Depending on group size, break the group into teams or allow the group to work cohesively. Design a mural based on the focus of your retreat. A piece of newsprint and markers should be provided. The leader instructs the groups to design a mural that will graphically illustrate the team's expectations and hopes for the retreat. Questions can be used to prompt the groups to get started. They can include:

- What student organizations do the members of your team represent? (who are you?)
- What do you expect to gain from the retreat? (what do you want?)
- What will you bring to this retreat?
- What will you take back to BGSU from this retreat?

## Skin the snake

This game places a premium on both individual and group coordination. You can play it as a cooperative exercise, but it's also great to play as a competition.

Each team should have about 20-25 players, lined up one behind the other. Players are instructed to make equal lines on opposite sides of the playing area, facing in the same direction. Players should then reach between their legs with their left hand and grab the right hand of the person behind them to form an interlocking chain. Once the chain is formed, the game can begin.

At the starting signal, the last person in line lies flat on their back without breaking the chain. The person in front of that person must straddle him and back up until they too can lie on their back. This continues until the whole team waddles backward down the growing line of prone bodies and slips into place.

### **All this is done while holding hands; the chain cannot be broken!**

When the last person in line lies down and has touched their head to the ground, they get back up and start forward again, pulling everyone else up and along. When the line begins to move again, the chain is reversed as everyone "skins the snake."

When the last person is back on their feet and the original chain is restored, the last part of the exercise can begin. The teams (still holding hands) must walk or run to get the whole line across the finish line, which is point where the head of the line started. If contact is broken at any time during this process, the teams must return to point where contact broke and reconnect before going on. The first team across the finish line is the winner.

*Pointers for facilitator - use these if the groups are having trouble.*

- Groups are less likely to trip over each other if they remove their shoes
- When the line is moving, the players should get close together rather than pulling each other along.
- Players should lie as close a possible to person in front of them with toes pointed in

## Discussion

The objective of this exercise is to provide a fun way for groups to work together toward a common goal. Have the group discuss the exercise and the strategies that might have been used to improve the team's performance. Use the questions below if necessary.

What were the hardest parts of this exercise? What was the easiest part?

How did you communicate with each other during the exercise? Did information travel up and down the line? Did the process get any easier on the way back?

How could you have improved what you did? What strategies would you try next time? (i.e., taller players together, lighter people in the middle, strongest people on the ends?)

## **Fun and Creative Icebreakers and Brain Teasers**

### **Amoeba**

Purpose: To have participants mingle, have fun, and form groups based on commonalities.

1. Have the entire group stand in a circle and instruct them to hold up both hands with fingers spread; tell them to wiggle their fingers and while they're wandering around the room have them chant, "Mingle, Mingle, Mingle,"
2. Facilitator yells "Stop!" and then calls out two commands: a NUMBER (i.e. 1-6) and a CATEGORY (i.e. favorite car, favorite season, number of broken bones, favorite actress/actor, number of siblings, etc.)
3. Using both the number and the category, everyone in the large group must subdivide by running around and trying to find the correct number of people PLUS the correct category grouping. The group then stands still and links arms. The result is lots of yelling, lots of grabbing, and lots of movement!
4. At the end of Round I, those left behind go to AMOEBEA HEAVEN. Those still in the game yell "You're outta here!!" Those in Amoeba Heaven respond by singing, "Welcome to Amoeba Heaven!!"  
This format of mingling and subdividing continues until only a few people are left.
5. Everyone may reassemble for a second game or simply applaud the efforts of everyone before closing the game.

### **Balls in the Air**

Purpose: Learn the names of everyone in your group; with groups who are already familiar with one another this activity may be used to illustrate the importance of each person in chains of communication.

Supplies: 6-8 balls of varying sizes

Directions: Begin with students standing in a circle facing one another. One person should have a ball. He or she will call out the name of another individual in the group before tossing them the ball. This pattern should continue until each member of the group has been tossed the ball and the ball has returned to the first person (IMPORTANT: each person should remember who tossed them the ball and who they tossed it to). As round two begins, slowly add additional balls until all balls are in play and flying everywhere.

