

# Activities for Groups

## ICE BREAKERS/MIXERS/ENERGIZERS

### Paired Sharing

A great way to get people comfortable talking to people they don't know or to raise the level of engagement within a group that does know each other.

**Supplies:**

None

**Number of people:**

Works well in small or large groups (12-100)

**Directions:**

Ask participants to stand up, move about the room (not just turn to the person next to them), and find a partner that they don't know or that they know the least of anyone in the room.

Once everyone is in pairs (if you have an odd number, one group can be a threesome), the facilitator says the following:

"You will have two minutes to discuss the following topic with your partner:

Please discuss .....(see below)..... and at the end of two minutes, I'll let you know your time is up."

At the end of two minutes, the facilitator gets the group's attention and may invite participants to share what they talked about with their partners.

Participants are then instructed to find a new partner and told they will be given a new topic.

This cycle can be repeated two or three times.

**Ideas for discussion:**

Find 3 things you and your partner have in common.

Describe for your partner the first job you ever held.

What would you do if you won the lottery?

What are your most favorite and least favorite things about working for this organization?



## “All My Neighbors” Activity

A fun moving around activity that breaks the ice, pumps up the energy and loosens people up.

### Supplies:

Something to use as a place marker for each individual (a name tag, a napkin, a note card)

### Number of people:

Works well in small or large groups (12-60 people)

### Directions:

Ask participants to form a shoulder to shoulder standing circle and then have each person take a step back.

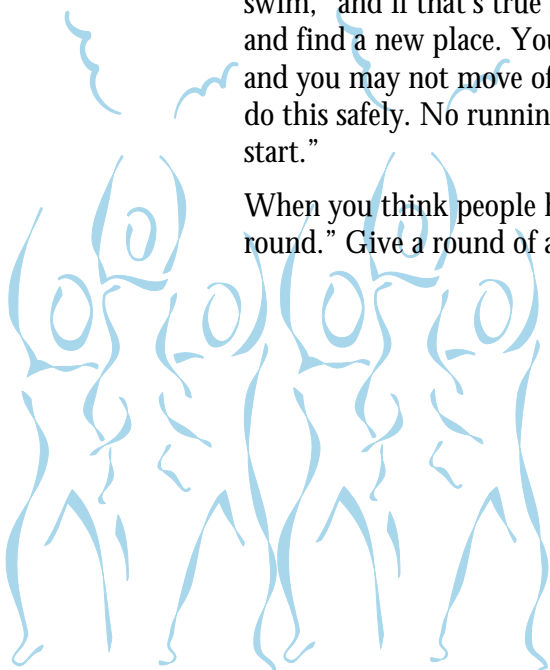
Each participant is given a place holder which they should place at their feet.

The leader stands in the center of the circle.

The facilitator says:

“This activity is similar to the game of musical chairs that you played as a child. As you’ll notice, there is one less place than people in the group. That’s why I’m in the center of the circle. So, I’ll begin in the center of the circle, but my task is to try and find a place on the outside of the circle and have someone else end up without a place. The way I’m going to do that is to make a statement that is TRUE for me. For example, if I am wearing tennis shoes, I might say ‘All my neighbors who are wearing tennis shoes.’ If that statement is also true for you, then you must come off your place and find another spot in the circle. I could also say something like “All my neighbors who love to swim,” and if that’s true for you on the outside of the circle, you must move and find a new place. You may not move immediately to your right or left and you may not move off your space and return to it in the same round. Let’s do this safely. No running. No body checking, kicking or pinching. OK. I’ll start.”

When you think people have had enough, simply say “OK, this is the last round.” Give a round of applause to the last person who ends up in the center.



## The Signature Game

A fun, non-physical impact activity that gets people out of their chairs and talking to other people in the room.

### Supplies:

A pencil and a piece of paper ( or note card—something to write on.)

### Number of People:

This activity works well with slightly larger groups (30-100)

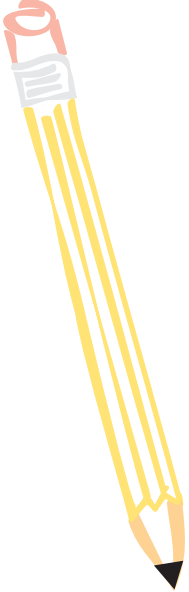
### Directions:

On a flip chart at the front of the room, the facilitator makes a list of 5 categories. These categories can be things like—

- ▼ Someone with an exotic pet
- ▼ Someone who's been on TV
- ▼ Someone who has 5 or more siblings
- ▼ Someone who's been in trouble with "the law"
- ▼ Someone who's run a marathon
- ▼ Someone who can wiggle their ears

Each participant is given pencil and paper, and asked to make five lines across their paper, one under the other.

Facilitator says the following:



“Please draw 5 lines on your paper with enough room on each to have someone sign their name. In just a moment, I am going to turn over a list of categories. Your job, in the next 5 minutes, is to move around the room and obtain the signatures of a person who fits each category. Please sit down once you have obtained all five signatures, so I'll know when you're done. And have fun with this. It's a great opportunity to talk to other people. And, by the way, categories can be broadly defined, so don't worry about being too exact. If you were on TV when you were five as part of Captain Kangaroo—well that counts. Everybody stand up. Go!”

At the end of five minutes, when people look like they're getting close, ask them to sit down. Then take a few minutes and see what the group found. For example, “Who did you find that has an exotic pet? Jerry, great, Jerry tell us about your iguana.” Run through all five categories. At the end, ask people to give themselves a hand.