I'm not a bot

Strong team cohesion – how bonded people feel to one another – is a key element for success in distributed teams. Icebreakers can be an effective way to help teams get to know each other and feel more comfortable collaborating.It's important to choose the right icebreaker for your team. Teams that know each other well may be more comfortable sharing personal information. Newer teams may want to start with lower-stakes games that focus on work-specific topics. "Icebreakers." The very name elicits a frosty reception in many workplaces. The concept – short, simple games to prime our brains for planning and problem-solving – is often discounted or completely overlooked by managers. But there's evidence that the benefits of icebreakers make them more than worth the time. "Icebreakers, particularly within the remote workspace, are an incredibly good idea," says Eugene Chung, an Atlassian team coach and advisor on Team Playbook. "Any time you're collaborating with colleagues, a few short minutes spent on carefully chosen activities beforehand can seriously help you. Not just in terms of feeling more connected by learning new things about each other, but also in terms of getting comfortable with speaking up and actively contributing to the group."   That last point is crucial, particularly when the activity precedes a problem-solving or brainstorming meeting. Icebreakers foster what workplace experts call psychological safety In other words, they create an atmosphere in which colleagues feel free to speak up, question, contribute, and criticize – without fear of censure. The trick – as any hungry polar bear would tell you – is to break the ice in the correct fashion. One common mistake is assuming that every icebreaker serves the same purpose. On the contrary, there are many types and styles of icebreaker, each geared towards particular groups and outcomes. It's smarter to think of them like a set of golf clubs, with each designed for certain scenarios. To tee off, there are "introductory icebreakers," where the participants are strangers at the start of the session, and the "ice" is simply the fact that they don't know each other yet. In a remote working environment, these have become increasingly valuable tools. There are plenty of other picks to choose from too, ranging from "team-building icebreakers" for more established groups to "topic exploration icebreakers," which help lay the groundwork for more targeted meetings. The common denominator is that all types of icebreakers can help build stronger team connections. Best for: Topic exploration How: Best for groups of three or more, this is one of the most popular icebreakers from Team Playbook. First you introduce the idea you'll be brainstorming around in the main meeting. Then, using a shared space in Confluence or Trello, you all note down the worst ideas you can possibly think of. After a few minutes, step back – asking each person to share their favorite worst idea. Why: This juices up everyone's neuropathways before brainstorming – and helps people to resist any temptation to self-censor when the real problem solving begins. This one also boosts psychological safety because, hey, every idea is automatically going to be better than whatever's already on the page. Best for: Team-building How: Each person is asked to make three statements about themselves, one of which has to be false. The rest of the group then votes on which "fact" is actually falsehood.   Why: Not only does this help the group get to know each other better and swiftly reduce stress levels, but it also sparks immediate interaction – as the group comes together to root out the red herrings. Best for: Introductions How: A quick-fire, fast-paced activity. Person A kicks things off by naming a category (for example, "types of dessert"). Person B rattles off three things that fit that theme, as quickly as they can. No judgment and no self-censoring. When they've finished, the entire group applauds, and then Person B names the next category. Continue until everyone has had a chance to name the category and the three things.   Why: This is all about triggering fast, unfiltered thinking before a brainstorming session. It's not about right or wrong answers, it's about celebrating the weirdest, funniest contributions and letting your brains relax into a comfortable, accepting, and creative gear.   Best for: Team building How: Each team member takes four slips of paper, jotting down an important moment from their life on each. When they're done, people take turns showing the camera what they have written, and each is added to a shared timeline on a Confluence page or whiteboard.   Why: This exercise helps show, in a visual way, the different experiences, priorities, and generations within your team. It leads well into talking about shared experiences, breaks down barriers and creates a mindset of authentic communication. Best for: Team building How: Split participants into small teams (using breakout rooms if you're on Zoom) and ask them to come up with one word to describe, say, your company culture, or a project you're working on. Give them a few minutes to discuss amongst themselves, then let each team present their word, and the reasoning behind it. Why: This can reveal some surprising answers, with enlightening discussion to follow, which can easily segue into the meeting proper. Plus, starting out with small groups allows everyone the chance to participate in a meaningful way, which can boost their confidence about speaking up in the full session. Best for: Team building How: Beforehand, everyone emails the facilitator three light-hearted answers from a list of questions. These could be anything from "what was your first job" to "what's your craziest-ever hair style?" During the icebreaker, the facilitator shares an answer, asking the group to guess who the response belongs to.   Why: This is a classic team-building exercise for groups of three to 10 employees who have met or interacted before. It's a fun way for teams to get closer and bond more. Best for: Introductions How: Break everyone into small groups in separate rooms over Zoom, being sure to mix departments if possible. Task the groups with finding 10 things that all of them share in common (for example: places they have visited, movies they love, items of clothing they own).   Why: This is an extremely effective way of encouraging cohesion and building solid inter-departmental relationships, leading to a happier, more committed and engaged workforce. While the many benefits of icebreakers are well documented, there are also a number of pitfalls to avoid, too. It's always a good idea, for example, to start with more simple icebreakers in newly established teams and work your way up. You also want to avoid anything that is too personal or hot-button topics that will foster division instead of cohesion. And always be sure to state the objectives of the task at the start of the exercise, so participants understand what they're doing and why. "One of the key elements of an effective team is cohesion," says Dr. Mahreen Khan, an organizational psychologist and emotional intelligence specialist, who's also a senior qualitative researcher at Atlassian. "In other words, how bonded do you feel with each other? To maximize that cohesion, you need to get to know people on a personal level, and icebreakers can really help with that. People are feeling more disconnected now than ever before, so it's even more important to use activities like this." Grab a list of 20+ icebreakers questions in the Atlassian Team Playbook – a free online resource of simple, science-backed workshops that helps teams build on their strengths, troubleshoot difficulties, and encourage positive team dynamics. Subscribe to Work LifeGet more teamwork advice like this in your inbox All products and services featured are independently selected by WikiJob. When you register or purchase through links on this page, we may earn a commission.Most people recognize that heart-sinking feeling when you are waiting to start a training session and the organiser says, "Right, we'll start with an icebreaker! Everyone pair up and find out five things about the other person." Icebreakers are often associated with activities that many people – particularly introverts – find cringeworthy and embarrassing. The good news is that icebreaker activities can actually be fun and engaging. Don't believe it? Read on to discover 33 ice breaker games for work that will make team meetings and workshops more productive and enjoyable for all concerned.33 ice breaker games for workMost people recognize that heart-sinking feeling when you are waiting to start a training session and the organiser says: "Right, we'll start with an icebreaker! Everyone pair up and find out five things about the other person." Icebreakers are often associated with activities that many people – particularly introverts – find cringeworthy and embarrassing. The good news is that icebreakers can actually be fun and engaging. Don't believe it? Read on to discover 33 icebreaker games that will make team meetings and workshops more productive and enjoyable for all concerned. What Are Ice Breaker Games? An icebreaker is a short activity introduced by the trainer at the start of a course, training session or any other type of group activity where it is expected that the majority of people don't know each other well, such as new hires or remote teams. Ice breaker games are also great for team bonding, especially before starting an important project where collaboration between team members is especially vital. The aim of an icebreaker question is to warm up the room prior to starting a meeting by giving participants time to have a little fun and get to know each other. When participants feel comfortable and relaxed, they will have more productive discussions. Purpose of Ice Breaker Games Ice breaker games can be used to: Encourage collaboration – When people feel relaxed, they will be more able to interact comfortably with each other and the