## Brain teasers

1. Even if they are starving, people living in the Arctic will never eat a penguin's egg. Why not?
2. Kelley surveys the scene. A woman is shot to death and is lying face down in the parking lot. A light snow covers the ground. Leading to the body is a set of footprints, which run between two sets of parallel tracks. Leading away from the dead woman are just two sets of parallel tracks. What type of person should Kelley be looking for?
3. Rosita discovered Samuel lying on his side in a puddle of broken water and glass. When the doctor arrived she pronounced Samuel dead. Since Samuel had no cuts on his body, how did he die?
4. This is a most unusual paragraph. How quickly can you find out what is so unusual about it? It looks so ordinary you'd think nothing was wrong with it - and in fact, nothing is wrong with it. It is unusual though. Why? Study it, think about it, and you may find out. Try to do it without coaching. If you work at it for a bit it will dawn on you. So jump to it and try your skill at figuring it out. Good luck - don't blow your cool!
5. While on a safari in the wild jungles of Africa, Professor Quantum woke one morning and felt something in the pocket of his shorts. It had a head and tail, but no legs. When Quantum got up he could feel it move inside his pockets. Quantum, however, showed little concern and went about his morning rituals. Why such a casual attitude?
6. A well-known fashion designer wanted to escape the hustle and bustle of the big city. She decided to spend a few days at a rural resort. Feeling like some fresh air after a day of reading and relaxing, she decided to go for a winter stroll. That was the last time anyone saw her alive. The autopsy revealed that the death was due to the pack on her back. What was so deadly about this pack?
7. If you were to put a coin into an empty bottle and then insert a cork into the neck, how could you remove the coin without taking out the cork or breaking the bottle?
8. The home of Shirley Rich was completely dark as Shadow and Sam Sham knocked on the front door. "As I said," murmured Sam, "this is not like her at all. She hasn't answered her phone all day, and being late for our date is totally out of character." Shadow tried the door and found it unlocked. They stepped into the front hall and called out, but there was no answer. Sam tried the front light switch, but nothing happened. "I'll try the light at the other end of the hall: offered Sam, feeling his way along the wall. Sam flipped the switch, casting light on the body of Shirley Rich sprawled across the hall floor. She had been shot in the back. Sam turned around and gasped in horror. Grabbing his stomach, he stumbled over the body of his dead girlfriend. "This scene makes you look rather guilty of murder," accused Shadow. Why?
9. Neon Slick adjusted his sunglasses as he sped down the winding mountain road into town. Being very nearsighted, he required corrective lenses. Arriving at the optician's, he tried on his new lenses, and since he could now see perfectly he decided to wear them home. On the way back, Neon saw his brother-in-law, Sid Shady. He stopped and a violent argument ensued. Sid picked up a rock and smashed it on Neon's forehead, killing him. Sid then put the dead body in the car. Seeing Neon's sunglasses on the passenger seat, he slipped them on Neon and then pushed the car off the road down a steep ravine. When Shadow examined the body he declared that it was no accident but a heinous murder. Why was Shadow convinced that Neon was murdered?

10. Slim Jim is a rather vain lifeguard who wears nothing but a string bikini while on duty, Slim's penchant for the night-life and gambling has left him a considerable debt. One day, the folks from the Pizza Connection urged Slim to pay a few of the gambling debts he had incurred. Slim was a little short on cash, so he gave them some of his expensive jewelry to soothe their nerves. Later on, Slim telephoned the police and reported a robbery. Shadow arrived and Slim explained that he had put his jewelry on the night table and went to sleep. In the morning when he went to put it on, it was missing. Slim said that he always wore his jewelry and that he would just 'die' without it. "Luckily," Slim mused, "I do have insurance." "You'll be lucky if you're not charged with fraud," said Shadow, Why?
11. While reading an article on slaughterhouses, Mrs. Shady fell asleep and dreamt that she was a chicken on a large farm. She dreamt that a farmer caught her and put her neck on the chopping block. Just as his axe was descending, her husband walked into the room and touched the back of her neck to awaken her. The shock was so great that Mrs. Shady died instantly. Is there anything wrong with this story?
12. It was a warm, rainy day. At 9:30am Sid Shady left his car idling facing the 'Rolling Donut Shop' and walked down the hill to 'Val's Garage.' Shady complained that his car had been acting strange lately. At 10:00am Shady's driverless car rolled down the hill, went through the 'Rolling Donut Shop' window and killed none other than Mrs. Shady. The puddle of water on the floor of the driver's side convinced Shadow to suspect Shady of foul play. Since Shady did not use any mechanical device, how could he have committed the crime when he was nowhere near the car?
13. Dutch Schwartz introduced Benny Heinz to his friends as his 'Uncle Ben.' Benny Heinz introduced Dutch Schwartz to his friends as 'Uncle Dutch.' "If you are uncles to each other," queried one of the friends, "you must also be nephews to each other." "That's correct," replied Dutch. Since there has been no breach of marriage law, how could such a relationship come to be?
14. Lets return to the scene," said Shannon, Shannon and Roger Ragtop drove to the deserted storage house. They walked down one of the many hills on the third floor and stopped in front of the ninth door on the left hand side. The area had been cordoned off with police tape. Shannon removed the tape and pulled the door open. They entered the room and Roger retold his story. "Sam Smith swore he was going to kill me when he got out of jail. Last week he was released. He was near me on the street so I turned and ran to this old storage house. With so many rooms I didn't think Smith would find me, then, to my horror, I saw the doorknob slowly turn. As the door started to swing toward me, I panicked and started to shoot. I didn't mean to kill him but rather scare him off." Shannon looked at Ragtop and replied, "That story will never hold up." Why not?

