

Name Game

This is an excellent method to help your docent team get to know one another, to begin feeling more comfortable speaking in front of groups, and to exercise their memories.

Instructions:

- Stand in a circle
- 1 person starts by saying their name and something they enjoy that starts with the first letter of their name. i.e. "I'm Jim, and I like Jogging"
- The next person in the circle repeats the previous person's name and what they liked and then says their own name and what they enjoy. i.e. "He's Jim, and he likes jogging. I'm Sarah, and I like soccer"
- The game continues until each person has spoken.
- It may be beneficial to add a physical motion to what people enjoy.

Improv Game

- Prepares staff to hold learning conversations with guests rather than reciting scripts.
- Warms up critical skill sets required for guest interaction/guest facilitation.
- Empowers staff to think on their feet and respond in the moment

Instructions:

All participants stand in a circle. The group leader introduces mimed balls to the group and assigns them different colors (e.g., "This is a red ball"). The group then passes the mimed ball around the circle. As the group becomes comfortable passing the first mimed ball, the group leader introduces balls of different colors. The group tries to keep all of the balls moving around the circle at the same time.

Skill sets

Teamwork, Accepting Offers,
Listening/Awareness, Quick Thinking,
Energy

Time to implement

5-8 minutes

Number of

participants

8-12 people per group

Exercise flow

1. Have all participants stand in a circle.
2. Explain that the group is going to pass around a pantomimed ball.
3. Introduce the first ball as a red ball.
4. Explain that to pass the ball a participant will offer the ball to another player by saying "Red Ball?". The receiving participant will then acknowledge the offer by restating the color of the ball... "Red Ball". Next the player tosses the mimed Red Ball to the person. When they person catches the ball they thank the person (Thank you, Red Ball), and then offers the ball to another person in the circle.
5. Give the group an example of passing the ball.
 - A: "Red Ball?"
 - B: "Red Ball!"
 - A tosses the ball; B catches the ball
 - B: "Thank You, Red Ball."
6. Allow the group to pass the Red Ball around and solidify the communication of offer and accept.
7. Stop the group and introduce a second ball with a different color.
8. Explain that this time the group will pass both balls around the circle. Remind the group to keep the same communication pattern and keep the balls separate.
9. Allow the group to pass the two mimed balls around the circle.

10. Introduce a third and fourth ball into the mix without stopping the group.
11. Allow the group to pass all four mimed balls around the circle.
12. Stop the group and quickly debrief.
13. If time permits, restart the exercise and allow the participants to add their own balls to the group.
Explain that you will call out the name of a participant and have them add in a new ball to the circle.
The participant will label the ball. Encourage them to be creative.

Debrief questions

1. What three components do you think make up the communication pattern in this exercise?
(Offer, acknowledge/accept offer, confirm/thank)
2. Where would you find those same components within a guest engagement?
3. How did you react to having multiple balls added into the mix?
4. What skills did you need to use to be successful in this exercise?
5. How could you use *(the skills identified by group)* to help us better engage guests in conversations?

Tips

Watch the group to make sure that each ball remains in circulation.

Side-coach the group to make eye contact and communicate each pass clearly using the three steps of the communication process (offer, acknowledge, thank).

From http://nisenet.org/catalog/tools_guides/improv_exercises

Improv Game:

Vocal Warm Up: In order to guide museum guests, docents must be heard. Vocal warm ups help Docents in Training exercise the needed muscles for audible and articulate speech. -5 Minutes

Sirens: To help avoid speaking in monotone, vocally imitate a ambulance siren.

Tongue Twisters: **Eleven benevolent elephants, Crisp crusts crackle and crunch**