facilitator. Inject some energy – Get participants involved from the very start and they will feel engaged and motivated to get the best out of the session. Encourage team building – Developing relationships between groups of people so that they work together more productively. Create a relaxed or creative company culture – Having a positive company culture has been proven to increase the productivity and creativity of teams. Icebreakers are especially useful for virtual teams. Remote working has many benefits to both employers and employees, but one of the main negatives is that it is increasingly hard for teams to bond and for individuals to feel included. Many of these icebreakers game for work can be undertaken on Zoom, and it is worth considering implementing a regular ice breaker to virtual team meetings. The Best 33 Icebreakers Games for Work These team-building icebreaker ideas for meetings all have the following things in common – they are quick, easy and inexpensive. These ice breaker games are perfect for building confidence, fostering a sense of togetherness and impressing your boss. Tip: don't be tempted to make them too long – keep them snappy and quick; just long enough to 'break the ice'. This one is good for a small group of under 20 people. Simply ask everyone around the table to share something they achieved when they were under the age of 18. If you want to keep it light, start things off by thinking of something silly, such as the fact that you learned how to tie your shoelaces at the ripe old age of 15. Getting people to talk about themselves and share fun facts can help the group bond and allow the quieter people a chance to speak. 2. Three Stellar Moments If you are looking for team-building icebreakers for meetings, this activity is ideal for creating an energized yet appropriately serious vibe. Ask all participants to think of three moments when they exceeded all expectations during their career and share with the group. Allow about 10 minutes for everyone to think of their best memories. It allows everyone a moment to reflect on their personal successes and to hear and learn about the achievements of their colleagues. Hopefully it will create an atmosphere that quickly becomes mutually supportive and empowering, an ideal warm-up for a course with difficult or challenging content. Is it fun? Well, yes – after all, most people love the opportunity to talk about their finest moments. 3. Stranded on a Desert Island Get everyone into small groups of between three to six and tell them the scenario, providing sheets of paper and pens. In five minutes they are going to be stranded on a desert island and must think of three things to take with them. Ask them to decide on three things and the reasons why. Each group must decide on a leader who will share the three things with the wider group. This activity is a great icebreaker as it allows people who don't like talking in front of unfamiliar people to participate without feeling under pressure. It is also an opportunity for you to observe people's brainstorming and problem-solving skills within each group, giving you valuable insights into their personality type and how they think. 4. Tell a Bad Joke Icebreakers are often considered to be embarrassing, and the bad joke contest is a fantastic way to exploit the natural cringe factor that a lot of people experience when they are faced with an exercise. Set some ground rules (for instance, nothing offensive or not safe for work) and challenge your group to tell the worst or funniest joke they can think of. Research using smartphones is absolutely permitted and laughter is obligatory. You will find that the lamest grade-school jokes always get the biggest laughs. Here's one to get you started: "What did the rug say to the floor? Don't move, I've got you covered." This is a quick icebreaker activity that will instantly create a relaxed and fun atmosphere. Each participant takes it in turns to tell their joke, and the group must decide which one is the worst. This is a quick icebreaker activity that will instantly create a relaxed and fun atmosphere. 5. Two Truths and a Lie This is a really simple game where every person needs to choose three statements about themselves. Two of the statements must be true, and one is a lie. Everyone else must decide which of the three statements is a lie. This is a great game to learn more about the other people in the meeting, and the answers can be serious or fun, depending on how the person is describing themselves. 6. What's My Name Every team member in the group has the name of a celebrity taped to their back, and they need to ask other people closed questions (with yes or no answers) to try and find out which celebrity they are. This is an excellent ice breaker that also helps people get involved to ask the right questions, using teamwork and communication skills to be one of the first to find out your name. 7. Who Did It? Every person in the group writes down something that they have done on a small piece of paper or card. This can be something mundane, like 'Once worked at McDonald's' or something more exciting like 'I once swam with dolphins in Florida.' All the statements are put into a hat and pulled out one at a time. The rest of the participants must guess who did it. 8. Never Have I Ever This might have started as a drinking game, but it can be adopted for a fun getting-to-know-you icebreaker game with a few tweaks. Start off with the rules that the topics must be suitable for work, and every person holds up five fingers. Take it in turns to give a 'never have I ever' statement, and those that have done the described thing have to put a finger down. This is a game that can spark conversation and make people feel happy and relaxed. 9. Movie Pitch This icebreaker game can work with individuals or small groups and is really simple. Give each team 10 minutes or so to come up with a pitch for a movie. You can give them a genre or name an actor that must be involved, or just leave it wide open to see what they produce. After the time is up, the teams should come together and describe their movie idea and the group must decide which one they think should win. 10. Hot Take Much like the silly argument activity, Hot Take is designed to encourage the sharing of opinions, hopefully with some laughs. A hot take in this situation is a statement that might be considered a little bit controversial (but obviously not offensive and suitable for the workplace). For example, you might want to kick off the discussion by saying 'Pineapple belongs on pizza'. 11. Would You Rather? This game can be expanded to cover any number of topics, from work-related decisions to things like holidays, food or random ones. Ask each participant what they would rather have or do out of two options, and then let them describe their reasoning afterwards. This is a great way for even the most introverted participants to get involved, as other people in the group will soon weigh in with their own opinions. An alternative to this is 'Have you ever?' but remember to keep the questions relatively professional. In this icebreaker game, select a theme (perhaps actors or just celebrities in general) and then every person in the circle must provide a name that matches the theme. The difficulty is that the name must start with the last letter of the previous name. For example, if the previous name was 'Brad Pitt', the next name would have to start with a 'T'. No names can be repeated and if answers aren't given in five seconds that player is out. 12. The Name Game In this icebreaker game, select a theme (perhaps actors or just celebrities in general) and then every person in the circle must provide a name that matches the theme. The difficulty is that the name must start with the last letter of the previous name. For example, if the previous name was 'Brad Pitt', the next name would have to start with a 'T'. No names can be repeated and if answers aren't given in five seconds that player is out. 13. Things in Common When working with a large group of participants, particularly if they do not know each other very well, finding things in common is an excellent icebreaker that helps make positive connections. In this activity, participants should be split into groups and given the task of finding ten things that they all have in common. They shouldn't be obvious things, like all working for the same company or all wearing shoes, however. If you have access to a large open space, this is well worth a whirl, as it's nearly impossible to do without laughing. Get everyone to form a large circle and hold hands. Take a normal-sized hula hoop and place it on the arm of one person in the circle, getting them to rejoin their hands. The aim is to see if they can find a way of getting the hoop to travel around the circle without anyone breaking hands. This is an excellent problem-solving and team-building activity, and is great for getting everyone relaxed and loosened up. 15. Picture This Hand out pencils, Sharpies and plain paper, and ask everyone to draw a picture that expresses who they are as a person. Allow about 10 minutes for this part of the activity. Get everyone to take turns to share their picture with the person sitting to their right. Take this to the next level by asking them to share their partner's picture and its meaning to the wider group. This activity encourages positive communication and will allow you to see who has good listening and communication skills. Some people will love this activity, while others will find it more of a challenge and will worry about being made a fool of – every group is different. If you find that this activity is met with moans and groans when you announce it, have a backup activity ready (for example, one of these other fun icebreaker games). 16. Office Charades Exactly the same as the traditional parlor game with one exception: you are only allowed to describe objects commonly found in the office (this is harder than it sounds). Ask for a volunteer to start things off. They are only allowed to use silent gestures to describe the object. Any words that are spoken aloud mean instant disqualification. 