**Answers:**

1. There aren't any penguins in the Arctic. They are native only to the Southern Hemisphere.
2. Kelley should be looking for a person in a wheelchair. The single set of footprints must belong to the dead woman since no footprints leave the scene. The two sets of parallel tracks are the tire marks of a wheelchair.
3. Samuel died of suffocation. Samuel is a goldfish whose fishbowl was knocked over.
4. The letter e, the most common letter in our language, does not appear in the paragraph.
5. It was only a coin.
6. It was a pack of wild wolves.
7. Simply push the cork back into the bottle and shake the coin out.
8. Shadow noticed that Sam only stumbled over the body on his way back. Therefore, when Sam felt his way down the hall to turn the light on, he must have known the body was on the floor, otherwise he would've tripped over it.
9. The new lenses Neon wore from the opticians were contacts. Shady wasn't farsighted enough to realize that Neon was wearing them and foolishly put the prescription sunglasses on him. The combination of the two would have drastically distorted his vision.
10. Shadow knew Slim was lying since he had a tan where he claimed he always wore his jewelry.
11. Since Mrs. Shady died in her sleep, there is no way of knowing that she was dreaming.
12. Shady left his car idling in drive and kept it stationary by wedging a piece of ice between the brake pedal and the bottom of the dash. Shady had timed the melting of the ice to exactly half an hour, hoping to use Val as his alibi.
13. Two men, A and B marry each other's mother. One son was born to each marriage, in this case, Dutch Schwartz and Benny Heinz. Dutch's father is A, and his half brother is B. Also, Benny Heinz's father is B, and his half brother is A; therefore, Dutch and Benny are uncle and nephew to one another.
14. Roger Ragtop's story had one flaw. He forgot which way the door swung, Shannon pulled the door toward her when they entered the room, but Ragtop claimed the door was swinging into the room when he panicked.

## **Candy Bar Trivia**

Distribute the Candy Bar Trivia clues to each team. Inform teams that they are racing against one another, and the fastest team to decipher the candy bar that correlates to each clue wins.

### **Candy Bar Trivia CLUES**

1. A Famous Swashbuckling Trio of Old
2. Favorite Day of the Week for Working People
3. Not Laughing out Loud
4. Indian Burial Grounds
5. Galaxy
6. Red Planet
7. A Sweet Sign of Affection
8. Can't Hold on to Anything
9. A Famous Author
10. A Happy Nut
11. Famous New York Street
12. Famous Former Baseball Star
13. Twin Letters
14. Home of the Movie Stars
15. Superman's "Reporter" Name
16. Freezing Point
17. Feline
18. Can't think of the Name

### **Candy Bar Trivia ANSWERS**

1. Three Musketeers
2. Pay Day
3. Snickers or Chuckles
4. Mounds
5. Milky Way
6. Mars
7. Hershey's Kiss
8. Butterfinger
9. O 'Henry
10. Almond Joy
11. 5th Avenue
12. Baby Ruth
13. M&M's
14. Hollywood
15. Clark Bar
16. Zero
17. Kit Kat
18. Whatchamacalit

## Common Ground

Teams will race to create lists of things that all the team members have in common.

Supplies: You'll need paper and pencils.

Form equal-sized teams of three to six. Give each team a sheet of paper and a pencil. Tell teams their challenge is to list everything they can think of that all team members have in common. For example, team members might all attend the same school, prefer the same kind of music, or like the same brand of tennis shoes. The only rule is that they can't list similar body parts, such as "We all have two arms, a brain, and a nose."

Tell teams they have three minutes to create their lists, so they need to work quickly. (Groups of five or six may need more time, but don't allow more than four to five minutes.) To add to the urgency and excitement of the game, inform teams when there's one minute as well as 30 seconds remaining.

