

TOOL KIT



ENERGIZERS

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PURPOSE

GOAL

An energizer is an activity that can be performed at the beginning of a training session. The purpose of this activity is to (re)energize participants and motivate them to participate actively in the rest of the session. What is more, an energizer can be a great opportunity to help participants get to know each other, loosen up, and help the trainer introduce the topic of the training in a more natural manner.

DESCRIPTION

INSTRUCTION

Energizers usually aim to energize the participants in two levels; physically and mentally. Therefore, the energizers can be chosen for these specific functions. For example, in the beginning of the training, when everyone is still relatively light, a physical energizer can be chosen, in order to bring some energy to the group, and people can get to know each other. Building rapport among participants is always necessary for a quality training program. When the topic of the training is a mentally challenging one, the trainer can use an energizer that will stimulate the participants mentally, introduce the topic, and motivate them to offer their view on the subject, so that engagement is increased. Also, the trainer needs to consider the element of time very carefully. For example, if the training includes a lunch break, it would be wise to avoid very physical energizers after the lunch break, but choose mental ones instead.

EXAMPLE



Rock Paper Scissors – Biggest fan (~10 minutes):

Strong energizer with game elements, which is universally enjoyed, people learn each other's names

Instructions: Participants are standing in the room, and they face each other in a traditional rock-paper-scissors game. The difference is that the loser follows the winner chanting their name, until at the end, there are only two people facing each other, with an army behind each of them, chanting their name.

Tip: It's nice to have an introduction to excite the participants, such as "How would you like to walk down the street with people chanting your name as your biggest fans?"



Elephant, kebab, toaster, vomit kangaroo:

Strong energizer with game elements, which is universally enjoyed.

Instructions: Participants stand at a circle, and they are shown 4 mini poses that they need to take with the people sitting at their left and right. The person in the middle of the circle chooses a person and this person, together with the neighbours, need to take the pose that is instructed by the middle person. The person who is the slowest to make the pose, goes in the middle.

Tip: Try to keep the pace high, so that it is more challenging to take the correct pose in time.

Fruit salad (~10 minutes):

Strong energizer with game elements, which is universally enjoyed.



Instructions: Participants are divided into random groups (size and number of groups does not matter), and they are instructed to choose a fruit that represents their group. Then they all sit down in random positions in chairs arranged in a circle. The instructor gives the instructions: The person in the middle announces: I would like to eat (name of one of the fruit chosen by the groups), and then all members of that group need to stand up and find a different chair. The instructor becomes immediately a member of the first group. Then, the person who is left standing announces what fruit they would like to eat, and more than one fruit can be chosen. Again, everyone has to stand and rush to find a chair to sit down. When a fruit salad is called, all participants need to stand up and find a different place to sit.

Tips: Careful, people might fall from chairs, make sure there is enough space for people to run around, and that no objects are in the middle to trip people.

Charades (pantomime) “What are you doing there?” (~10 minutes):

Good energizer to stimulate participants mentally.



Instructions: Participants stand in a line, and the instructor stands in front of them facing them, and gives the instructions: The person facing the group pretends to be doing an activity (e.g. brushing teeth). The person who is at the front of the line, asks “What are you doing (name)?” and the person doing the charade answers something else (eg driving my car). Then, (s)he goes to the end of the line, and the next person has to do what the previous SAID, while doing something else.

Tips: Group needs to try to find funny activities otherwise activity can be a little bland, so someone of the group can be a collaborator of the instructor, to spark some funny and provocative activities to make it more interesting.



Two truths, one lie (~15 minutes):

Energizer that is done normally in the beginning of the training in order to break the ice between the participants, make them laugh and get to know each other. It can be used to energize the group, and to break stereotypes.

Instructions: Participants are given three post-it notes, and they are asked to write in each one of them two things about themselves that are true and one that is a lie. They are given instructions to write things that look that they are believable. They are given 10-15 minutes in the space to ask the other participants about their stories and guess which of the three statements is not true. In the end, if there is time, we can debrief the exercise by asking questions such as: How did you feel during this exercise? Anybody guessed a concrete thing about the other that was constantly wrong?

Tips: You can make some jokes in the post-its to make people feel more comfortable



Name game (~15 minutes):

People can start to learn the names of their co-participants and learn something about each other.

Instructions: This game is set in the beginning of a training, when a group is not familiar with the names of the rest of the participants. The game is organized in 4 phases:

a) Phase 1- The facilitator holds a ball and explains the game. Every person that receives the ball should tell their name and something about himself that is interesting (depending on the context of the project this could be the origin of his name, one passion of his etc). The ball should be thrown to someone who is not from the same group

b) Phase 2: Now that all participants have told their names and one information about themselves, they should throw the ball to someone and tell their name and the story.

c) Phase 3: The facilitator points a person, and he must sit in his knees. The two that are sitting beside him should tell as quick as they can, the name of each other. Whoever loses, stays in the middle and chooses the next person

d) One brave person should say in the end all the names in the circle



Presenting each other (~20 minutes):

To meet more in depth the other participants, presentation skills, connecting with each other.

Description: You mix participants by making pairs with people who don't know each other. Then you give them 5 minutes to discuss a bit about themselves, things they like, dislike, their hobbies, their professions. Then we return to the circle and every participant must present in brief NOT themselves but the other person who they just met and shared information about themselves

The power of photographs (~15 minutes):

Rather than using a power point presentation and keep participants not involved, you give them the chance to participate actively and co-create knowledge!



Description: According to the theme of a training you select and print photos and put them down in a random formation. You ask the participants to select one and tell their opinion on what do they think these photos represent. Then you might ask them more questions such as, do you relate this photo with any of your experiences/context/interest etc. Finally, you explain to them what this photo represents and you start introducing your subject by this interactive way.

Statements (~10 minutes):

Introducing a subject while energising and encouraging conversation among participants.

Description: Facilitator prepares some statements that are related with the theme of the subject. Then he asks the participants if they relate with this statement to take one step forward. Whoever they want, can say some things about how he/she is related to this statement. Through this exercise we facilitate the participants to understand how many things they have in common.



Put yourself on the line (~15 minutes):

Enabling interaction about specific topics of interest and facilitate people to participate actively.

Description: There is one statement that provokes controversy (example) “I feel that money brings happiness”.) Then you create two extremes. I agree totally, I disagree totally. In the next steps you ask the participants to place themselves in the line between these two extremes and explain their position.

PROS



- Energizing the group
- Engaging by encouraging participation
- Creating interest to the training topics
- Participants get to know each other
- A climate of trust is created
- Playful interaction encourages engagement and retention of information

CONS



- In large groups, the facilitator needs to exercise a lot of control because time and topics can get out of hand.

TIPS



- When the facilitator is running an energizer, there needs to be a balance between loosening up the participants and having fun, and staying on topic.
- Even though energizers are fairly simple exercises and activities, the facilitator should spend time to prepare and practice.
- Knowing the “vibe” of the participant group can help choose the activities that are more appropriate to them.
- Don't be afraid to put participants out of their comfort zone.

PARTNERS



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