17. Mindfulness This activity is not strictly a game but in today's high-pressure work environment, the opportunity to take a few minutes to be a little zen should not be sniffed at. Start the meeting with a calming few minutes where everyone can meditate. Play some calming music and turn off any bright lights. Ask everyone to listen and identify any sounds that they can hear, and to remain in the present moment. You could also ask everyone to write down three things that they are currently stressed about. When the meditation is over, ask everyone to tear their piece of paper up and place it in a bowl in the center of the table. This is an effective way of getting everyone to leave their stress and worries to one side before the start of the main event. 18. Scavenger Hunt Scavenger hunts are great fun, and they can be adapted to suit the surroundings. For example, you can arrange a scavenger hunt in the office or room you are in, use the whole building, or even send participants to a local park. Scavenger hunts can also take place remotely in video meetings. Split participants into teams so that they can work together to find the different items on the list, and for the best results offer the winners a little prize – whether that is a voucher or just a badge to wear for the rest of the event. 19. Marshmallow Challenge This is an good icebreaker that is also a great team-building exercise. You should split the participants into equal groups and give them some pieces of equipment to use. This should include some spaghetti sticks, tape, string and a marshmallow. Using only this equipment and their ingenuity, the participants must work together to build a tower that is as high as possible so that they can beat the other teams. 20. Group Map A simple exercise that can make for some great discussions is providing a map of the country and inviting participants to place their name or a picture of themselves in the place that they were born. The leader can then ask about each location in turn, encouraging the participants to talk about their home town and what they like about it. This can still work with an international group of participants if you use a map of Europe or a world map. 21. Line Up Creativity, teamwork and non-verbal communication are all skills that are needed to complete this activity. Participants must create a single file line based on certain pre-determined characteristics. For example, they might need to line up in order from the shortest to the tallest, or from the oldest to the youngest. However, they are not allowed to speak at all during this challenge. Other criteria can be added to make it harder if necessary. 22. Silly Argument This is a fun one because it encourages some banter and friendly debate. Splitting the group down the middle, present a silly debate topic (nothing that could get personal or be considered offensive, of course). This might be something like 'Pizza is better than a cheeseburger'. Each team member is assigned a side of the argument to debate and some time to discuss tactics and ideas on how to get their point across. Then, both sides come together to debate the argument in the best way, while the arbiter is the leader and who gets to keep order in the court and decide on an eventual winner. 23. Helium Stick A physical activity that needs something like a broom handle or a long stick, this is another teamwork-based icebreaker activity that will make people laugh. Hold the stick at about shoulder height and instruct every participant to hold one finger on the underside of the stick. This will support it comfortably if everyone is well spread out. Then, the challenge is to lower the stick to the ground, without grabbing or pinching it. If it falls or it is grabbed, they must start again. 24. Red Light, Green Light Childhood games adapted for the workplace always go down well as icebreakers and this simple game is no exception. The rules are simple: The leader stands at the front of the room, with their back to the participants who are lined up at the rear of the room. When the leader says, 'green light,' the participants can make their way across the room. When the leader spins round and says, 'red light,' the participants must freeze. If the leader spots movement, then that participant is out. The winner is the first person to either cross the finishing line or touch the wall, depending on the environment. 25. Simon Says Another childhood memory, Simon Says is a great icebreaker that focuses on fun but also on active listening skills. The leader tells the participants to complete an action, starting with the phrase 'Simon says'. If someone does not complete the action, they are out. Participants can also be out if they complete an action that wasn't prefaced with the phrase 'Simon says.' 26. Clumps This is a great movement ice breaker, especially when working with large groups of participants. Ask everyone to mill about and mingle in a wide-open space. The leader will then call out a number under 10, and everyone needs to get themselves into a 'clump' that has the right number of people in it. Anyone that is not in the clump is out, and the winner is the last participant standing. 27. Blind Drawing This is an activity that should take place in pairs. Both people sit back-to-back and one has an image in front of them that they need to describe to the other so that they can draw it. The describer cannot use any phrases that might give it away or be too obvious, and the drawer can only use the information that they are given to complete their drawing.To find out which jobs fit your personality best, visit our partner CareerFitter and take the Career Test for FREE. This is a simple and fun way to get people to introduce themselves and is a favorite icebreaker. Most foks love chocolate and this icebreaker has a relaxed vibe, so is a great way to encourage shyer people to get involved. The game can also be easily adapted depending on what you want to find out about your team. Basically, each color M&M is assigned a question or a characteristic. A red candy, for example, could be your favorite film, the green one could be your greatest fear. Get creative and use your imagination to decide what the M&M's will signify. This game also works with Skittles or any other type of different colored candy. How to play: Everyone grabs a small handful of M&M's from the central bowl. The facilitator will then call out a color and everyone with candies of that color has to answer the question assigned to that color. If they have two blue candies they have to answer two questions. After they have answered, candidates get to eat their candy. 29. The Chicken and Fox Brain Teaser This old riddle is a fun icebreaker to encourage creative thinking. It works best if you split up the group into smaller teams of three or four. You have a chicken, a fox and a bag of grain, and have to take all of them across the river without anyone being eaten. You can only take one in the boat at a time. This is a classic puzzle but there is a good chance that your team won't have heard of it before, especially if they are young. Click here for the answer to the riddle. 30. Rock, Paper, Scissors Tournament Everyone knows how to play Rock, Paper, Scissors, and many people might even have a winning technique that they rely on. The tournament gives everyone the opportunity to play in the knockout rounds. As people get knocked out, they become fans and cheer the remaining competitors on, getting increasingly raucous and erupting into giggles. 31. No Smiling This is not so much a game as a quick way to loosen people up before starting. Ask all the participants to stand facing each other in a circle and tell them that they are not allowed to smile or laugh. The natural tendency to laugh when you are not allowed to, coupled with nerves and anticipation, will make this a challenge that is guaranteed to end in fun. You can make it even more fun by trying to make the participants smile and laugh. 32. Coin This is a good 'getting to know you' game that needs little preparation – just some coins. Ask every participant to take a coin, and then talk about something significant that happened to them when the coin was first minted (according to the date on the coin). You might want to make sure that the older coins are taken from the pile before this begins, depending on the ages of the participants. 33. Tower of Questions Tower building games (like Jenga) are fun to play, and simple to grasp. You can turn them into icebreaker games by writing questions on the blocks. When the participant removes the block, they must answer the question on it before they can place it on the top. The questions can be relevant to the meeting or to the business, or they can be about getting to know the participants a bit better.Pass the Quiz for FREETips to Choose the Best Icebreaker Questions and Games for Your TeamWe have given lots of examples above of good ice breaker games to try with your teams, but really any activity can be an ice breaker if it has the following key features. Here are some tips to choose the best icebreaker questions and games for your team:Step 1. It Is FunIce breaker games that are boring, embarrassing or over-complicated will not have the desired effect and will leave team members feeling uncomfortable rather than motivated. Keep things professional but lighthearted.Step 2. It Only Lasts a Few MinutesRemember that ice breaker games are just designed as a warm-up. It is not the objective of the meeting. Although it is easy to get carried away with the fun, ensure there is a clear end-point and you allow time for business discussions to take place afterwards.Step 3. It Is EngagingIce breaker games must keep everyone engaged and interested and should ensure that all members of the meeting are able to participate willingly.Step 4. It Is Easy to UnderstandSpending ages explaining the rules or causing the participants to