When time is up, find out which team has the longest list and ask team members to read the similarities they listed. Then ask teams who had similarities not already listed to share them. To conclude, have the entire group discuss the following questions. Ask:

- *How easy was it to discover something in common with another team member? With every team member?*
- *What does this reveal about the extent to which we're alike? The ways in which we're all different?*
- *How can our similarities draw us closer together? How can our differences help us grow closer?*

Variation Idea: Challenge teams to list things members don't have in *common* - things that make each person unique. For example, people may have been born in different states, might go to different schools, or might like different music. You might also challenge your entire group to list as many things as it can that members all have in common.

## Connect

Purpose: Students will learn *more* about one another, discover unanticipated connections, and get energized.

Directions: One person starts the game by giving an introduction and "fun facts." At any point during the person's "fun facts" description another participant may interrupt, illustrate how they are connected to the first person, and begin their *own* introduction.

## **Criminal Dealings**

Design a system for secretly identifying the "criminal" and the "cop," A deck of cards works well. You only need enough cards so that each player may have one card. One card needs to be a jack-the criminal, and one needs to be an ace--the cop. All of the other cards should be below ten in rank. Let each person draw and keep a card, without showing it to anyone.

The criminal needs to recruit other criminals by winking at them, but without getting caught by the cop. Any person who sees a wink is to wait a few seconds, so as not to be obvious, and then say, "A crime has been committed," That person then turns in his or her card and is out of the game. Play continues until the criminal recruits all players without being caught by the cop, or the cop identifies the criminal. If the cop misidentifies the criminal, he loses the game.

## **Concentric Circle Steps:**

1. Have each person number off 1,2,1,2,..
2. Have the "1 's" form the first circle, and the "2's" form a circle around the ones. Ones should face the twos.
3. Explain to the group that they will be introducing each other to whomever they are facing when they are told to move, and then answering questions,
4. Remember to have people introduce themselves to their partners before answering every question.

## **Questions:**

What would be your dream job?

Why did you decide to come to BGSU?

Why did you decide to get involved in,..?

What do you do for fun?

If you could go anywhere in the world right now, where would it be?

If you could invite three people, alive or dead, to dinner, who would they be and why?

What would you do if you had one million dollars?

What is our favorite movie, song, tv show, etc. and why?

## **Hula Heads**

This game requires little preparation but will build unity in a group whose members don't know each other well.

You'll need at least two Hula Hoop plastic hoops. Have people form small groups of five to 10 people. Have groups stand in a circle, holding hands. Place a hoop around one person's neck. The object of the game is to have each team send the hoop around the circle, passing it from head to head, without anyone touching it with their hands. After a few practice rounds, have teams race against each other to see who can get the hoop around the circle the quickest.

## **The Monster**

Purpose: To have a group of 10-14 form a "monster" which must move from point A to point B (approximately 10-15 feet).

- Give specific parameters such as 11 legs, 10 hands, all eyes (fairly easy) to 4 legs, 6 hands, 4 eyes (fairly hard).
- May wish to provide blindfolds **if** you're restricting use of sight!

## **People to People**

1. Ask everyone to get in a large circle (this can be done with up to 50-60 people),
2. Instruct everyone to find a partner. Make sure that there is one solo person left (if there are an even number of people, the facilitator can act as the solo person).
3. For 3-5 minutes, the partners simply introduce themselves and share some information (i.e. hometown, major, type of care they drive, favorites, etc.). Then the facilitator calls out interactive instruction - "fingers to fingers," "elbow to elbow," "knee to knee," "bottom to bottom," etc.
4. After the command, the facilitator calls out "People to People" and partners change, hooking up the appropriate body parts. There should be one person left in the middle who acts as the facilitator.
5. The new partners exchange introductions and tidbits of information (i.e. describe the last movie you saw, etc.) A new interactive instruction is then given - "toes to toes," "shoulders to shoulders," etc.
6. The acting facilitator again calls out "People to People" and people change partners again, hooking up the appropriate body parts.
7. It's probably best to stop the activity after 3-4 people.

## **Plastic Wrap**

Time: 10 minutes

Props: A roll of very inexpensive plastic wrap cut to four inches wide

Objective: A group moves from one side of a room to another as fast as they can as a unit wrapped by plastic wrap, Icebreakers gets people close, sets the tone for creative problem solving, and is fun!

Instructions: Ask everyone in the group to gather in a tight clump, shoulder to shoulder, Take the four-inch wide roll of plastic wrap and begin wrapping it around the whole group at about waist height. Make about 5 rounds while emphasizing to the group that they should not break the band holding them together and they should not take it off the group.

