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Energiser suggestions

These are games and exercises that can be used as energisers during a training workshop. They are ideal for use at the beginning of a day, and immediately after a refreshment break or lunch break. Also included are some suggestions for use at the beginning and end of a training workshop.

- Energisers**
- **Counting game**
As a group, participants have to try to count up to 20, one by one, without someone speaking at the same time. Each person calls out a number and if two people speak at the same time they have to start again.
 - **Signature**
Get participants to stand up and 'write' their signature in the air with their right hand, then their left hand, right foot, left foot and then their bottom!
 - **Pass the ball**
Get participants to stand in a circle and pass a ball round as quickly as they can. Time them and keep pushing them to reduce the time they do it in. It is good for team work and it is amazing how quickly they can do it when they discuss tactics. The only rule is that each person has to touch the ball.
 - **Shark-infested water**
Place paper on the floor to represent safe land, which participants need to stand on when the music stops and you shout 'sharks'. Play short bursts of music. Each time the music stops, take more paper away, so there's not enough for everyone and they have to rush to the land when you shout 'sharks'. You can keep removing paper until there is only enough for one person to stand on, in order to get a 'winner'.
 - **Groupings**
The group gets into a line by order of the first letter of their first name, or the month of their birthday, or where they are from (eg ordered from east to west or north to south, or by the first letter of the name of the place where they live). You could get them to do this without talking or only with certain gestures. You can also use this to mix the group up and then split them into smaller working groups.
 - **Fruit cocktail**
Get participants to sit on chairs in a circle and assign each person the name of a fruit – choose between four and five different fruits depending on the size of your group. When you call out the name of a fruit, eg 'Orange!', the people who have been assigned that fruit have to run round the outside of the circle of chairs and back to their seat as quickly as they can. You could call more than one fruit at time and also 'fruit cocktail', which is all the fruits together.
 - **Ball under the chin**
Get participants to stand in two lines. The first person in each line has to hold a ball under his or her chin and pass it to the next person so that person has it under his or her chin. No one can use their hands! If the ball is dropped, then it has to go back to the beginning of the line. The winning line is the one that gets the ball to the last person first.

Introduction games**■ Interviews**

In pairs, participants interview each other for a few minutes before reporting back to the group what they have learned about each other. You could give them three different things they need to find out or ask them to try and find five (or more!) things they have in common.

■ Quick fire introductions

Give participants a set period of time to meet as many different people as possible and write down their names and their answers to one question (use the same question for each person). This works well for big groups. For smaller groups, just reduce the time allowed.

■ Get knotty/spiders

Stand in a small circle. Everyone puts their hands in the middle and takes hold of two hands (the hands should belong to different people!). They then have to untie themselves as a group, without breaking the circle. This is good as an icebreaker and in reflecting on how we all need to work together and get to know each other.

■ Throwing a ball

Everyone stands in a circle. Participants throw the ball to each other in no particular order. When participants catch the ball, they have to share one thing about themselves (this could be from a set list of things that you choose and change periodically).

■ Throwing a ball alternative version

Everyone in the circle introduces themselves with their names and where they are from or what they do. Then the first person (person A) throws the ball to person B and says 'Hello B, I'm A'. Person B will then throw the ball to a different person and say 'Hello C, I'm B'. Let this continue for a short while, and then get each person to repeat the names of everyone in the circle.

■ Toilet paper

Everyone stands in a circle. Give participants different lengths of toilet paper to hold (eg one sheet, three sheets, four sheets). The number of sheets they have shows how many things about themselves they need to share. This way of sharing information can be used for getting feedback and raising ideas and questions, as well as for introductions.

Evaluation games**■ Letter to self at the beginning**

This would be done at the beginning of the training course. Participants write a postcard to themselves, recording what they would like to get out of or learn from the course. You collect these in and give them back out at the end so they can see if the course has met their expectations. You can discuss and address issues during the last session.

■ Letter to self at the end

Get the participants to write a letter or postcard to themselves during the last session with information about something they have learned, something they want to put into practice back at work, something they will do differently, or one bit of learning they will pass on to someone else.

■ Thermometer

Use a picture of a thermometer with a question written at the top about how participants view the session. Get them to place stickers or sticky notes to reflect their views. For example, they place a sticker by a high temperature to indicate they loved the session or by a low temperature if they hated it. You can also use this method as a kind of voting system to show how keen participants are about a particular idea, or what their views are on something. For example, you could use the question 'Should my organisation be doing joint advocacy?'

and participants could place a sticker by a high temperature to show they think this is very important, or by a low temperature to show that it is unimportant or inadvisable.

- **Target board**

This is similar to the thermometer idea. People can place stickers on a target board in answer to a question being asked about a session or issue.

- **Throw the ball**

Everyone stands in a circle, and a ball is thrown round in no particular order. When they have the ball, participants have to say one thing they have learned.

- **String**

Everyone stands in a circle. Take a ball of string and pass it to one person who has to say one thing they have learned that they will put into practice. They then keep hold of the string and throw it to someone else. This second person also says one thing they learned, keeps hold of the string and throws the ball to a third person and so on. At the end, walk around and cut all the string from the middle – each person should be left with a piece of string in their hand. This can serve as a reminder of the training when they go back to the office.

- **Alphabet review**

Go around the group, asking each person to think of a word related to the course – going through the letters of the alphabet in turn.

- **Game show quiz**

Prepare six to eight questions related to what has been discussed on the course, including a fun question. Split the group into two teams (depending on numbers) and ask each team to think of a team name and a buzzer sound they can make. Run the quiz. The teams have to make their buzzer sound to answer a question.

- **Quiz**

Split into two teams and get each team to think of questions for the other team to answer. Each team takes a turn at running the quiz and answering the other team's questions. If both teams get an equal number of questions correct, ask a final question and the teams need to shout out the answer to win.

- **Creative review**

In groups, get participants to create a five-minute song, dance or drama that covers the things they have learned. They then perform to the rest of the group.

Analysis game

- **Hot air balloon**

This image can be used as a kind of analysis exercise for a particular project or issue. Ask participants what makes the balloon fly, what keeps it held to the ground and what could be a threat to steering its course (eg clouds). Then use the image to relate to the project or issue. For example, the people in the basket could be the stakeholders, so you could ask the group who they need to be accountable to, or who can help them with their project.

Grand finale game

- **Circle of excellence**

At the end of the training, all the participants stand in a circle. Walk around the group encouraging and praising each person and reflecting on all that the group has learned. Now they are standing in a circle of excellence! To celebrate, you can start clapping or making other sounds and movements that participants have to copy as you walk around the circle. As they join in one by one, the sound gets louder and louder.