become confused is a no-no.Step 5. It Is InclusiveEnsure that all members of the team are able to participate and all content is suitable for the diverse range of people within the team, as well as workplace rules and etiquette. If chosen well, ice breaker games for work can result in more productive and memorable sessions. Icebreakers can be cliched, sure, but if they are carefully considered and led by a thoughtful facilitator, they can set the tone of the meeting and enable everyone to gain more than they might have done otherwise. All great workshops and meetings start with a good icebreaker. You can't just put a bunch of people in a room and expect them to be creative—you have to warm them up first. So, when planning your next workshop, be sure to have an icebreaker or two at the ready. In this guide, you'll find our 6 favorite icebreakers, together with instructions on how to implement them.My First JobOne WordPointless QuestionsGuess Who?PictionaryFour QuadrantsAnd, because it's 2024, all of these icebreakers can be adapted for remote and hybrid workshops, too. Before we jump in, let's quickly touch on why icebreakers are so important...Icebreakers are quick, fun activities used at the start of a workshop or meeting to warm up the members of the group. Their purpose is, quite literally, to break the ice—to help people feel comfortable and relieve some of that initial awkwardness that's often felt in workshop settings. Kicking off your meeting or workshop with an icebreaker will help to set a relaxed tone for the session. It encourages the group to have a bit of fun and reassures them that the workshop is a safe and comfortable space. That's the optimal setting for creativity and collaboration! The great thing about icebreakers is that they require little effort but offer a lot of reward. So what are the best icebreakers for your in-person, remote, and hybrid workshops or meetings? Here are our top 6.The first icebreaker on our list is a personal favorite of AJ&Smart CEO Jonathan Courtney. It's simple yet effective, as any good icebreaker should be, and doesn't take any time or effort to set up. How it works:Ask everyone in the group to write down their name, their first job, and what they learned from that job. Then go round the group and have everybody read theirs out. This is a chance for the group to learn something new about each other without getting too uncomfortably personal. It's also a great warm-up as it doesn't require too much thinking straight off the bat. Variation:If you want to add a bit of mystery to the 'My First Job' icebreaker, have everybody write down only their first job and what they learned from it (leaving out their name) and put their answers into a hat (or on an anonymous virtual Post-it note if you're running a remote or hybrid meeting). Then have the rest of the group guess which first job belongs to which member of the group. Icebreaker #2: One WordThis next icebreaker is great if you want to warm people up but also set some context for the meeting or workshop. The goal of the One Word game is to ease your workshop participants into your workshop topic in a lighthearted, low-pressure way. How it works:Divide the group into smaller groups or pairs, depending on how many participants you have. If you're holding a remote meeting, you might want to set up breakout rooms for each group. Ask each group to come up with one word that describes a certain topic, as defined by you. For example, if the goal of the workshop is to come up with new ways to improve the customer service process, you might ask the group to come up with a word to describe the current process. If you're holding a meeting to brainstorm ideas for a new marketing campaign, you could ask the group to come up with a word to describe what they think the main goal of the next campaign should be. Set a timer (2 minutes should suffice) and then ask each group to share their word. You can write each word on a whiteboard (either physical or digital) so you have a visual compilation of everybody's ideas at the end. The purpose of this icebreaker isn't necessarily to come up with actionable ideas, but rather, to get people thinking about the topic ahead of the main workshop activities. Icebreaker #3: Pointless QuestionsWe call this one Pointless Questions simply because the questions (and their answers) bear no relation to the workshop topic. But this icebreaker itself is not pointless! Far from it. By asking fun, non-work-related questions, you'll ease the group into natural conversation—and prime them for creative thinking. How it works:Prepare a few fun questions ahead of the workshop, then go round the room and have everybody take turns answering the questions. It's as simple as that—you don't even need to write anything down!Tips for coming up with icebreaker questions:Keep your icebreaker questions lighthearted and inclusive. Make sure they're questions that everybody can answer—steer clear of topics that are too specific or which might not be relevant to everybody, such as certain TV shows or music genres. Here are some ideas to get you started:If you could invite a celebrity over for dinner, who would it be and why?What is your most prized possession and why?You can have an unlimited supply of one thing for the rest of your life. What do you choose?For more inspiration, check out this list of over 200 icebreaker questions.This is another getting-to-know-each-other icebreaker that will facilitate natural conversation (and probably a few laughs). All you need is pen and paper for each workshop participant (or digital sticky notes and a virtual whiteboard, if you're holding the meeting remotely). How it works:Ask each member of the group to write down a random fact about themselves—something that others in the group are unlikely to know already. Collect all the random facts in a hat (or on a virtual whiteboard) and read each one aloud. The group then has to decide who they think the fact relates to. Once all votes are in, ask the 'owner' of the fact to come forward and elaborate in more detail if they feel comfortable doing so. This is a great team-building icebreaker as it encourages people to reveal something new about themselves. It can spark conversations, bring people closer together, and foster empathy within a group. Icebreaker #5: PictionaryPictionary isn't just for games night! It also serves as an excellent icebreaker for meetings and workshops. All you need for this icebreaker is pencil and paper for each participant. If you're holding a remote workshop, ask them to have their own at the ready.How it works:For each round of Pictionary, pick a name out of a hat to determine the designated sketcher. Give them a Pictionary prompt (you can use this Pictionary generator) and allocate 1 minute for them to draw the word. The group then has to guess the word based on the sketcher's drawing. You can speed this part up and make it more fun by setting another timer. We love Pictionary as an icebreaker because it gets the creative juices flowing. And, as it's a party game that most people are familiar with, it's a great way to get people feeling relaxed. Icebreaker #6: Four QuadrantsOur final icebreaker is the Four Quadrants exercise, and it's especially useful because it can be adapted to a range of different contexts and needs. As such, the Four Quadrants will require a little more thought and planning on the workshop facilitator's part—but it's well worth it!How it works:Give each participant a pen and paper and have them draw a 2x2 grid (alternatively, you can provide ready-made grids). You'll ask four questions, and each participant will draw their answer, using one quadrant per question. At the end, participants will present and discuss what they've drawn. You can use the Four Quadrants as a just-for-fun icebreaker, asking random questions, or use it as an opportunity to introduce the topic of the workshop. For example, you could focus the questions around the current challenges that people are facing at work and what they'd like to achieve from the workshop. However you choose to frame it, the Four Quadrants icebreaker is great for getting a bit creative and approaching potentially serious topics in a more lighthearted way. What else do you need for an awesome meeting or workshop?Icebreakers are just one component of a great workshop or meeting. You'll also need a solid workshop agenda (we show you how to write one in this guide) and the right set of tools (start with this round-up of the best digital facilitation tools for online workshops and meetings).And, of course, you'll need first-class facilitation skills and techniques you can adapt throughout the workshop or meeting. If you're new to facilitation, or want to improve your existing skills, consult our ultimate guide to workshop facilitation and explore our training courses. When most people hear the word "icebreaker," they think of boring, silly, or awkward. In this post, I want to share 80 meeting icebreakers that are: fun quick-bonding easy to do If you are a meeting planner, team leader, or event organizer (or simply want to make your meetings a little better), you MUST watch this video for my personal favorites: And if you want better meetings, you MUST send this article to your meeting planner. I'm going to convince you to upgrade the age-old icebreaker. An icebreaker is an activity, event, or game that is designed to break down social barriers, make others feel more comfortable, and facilitate social interaction. Icebreakers are usually performed at the beginning of a meeting or team session and involve a group of people. After hosting hundreds of meetings every year, from conferences to sales team retreats, one thing I've learned is that an icebreaker truly can make or break an event. Here's the crazy science on this: Harvard Business School professor Michael Norton gathered 221 participants and had them form groups of two to four people. Then, he asked them to do a campus scavenger hunt where they had to run around taking selfies in front of specific locations. *There