

# Ice Breakers

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Ice Breakers

“Snowflakes are one of nature’s most fragile things, but just look at what they can do when they stick together.”

*-Vesta Kelly*

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## What is an ice breaker?

An Ice Breaker is an activity or opening remarks in a meeting with the purpose of bringing members together in a relaxed, interesting, or fun way. An Ice Breaker may also serve as a tool to introduce members to the group.

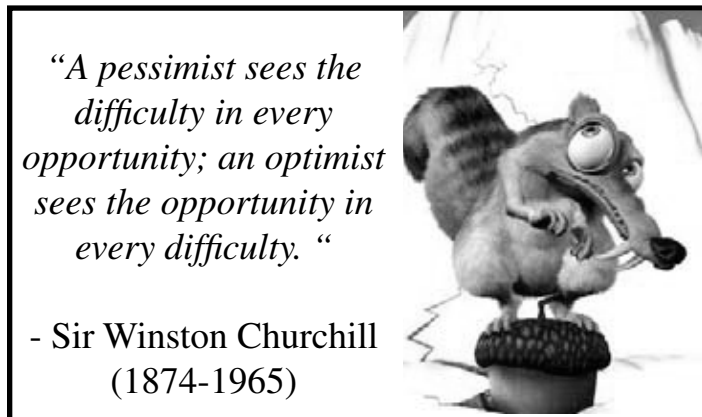
## Qualities of an Icebreaker

*Positive or Upbeat.* Starting a meeting with laughter or sharing “good feelings” is a great way to get everyone in sync.

*All Inclusive:* An Ice Breaker should include everyone in the room. Insider jokes are out!

*Appropriate for the Group:* Consider the character of the group when planning an Ice Breaker. A group of business persons may not feel comfortable with an exercise where they have to get up and greet strangers, but that may be perfect for a group that is based on social relationships.

*Make it Brief:* An Ice Breaker should bring the start of a meeting into focus, not be the focus of a meeting.



## Rules to Follow

1. An ice breaker or game must support the points you plan to make in the meeting.
2. Check your time and space: Do you have enough? Is your space appropriate for the activity?
3. Practice the ice breaker or game before you try it with your organization.
4. Personalize the game for the day or the group.
5. Be flexible. Make every moment a meaningful one.
6. Wrap up with a punch line or a concluding remark to give purpose to the ice breaker.
7. Make sure the environment is inclusive and supports team building/community building.
8. Have fun!

## Types of Icebreakers

*Start off with a Joke or a Funny Story:* This is good for any type of meeting. Members can share humor (as well as get a glimpse of your “human side”), helping to create a “friendly feeling” in the room. (Just make sure not to offend anyone. No jokes about individuals or special groups.)

*Bring Up a Current Event:* Make a comment about some thing in the news that is interesting for everyone AND is upbeat or inspirational.

*Inspirational Quote:* There are many books that have quotes from famous or not so famous people. Pick one that is relevant to the meeting topic. A quote can often set the tone for a meeting. This works especially well for more serious, “soul searching” meetings where members may have to make decisions.

*“Ice Breaker” Introductions:* We’ve all been in meetings where we go around the table and introduce ourselves. This actually serves as an Ice Breaker. If an interesting tidbit of information is added it can be much more effective. For example, What is your favorite flavor of pizza?

## Ice Breaker Activities

*Animal Noises:* Everyone is given a piece of paper with an animal on it. When told, everyone closes their eyes and must make the animal noise to find the others like themselves. For example, the “cows” will “moo” and try to find the other cows. Really fun to watch people try to find groups. Examples of animals: cows-moo, sheep-baah, dogs-bark, frogs-ribbit, etc.

*Find Your Nut:* An assortment of nuts and bolts are handed out to everyone. People are told to find the nut (or bolt) that screws into theirs.

*People Knots:* Everyone sits on the floor in a circle with legs extended toward the middle. Each person grabs two others’ hands and holds them. The hands cannot be those of either person sitting on your sides and also cannot be the two hands of the same person. Now, everyone stands up and untangles each other into a single circle, without letting go of the hands you have.

Want more Icebreaker ideas?  
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