Once they are wrapped up, ask them how fast they think they can get from one side of the room and touch the other side of the room, When they have guessed, time their travel and celebrate the effort regardless, Ask them if they could travel the same distance in a shorter time. "Yes" is almost always immediately the reply, Time them again when they have problem solved enough,

Ask everyone to move to the center of the room and back away from the center of the circle until the band breaks or they just can't move back anymore. When you use good stretchy plastic wrap, the circle often stretches 30 feet in diameter or more and people see that they just had to stretch their boundaries to accomplish their goal.

Variation: Place three objects in three separate locations. Put them far enough apart so that the whole group has to move from place to place to touch each one as quickly as possible. Emphasize that they should not break the band. When their time is as low as they want, ask them to stretch the band. Hopefully you placed the objects in such a way that all three can be touched simultaneously.

## **Snake's Tail**

Purpose: For two smaller groups to play a sort of tag where the "head" of one snake must snatch a bandana from the "tail" of the other snake.

- Small groups must always stay connected as they run, chase, and try to steal the bandana.
- This is very active and can be rough, but its lots of fun!
- Variation: May want to give both snakes some strategy time between rounds to figure out how best to steal the bandana off the other snake. This is especially useful if game is finished quickly the first time.

## **Spider Web**

Purpose: Students will learn one another's names and physically illustrate with yarn how each individual is connected to the group.

Supplies: Roll of yarn

Directions: One person begins with a roll of yarn. This person will introduce him or herself and then, while holding tightly to the end of the yarn, say the name of another member of the group and toss the yarn to them. After the last person has received the yarn students should set their "spider web" on the floor and reflect upon the interconnectedness of the group. May also use this exercise to illustrate communication webs and the unique strand that each person contributes.

## **Spin the Bottle**

Purpose: Break the ice and have students get to know one another.

Supplies: Bottle (any empty bottle with a cap), Hershey kisses, Bag of pre-made questions (see below)

Directions: Have students sit in a circle. The first person spins the bottle. The person who the bottle lands on (the mouth of the bottle will be facing this person) draws a question from the bag. This person may then choose to answer the question and receive a Hershey kiss or decline to answer (and of course not receive a kiss). Continue until all students have had a turn to answer a question and spin the bottle.

Sample Questions:

- If you were a children's toy, what would you be and why?
- Describe a defining moment in your life.
- Who is your role model?
- What is the craziest thing you have ever done?
- What makes you laugh?
- What is your dream retirement?

\*Be creative with the questions. Works well to gear some of the questions toward your particular organization or team.

## Student Leaders Survival Kit

Each student in your group should receive one Ziploc bag with the following items and a sheet of paper detailing what each item represents:

1. Rubber Band - To remind you to stretch your new ideas and your mind to new limits so you will continue to grow and reach your potential.
2. Bubble Gum - To remind you that there will always be a child in all of us. Be playful. *Have fun!*
3. Life Saver - To remind you to think of your peers as your "life savers." Care about each other and help each other through the stressful times in life.
4. Penny - To remind you the value of your thoughts - BIG and little ones! Share them ...they are all important.
5. Eraser - To remind you that we all make mistakes.
6. Toothpick - To remind you to "pick-out" the good qualities in others and yourself, and to be tolerant and accepting of difference.
7. Paper clip -It is important to "keep it all together." Find balance in your physical, educational, and spiritual life; utilize resources, mentors, friends, and programs available to you.
8. Two Straws - So you will never reach the "last straw."
9. Candle - To remind you that you cannot "do it all." Take care not to burn your candle at both ends or to burn out.
10. Playing Cards - To remind you that each of us is an essential player in the larger deck of cards. The things we accomplish as a team are greater than any Individual card.

## Who Am I?

For this activity you will need one sticky note per person. On each note write the name of a celebrity, political figure, cartoon character, book character, etc. You can choose one category or mix them up. Use a different person for each note.

Place a sticky note on the back (or forehead) of each participant. The participants are to figure out who they are, but can only do so in the following manner. Find a partner and read each other's sticky notes. You may ask the other person three questions to which there are yes or no answers.

Once your questions have been asked and answered, make a guess as to your identity. If you are correct, move the sticky note to your chest and you become a "consultant" who gives clues to those still trying to figure out their identities. If you are not correct, find a new partner and repeat the process.

SPECIAL NOTE: Be sure to choose characters that are appropriate to the age of the participants to avoid "generation gap frustration."

**MOST IMPORTANTLY, BE CREATIVE AND HAVE FUN!!!**