was a catch. Half of the teams were asked to do a pre-scavenger hunt icebreaker together, and the other half were simply asked to read an article together. The results were clear. The teams that did the icebreaker reported liking each other more. This is incredible! Icebreakers improved performance, time, AND likability. Here's a list of my favorite icebreakers to avoid having those awkward meetings. Not all meetings nowadays are in-person. Some are virtual. These fun icebreakers can be performed anytime, anywhere, no matter the distance! Best For: Turning coworkers into show-and-tell-loving third graders again! This is one of my favorite virtual icebreakers. Why? Because it reveals what your teammates really value! Here's how to perform this icebreaker: Ask your remote team members to grab a nearby item (or even send a personal picture through group chat!). This item should be unique to them. Share! Take turns sharing your item and the story or personal meeting behind it. For example, I recently shared in my weekly team meeting a small personal item: a llama doll I received from one of my friends! It was a great way to show to my remote team how I value small gifts from friends, and an easy icebreaker, too. Win-win! Best For: Learning new things, boosting confidence in presentation skills, and promoting engagement and fun in team meetings. If you like having mini TED Talks sprinkled into your meetings, this one's for you! "Teach Something New" is one of my favorite icebreakers—each team member will have, say, 5 minutes to teach everyone one little thing. It could be how to draw a giraffe, how to juggle, or a magic trick. Here's how you can introduce this activity: Encourage team members to think about a skill or knowledge snippet they can share within a 5-minute time slot. At the start of the meeting, ask for a volunteer to go first. They will have 5 minutes to teach their chosen topic. Other participants should engage by asking questions or offering thoughts on the subject. Remember, the goal is to promote a light, fun learning environment. Best For: Showcasing workspace creativity, bonding, and inspiring décor discussions. Zoom backgrounds make meetings fun, but they don't help people get to know each other very well. Location-specific photo challenges could start more personalized conversations because they'll reveal new things about each coworker. Explain the Activity: Let everyone know they need to take a creative selfie at their workspace. Take Selfies: Team members take their workspace selfies—could be in their home office, a coffee shop, or an outdoor setup. Share the Pictures: Each participant shares their selfie in the group chat or designated platform. Decide the Winner: The picture that is deemed the most creative (based on your established criteria) wins. People don't need to share their location or name their city if they feel uncomfortable. The point is to showcase everyone's workplace setting because it speaks to their personalities. After the scavenger hunt, team members could also swap decor ideas to elevate their remote workstations. It may open doors to conversations about their hobbies, pets, and other interests based on what showed up in everyone's selfies. Best For: Strategic minds seeking to decode enigmatic clues and outsmart opponents in a witty word game. If you've ever played one of my favorite board games, Codenames, this one packs all the fun—but now, it's online! In this word game, each Spymaster tries to get the other team to guess a combination of words on the table by giving a one-word clue. For example, in the above picture, if you needed to have your teammates guess the words "Bowl" and "Knife," you might give the clue "Kitchen." If you've never played Codenames, this one's a great starter icebreaker that's super helpful if you want to boost creativity. Head on over to . Click on the CREATE ROOM button. Select the preferred game settings and start the game. Connect with your friends using your favorite audio or video chat. Share the room URL with your friends. Enjoy the game! Best For: People who love drawing (even if they are terrible at it!) Even if you're not artistic, this game is absolutely funny and fun. Gartic Phone gives you a short time frame to sketch photos based on other players' prompts—and can result in some hilarious artwork. Imagine trying to draw your teammate's prompt of "Harry Potter riding a unicorn in space." The weirder the prompt, the crazier the doodles! Here's how to play this game that combines the classic games "Pictionary" with "Telephone." Go over to . Whip up a nickname and select an avatar that screams "you." Hit "Start." Click the "Invite" button and broadcast the link to your team. Once the game starts up, everyone is invited to write down a hilarious sentence. Wait for a sentence from your colleague, and then give it your artistic spin. Next, it's your turn to interpret someone else's doodle by guessing the original sentence. Have fun and unleash your inner Van Gogh! Best For: Animal lovers, whether furry, leafy, or miniature human ones! This icebreaker idea is super simple, and who doesn't like pets? It's best performed for remote teams that are newer and/or as a first-day icebreaker. Here's how: Have your remote team grab their pets or show a picture of them. Start the introductions! You can start off with the basics (name, age, where you got him/her), but make sure to throw in one personal/fun story you had with your pet. Pro tip: If your teammate does not have a pet, ask them to describe their ideal pet. Or meet each other's kids. Or meet each other's plants. Feeling funky? Ask them what their spirit animal is! Best For: Tapping into your team's inner Picasso while testing their quick-thinking skills in a vibrant guessing game. If you're a big fan of draw-and-guess games, then this one's for you! Drawasaurus is Pictionary with a twist where everyone gets a shot at the scoreboard—the artist and the guessers alike. The game slips a secret word to the doodler, who then creates a visual puzzle for others to solve. The speed of your guesses matters—quicker guesses mean more points. If every participant manages to decode the drawing, the artist also hits a points jackpot. This sure adds an extra dose of fun to the classic game, doesn't it? Head on over to . Choose a nickname (no stress, this won't kick off the game). Tap + Create a Room. Make your room Private, give it a name, set a password, and select the number of players you want. Copy the link from the URL bar and send it over to your team. When everyone's geared up and clicks Ready to Play, the game begins. Take turns picking a word to sketch, while others try to guess it. Rack up points by being the quickest to guess correctly. Have fun! Best For: Best For: Armchair explorers and globetrotters looking to test their geography and deduction skills in a thrilling virtual quest. I absolutely love GeoGuessr—it's especially fun if your team is located across the globe or loves to travel. GeoGuessr is a captivating global exploration game that virtually parachutes you into a random corner of the world, using a street view panorama. Your objective? To scour the surroundings for clues that might help pinpoint your exact location on the world map. For example, GeoGuessr might drop you in a random spot on a canal, and you might use building signs or other clues to help you guess where in the world you are. Here's how to play: Head to . Sign up for an account. Click on "Party" to create your own room. Invite your friends by sending them your unique room code. Start playing! *GeoGuessr does cost a small monthly fee for team play, although it is still recommended. Best For: Revealing hidden layers of team members through snapshots of their most memorable (or embarrassing) moments! Do you want to get to know your team on a more personal note? This icebreaker activity is a great way to break the ice by putting your most embarrassing/awkward/awesome/proud moments up front for the world to see. Before the video call starts, send out a team message to find an embarrassing/awkward/proud/awesome/proud photo on their phone and post it in the group chat. When the call begins, share the details about your photo! The more ridiculous the photo, the more laughs you'll get out of this icebreaker. Everyone has an interesting photo on their phone, so this is a great activity for everyone! Here's mine... Best For: Cultivating deeper connections over shared meals and intimate one-on-one discussions. Want a fun way to make a meeting more... dare I say... delicious? Enter: the Partner Lunch. This icebreaker requires a bit of prep work with your team, and it'll be better if you're in similar time zones. Schedule a time where you and your team can video call and eat a meal together. Find a partner. Randomly assign partners in your team to talk one-on-one for 10-20 minutes before your group call. Talk! Now's a great time for the partners to get to know each other over lunch. You can even have a list of deep questions to help facilitate discussion. Best For: Encouraging creativity, self-expression, and understanding team members on a personal level. The Personal Logo icebreaker is a fantastic way to get your team's creative juices flowing. It's not just about doodling a pretty image—it's a window into each person's world, reflecting their personality, interests, or passions. Here's how to get this activity buzzing: Give guidelines on what the logo should include—it could be a combination of symbols, initials, colors, or abstract shapes. Stress that artistic skills are not being judged; it's the thought and creativity that count! Set a timer for the creation process. 5-10 minutes should suffice for a quick sketch. If doing this in a meeting, consider having a quick discussion while everyone works on their logos. Each participant shares their logo on screen (either by holding up their drawing or sharing it digitally) and explains the concept behind it. Encourage team members to give positive feedback and ask questions about each logo. If your team enjoyed this, you could even consider having these personal logos professionally made or used in some team swag! Best For: Engaging quick-witted competitors who enjoy a playful battle of words and ideas. Flexing your rapid-fire brainstorming muscle becomes a thrilling challenge in Scattergories. The person steering the game can select categories as general as fashion and wildlife or as quirky as "famous comic book catchphrases." In every round, the game highlights a random letter from the alphabet, asking players to think on their feet and come up with any word or phrase from the chosen category starting with that letter. This game serves as a fantastic icebreaker, especially for those in your crew who can't resist a competitive streak. Go over to . Select your game categories, maybe you like "Team names," "Thiings You Shouldn't Touch," or "Superpowers." Hit the Create new game button. Set up the game's variables—the starting letters (a majority will be preset), player count, and round numbers. In the "Who can join" section, opt for Invited friends. Click again on Create new game. Grab the link and send it to your teammates. Everyone will be racing against the clock to fill multiple categories with words starting with a designated letter. Get through all the rounds and discover which teammate boasts the most impressive word arsenal! Best For: Adding a fun twist to virtual meetings, sparking creativity, and enhancing team members' storytelling skills. This fun-filled activity not only adds a splash of color and joy to your meetings but it also nudges team members to showcase their creative sides and storytelling skills. Let's see how you can get this show on the road: Challenge your team members to pick a virtual background that is uniquely creative or amusingly original. During the meeting, set aside time for each participant to present their background choice, along with the story or concept behind it. After all presentations, host a vote to select the "Virtual Background Champion". This could be a quick poll or even a show of hands. Celebrate the winner and offer them a chance to lead off the next meeting or decide the theme for the forthcoming contest. Pro Tip: Having a hard time picking a Zoom background? Check out our guide: 101 Best Zoom Backgrounds to Rock Your Next Meeting Best For: Storytelling enthusiasts ready to weave a quirky narrative, one unpredictable word at a time. This game is commonly known as "One Word at a Time." It's a simple and fun icebreaker or warm-up activity for groups, and it's also super popular if you've ever done improv as well. Here's how to get started: Start the Game: The first person begins the story by saying a single word. It's often easiest to start with "Once," but any word that can start a story is fine. Continue the Story: The next person in line adds another word to the story, and this continues with each participant adding a single word in turn. This can follow a designated order, like going in a circle or following the order of participants listed in a video call. Listen Carefully: Participants need to listen to each word carefully to make sure their word makes sense in the context of the story. End the Story: Eventually, the story will reach a natural conclusion. Typically, the facilitator or someone who senses a good ending coming might say "And" and the next person can say "The" and then "End" to wrap it up. Best For: Encouraging communication skills, team bonding through friendly debates, and a creative way to learn about diverse viewpoints. This isn't just your run-of-the-mill icebreaker—it's a fun-packed mini-debate club that can spice up your meeting. Best part? While your team enjoys this engaging banter, they'll also polish their communication skills, flex their persuasive abilities, and experience the art of friendly debate. I love this icebreaker for flexing your creativity! Here's how to pull it off: Introduce the game and ask a teammate to share a non-controversial opinion. Set a timer for two minutes. During this time, the rest of the team attempts to sway the opinion-holder's view. After the timer ends, the teammate shares if they've been persuaded and why. Repeat with the next person. Best For: Diving into your teammates' minds through a volley of thoughtful and unexpected queries. In small groups, you can use great questions to get people to open up. Gather a list of icebreaker questions, or check out my favorite 57 conversation starters you can use. Have everyone take turns answering questions. If they don't like a question, they can choose another one to answer! Best For: Promoting cultural awareness, fostering deeper connections, broadening perspectives, and keeping meetings engaging. This simple, yet incredibly powerful activity, invites participants to share a tradition or custom from their culture. But here's where we crank up the heat: don't just stop at explaining the custom. Bring it to life! Share a personal anecdote, cook up a traditional recipe live, showcase an artifact, or even perform a quick traditional dance if you're up for it. It's not just about sharing, it's about experiencing. This allows for deeper connections, broader perspectives, and hey, it makes for an incredibly fascinating meeting. Just remember to keep the shares short and sweet to keep the momentum going. Best For: Uncovering hidden team traits and testing trivia prowess with a friendly dose of competition. One of the most fun icebreaker activities is to take quizzes and compare the results with your team! Here at Science of People, we absolutely LOVE quizzes. We've got a ton of quizzes backed with science to help you and your team understand each other: How open are you to new experiences? Are you extroverted or more introverted? Are you agreeable? See your traits in our Personality Test! Are you good at figuring out nonverbal communication? See if you can spot these cues with the Body Language Quiz. Have you ever noticed you date the same kind of person over and over again? That's because we have specific attachment styles—find out yours in our Attachment Styles Quiz! Do you love trivia? You can check out a list of other quizzes on Sporcle. If you can't take advantage of icebreakers for virtual meetings, don't sweat it! Here are some icebreaker ideas you can do in person. And if you want to increase your charisma while you're at it, check this out: Unlock the Secrets of Charisma Control and leverage the tiny signals you're sending – from your stance and facial expressions to your word choice and vocal tone – to improve your personal and professional relationships. Succeed with People Master the laws of human behavior. Get along with anyone, increasing your influence, impact, and income. Let's dive in! Best For: Sweet-toothed conversationalists ready to trade colorful candy for flavorful personal insights. This is my favorite icebreaker because you combine easy bonding with the best possible ingredient: sugar! To coordinate this icebreaker: Pick your favorite kind of multi-colored candy–a bowl of M&Ms, Starbursts, Skittles, or whatever tickles your fancy. Next, pass around the bowl and ask people to take as many candy pieces as they like, but NOT to eat them. Once the bowl of candy has been passed around, each person has to answer a question for each color they take. For example, you can assign questions such as: Red: What's your favorite book? Orange: What's the best vacation spot you have ever been to? Blue: What's your favorite kind of food? Green: What TV show are you addicted to? Brown: If you could have any superhero quality, what would it be? Yellow: What's the best part of your work week? Best For: Creative builders looking to showcase teamwork and engineering skills with a side of sweet victory. Another icebreaker based on food? Of course! This icebreaker's end goal is to build the tallest freestanding structure... out of spaghetti, string, tape, and a marshmallow. And if that wasn't enough? The marshmallow has to be on top! Here's how to play: Divide your group into teams of four. Hand each group these four things: 20 sticks of spaghetti, one yard of tape, one yard of string, and one marshmallow. Set a timer for 18 minutes. After 18 minutes, the team with the tallest standing structure wins! This is a great team-building exercise and also forces your teammates to cooperate with each other. I also recommend giving out a prize to the winning team—stacking uncooked spaghetti is definitely not an easy task! This icebreaker was originally introduced by Tom Wujec, who made a TED talk about it, which you can check out here: Best For: Injecting fun into mundane schedules, sparking adventurous spirits, and stirring up the team's inner explorers. If you want people to get out of the office, you also can have your icebreaker be a mini scavenger hunt. It can be around town, around the office, or around the building. For example, hunting for bugs is a great way to create an outdoor scavenger hunt for kids or adults. They can take a picture of the first bug they come across, which might not take long. Being outside will refresh everyone so they're more energetic for whatever's next on their daily calendar. Want more ideas? Check out our list: 40+ Scavenger Hunt Games You Can Try Virtually or in Person Best For: Laughter and bonding through uncovering truths and hilarious fibs! I love the game "Two Truths and One Lie," because it allows you to get a little more creative with your teams and to have some fun. Start by asking each person to come up with two facts about themselves and one believable fib. Next, everyone shares their three statements and the group votes or discusses their guess for the lie. For example, here are three statements about me. I have a pet turtle. Growing up, my family called me "Sasa" as a nickname. I speak Mandarin. Can you guess which is the lie? I do not have a pet turtle! Yes, my family called me Sasa because my little sisters couldn't say "Vanessa." And I lived in China during college. Fun facts, right? This icebreaker is a great way to get to know each other, and to have some laughs along the way. Special Note: If you have introverts in the group, it's nice to let the group know ahead of time that they should think of two truths and one lie for the meeting. This is helpful for not putting people on the spot. Best For: Adventure seekers ready to share their survival instincts and imaginative flair in a hypothetical scenario. Spice up your virtual meetings with the Desert Island Scenario. It's fun, it's simple, and it's your ticket to knowing your colleagues in an intriguing new way. Here's how: Set the Scene: Tell your team to imagine they're about to be stranded on a desert island. Pick Three: Ask each person to come up with three items they'd take with them. Real or imaginary, practical or bizarre, it's their call. Share and Explain: During the meeting, everyone shares their chosen items and explains why they picked them. Have Fun: Enjoy the hilarious, touching, or surprising revelations! Pro Tip: Give your teammates a heads-up to come prepared with their three items. Nobody likes being put on the spot, and it gives them a chance to think about their answers and let their imaginations run wild. Plus, it builds anticipation for the big reveal. Best For: Unleashing creativity and learning fascinating facts through airborne paper revelations! I love this icebreaker because it is more hands-on. Pass out different-colored sheets of paper to each person attending the meeting. Then, ask everyone to write an interesting fact about themselves on the piece of paper and fold it into a paper airplane. Then, everyone launches their paper airplane around the room. Finally, everyone retrieves one of the paper airplanes, reads the fact, and guesses whose paper airplane they got. It's fun to guess, and you learn new things about each other! Best For: Sparking curiosity, igniting laughter, and providing a unique, tactile team-building experience. Want to challenge your team's senses and create some laughs along the way? "Guess the Item" is the perfect in-person icebreaker to mix things up. I love this game because it tests your team's sense of touch and sparks curiosity. Here's how you can introduce this tactile teaser to your next gathering: Prior to the meeting, gather various objects of different textures, shapes, and sizes. Place each object in a separate paper bag. During the meeting, invite each participant to reach into a bag without peeking and try to identify the object inside only by touch. Allow each participant to share their guesses. The group can have fun

discussing and debating what the mysterious object might be. Reveal the object to the group once all the guesses are in. Rotate until everyone has had a turn. Best For: Unearthing memories and forging connections as you journey back in time with coins as your guide. Have a bowl of coins sitting at home? Perfect! They are great for icebreakers. Sort through the bowl to make sure you don't have any coins that are too old Then have everyone pick a coin out of the bowl. Go around and ask each person to share something they were doing the year the coin was minted. This is great for getting to know someone's past—and to test people's memories. Best For: Discovering unique similarities among your teammates. This is a great icebreaker if you want to get people moving around the room. Give everyone a list with each person's name on it. Set a timer and have people go around and find one commonality with each person in the room. The key is, you cannot share the same commonality with anyone else. If everyone in the room works at the same company, that commonality wouldn't count. This is a way to get people exploring beyond what they already know about each other. Best For: Encouraging teamwork, creative problem-solving, and healthy competition within a fun, hands-on environment. Looking to unlock the hidden architects within your team and promote a bit of friendly competition? The "Lego Tower Challenge" is the perfect way to engage your team. This hands-on activity encourages teamwork, creativity, and quick thinking under time constraints. Here are the steps: Divide your team into smaller groups, preferably of equal size. Provide each team with the same number of Lego bricks. Set a timer for the challenge. This could range from 5 minutes to 15 minutes, depending on the complexity you wish to add. The objective is simple yet challenging: each team has to build the tallest Lego tower possible within the given time. Once the timer goes off, it's time to measure the towers. The team with the tallest standing tower wins! Debrief and discuss. Ask each team to share their strategies and thought processes. This can lead to interesting insights about teamwork and problem-solving. Best For: Rapid connections, exchanging thoughts and laughs in a lively speed networking setup. A speed networking session doesn't just have to be for networking or new people. It also can be for groups that want to get to know each other. You can even do this with a large group of people, as long as you have a big open space. Ask everyone in the room to find a partner. Give everyone a conversation starter to answer and set a timer for two minutes. Each person has one minute to answer. After both people have answered and the two-minute timer is up, have them find a new partner and assign them a new conversation starter. You can do as many rounds as time allows. If you have a small group, you can make sure everyone in the room gets at least one turn with each other. Best For: Harnessing creativity, boosting team spirit and light-hearted competition through drawing and guessing. Here's the last icebreaker and also a fun one: Pictionary! You can do it online, as mentioned before, but it's also an amazing game to play at home—you can even bring it to your meetings as a cool icebreaker activity. If you've never played before, Pictionary is basically a word-guessing game where one player chooses a randomly selected word and draws it while the other players guess what the word is. Normal Pictionary is played using a physical board and pencils/pens. You can also print out a Pictionary board here and a word list here, and use candy pieces as playing pieces! Icebreaker questions are a fun, easy way to get to know people and lighten the mood. They are similar to icebreaker activities but usually do not require much or any preparation at all. Here are some great icebreaker questions you can ask! What is your proudest accomplishment? If you could write a book, what would it be about? What is the happiest moment in your life? What made it so special? What is the scariest thing you've ever done for fun? What is the best gift you've ever given/received? What is your dream job? What is something you were known for in college/high school? What's the best piece of advice you've ever been given? Where is one place you'd love to travel to? What does your ideal day look like? What is your spirit animal? Who would win in a fight: a horse-sized duck or 100 duck-sized horses? If you were a color, what would it be? What superpower would you choose to have? Why? What was your favorite television show as a kid? If you had a time machine, what time period would you travel to? If you could only eat one thing for the rest of your life, what would it be? If you had one wish, what would you wish for? If you were stranded on an island, what 3 things would you bring with you? What song best describes you? What's one skill you'd like to improve this year, and why? Can you share a book that significantly influenced your life or career? What's the best piece of advice you've ever received? Can you name a person who has had a significant impact on your professional development? How so? If you could go back and give your 18-year-old self a piece of advice, what would it be? What's an accomplishment you're proud of from the past year? If you had unlimited resources, what kind of project or business would you start? What's a goal you've set for yourself recently, and what steps are you taking to achieve it? How do you handle stress and maintain a work-life balance? If you could learn about any new topic or skill, without any constraints of time or money, what would it be? What's the most interesting place you've ever visited? If you could go anywhere in the world right now, where would you go? What's the longest trip you've ever taken? Do you prefer nature trips or city trips? Why? What's your most essential travel item? Have you ever traveled alone? What was that like? What's the strangest thing you've ever eaten while traveling? Have you ever visited a place just because you saw it in a book or a movie? What's one travel experience you'll never forget? If you could live in any city in the world, where would you choose and why? Do you prefer working in teams or independently? Why? How do you typically organize your workday for maximum productivity? What motivates you most at work? What kind of work environment helps you to be most productive? Do you prefer to have clear guidelines or do you like having the freedom to figure things out yourself? What part of your work process do you find most fulfilling? How do you handle feedback and criticism at work? What is your preferred method of communication in a professional setting (email, phone call, in-person, etc.)? How do you usually handle tight deadlines or high-pressure situations? How do you ensure a good work-life balance? An icebreaker should not be too long, or it will take time away from the actual meeting. Icebreakers typically last anywhere from 5 minutes to 20 minutes. It should last enough time for people to feel comfortable and relaxed enough to easily discuss more important topics later on in the meeting. These are my favorite icebreakers, and they work for different-sized groups. When thinking about having a successful meeting or retreat, we often think about the basics, such as a strong agenda, a yummy lunch, and planning. These are all good strategies, but don't forget about the professional warm-up. A good icebreaker can break the tension, break the awkwardness and, of course, break the ice. To your success, Vanessa Leaders facilitating icebreaker activities may reap the benefits of a more cohesive team by experiencing 21% increase in profitability —one willing to collaborate and go the extra mile together to produce results. The real challenge is finding get-to-know-you icebreakers for adults that avoid eye-rolling, crossed arms, and frustration. Hopefully, you'll find something that works for your team and cultivates stronger workplace friendships among these 60 non-cheesy icebreakers. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average American spends 7.8 hours at the office or 5.6 hours working remotely per day. Needless to say, work occupies the majority of most people's time. Because we spend long hours working, forming bonds with our coworkers is crucial. Building friendships at work allows team members to ask questions, seek help on tasks, and increase productivity. About 32% of employees say having a best friend improves workplace satisfaction. Meanwhile, other studies show bonding with coworkers makes you seven times more engaged in your work—particularly crucial for remote teams with minimal interaction. Ice breakers can help start conversations and enable team members to find common ground. The goal is always to help teams get to know one another on a deeper, more collaborative level. Teams often comprise all types of people with different personalities, making the extra workplace special. Discover everyone's talents, interests, traits, and quirks with these 60 get-to-know-you icebreakers for adults. On average, you have seven seconds to make a positive first impression on someone—it can be difficult for remote workers to achieve this through a computer. Fortunately, get-to-know-you icebreakers for virtual teams can help both new and old employees bond online. Ask your team to have something ready for show-and-tell during the next virtual meeting. Maybe it's a favorite picture, an artifact, or something special they received from a relative. Have them upload a photo of their item in the chat box or ask them to share about it for a minute. You or a volunteer can say two truths and a lie about yourself to see if attendees can guess which statement is the lie. You can play this "Round Robin" style or only do a few rounds per meeting if you're under time constraints, but this is a fun way to get to know your office mates. Send an email asking teams to upload a background picture based on a specific topic. Some ideas could include the following: Someplace they want to visit Their favorite holiday A favorite hobby outside of work A photo of their pet Background photos can be one of the easiest get-to-know-you icebreakers for virtual teams. Remote teams miss the opportunity to get together for cocktails and drinks after work—traditionally, a prime time to bond with coworkers. Host a virtual cocktail hour after work one evening for your remote team to relax and hang out with their favorite drink from the comfort of their home. Allow everyone to share something unique about themselves during your next virtual meeting. This get-to-know-you icebreaker allows coworkers to discover hidden talents and interests they wouldn't have otherwise known. You may even find ways to leverage those unique talents, skills, and interests in the workplace. Start each virtual meeting with a question about your employees' favorite things. For example, you might ask them the following: What's your favorite app? What's your favorite type of food? What's your favorite place you've traveled to? People can share their answers in the chat box as the meeting progresses. Your remote team could be spread out across the country or worldwide, allowing coworkers to share about their current location. Have your team describe the weather in the chat box with an emoji. You can also use emojis to describe their favorite remote work environments—such as at home, a café, or a bookstore—or their city and state. Then, have coworkers try to guess where they are. Teams can also use emojis to describe just about anything. Maybe have your team represent their favorite book, hobby, or what they did over the weekend with three to four emojis. Coworkers can then try to solve the puzzle while learning more about each other. When you schedule your virtual team meeting, ask employees if they've recently reached any personal or professional milestones they'd like to share with their coworkers. Have them email you in advance so you can work in a section of the meeting to celebrate their achievements with the team. A workplace with few employees is ideal for fostering more profound relationships. To help with this task, managers can deliver several get-to-know-you icebreakers for small teams during meetings and retreats. Have team members reflect on and share their three most personal or professional successes with their coworkers. This game allows attendees to shine and feel celebrated for past and present achievements. Associate a topic with each color M&M—red could be a favorite memory, green could be a favorite movie, or blue might be a favorite song or band. Have each coworker take an M&M from a jar and share an answer for whatever topic is associated with that color. Each team member should write something they did on a piece of paper, fold it up, and toss it in a bowl or hat. Pull out one piece at a time, sharing it with the group. Everyone can then try to guess who did the activity on the paper. Ask your team to contribute some of their favorite songs to create a workplace playlist. You can play the music quietly in the background during the day or have employees share and listen to music while working. Pro Tip: Set ground rules for the type of songs employees may add to the playlist. For instance, they should select songs without profanities or derogatory terms. Pair off employees to talk for about five or 10 minutes. During this time, they should try to find 10 things they have in common. Then, allow the pairs to tell the rest of the team about their uncovered similarities. A beach ball toss is the perfect get-to-know-you icebreaker for adults. Write several questions on a beach ball and have the team stand in a circle. Whenever a team member tosses the ball to someone, the catcher must answer the question in front of them before throwing it to another person. Go around the room and have everyone describe themselves in one word for every alphabet letter. For instance, you might start with "adaptable," while the next person might say "bold." A variation of this game might be to describe the person next to you according to whatever letter you land on. Small teams are one thing, but facilitating get-to-know-you icebreakers for large groups requires you to be more strategic. These seven icebreakers might do the trick. For this game, employees must stand in a line or a circle. One person should whisper a sentence about themselves in the first person's ear. The following person will relay that sentence to the next person until it works its way around the room. The fun is in how the original sentence gets twisted by the end. Everyone should hold a finger up as someone says a "never have I ever" statement. Group members who have done that activity should put their finger down. This particular icebreaker is excellent for starting discussions among players, as many will want to hear the story behind each statement. Pro Tip: Remind the team that statements should be work-appropriate and avoid offending anyone. Save time with get-to-know-you icebreakers for large groups by making activities short and sweet. At the beginning or end of a meeting, go around the room having everyone share their superpower with the team. For example, you could talk about your ability to connect with strangers or cook amazing meals. Each player should write three open-ended questions down on a sticky note. Give the group 10 minutes to find someone to ask the questions and spark conversation. Afterward, ask the group to share what exciting facts they learned about their coworker. The team should write down questions on small sheets of paper and throw them in a bowl. Then each attendee can pull out a question to ask the person sitting next to them. These questions shouldn't be too invasive but ideal for starting a casual conversation, or just for everyone to share an interesting detail about themselves. Have people nominate and vote on superlatives for their coworkers before the next team meeting. Superlatives are a fun way to recognize employees for skills, kindness, and quirks that make others smile. Pro Tip: Again, this game is meant to be fun and should avoid offending people on the team. Always vet the superlatives before allowing anyone to nominate or vote for their coworkers. Choose an attendee to be a "mystery guest" and jot down five things about them. During the meeting, read the facts to the rest of the members without revealing who the mystery person is and see if anyone can guess them. New hires will likely be nervous on their first day of work. Ease them into the friendly workplace with these get-to-know-you icebreakers during orientation. Sharing details about yourself with strangers can be uncomfortable or scary—that's why a simple introduction may be best for new employees. Go around the room, allowing everyone to say their name, new role, and any other detail they'd like to share about themselves on their own terms. Personality quizzes are fun for getting to know someone and can help managers determine a new hire's strengths. Take the Big Five personality test to see where you rank for the science-backed 5 basic traits: Openness, Conscientiousness, Extroversion, Agreeableness and Neuroticism. Read more here. Host a 20- to 30-minute coffee mingle in the morning before a new-start orientation. This will allow all the new hires to gather and meet each other. Encourage current team members to attend and meet their new coworkers, too—a practical way to ease everyone's nerves and make newcomers feel welcome. