



Ice Breakers for Breakout Groups

Why Use an Ice Breaker?

Ice breakers can be an important tool in helping people connect with one another in a group setting. They can create a good environment for participation and shared learning. They also encourage listening and often help attendees feel more comfortable interacting with each other by breaking down feelings of unfamiliarity and shyness. Ice breakers are especially helpful with a new group of people that do not frequently exchange ideas and may be hesitant to contribute to a discussion.

How Do I Use an Ice Breaker if I Have Limited Time?

Below, we've provided three easy and quick approaches for using ice breakers in your small groups based on your selected assessment approach (e.g., core team versus retreat style meeting). All three of these approaches can be done during the introductions.

Introductory Remarks – What if Scenario

Ask participants to introduce themselves, identify their organization and name one (select from options below)...

1. Place they would like to visit.
2. Super power they would like to have for a day.
3. Thing they would hate to live without.
4. Snack they would like to enjoy while participating in the assessment.

Introductory Remarks – True or False

Ask each group member to write down one true and one false or fanciful fact about him/herself. In a round robin fashion, have each participant introduce him/herself, identify their organization, and tell the group one fact they wrote down (true or false). Ask for a show of hands if the fact is true or false for each participant.

Introductory Remarks – Using Adjectives

Ask each group member to introduce him/herself, identify their organization, and attach an adjective that describes them to their name. The adjective should start with the first letter of their name. The facilitator and note-taker can start. Example, Hi, I'm bossy Brenda from Plum County Health Department.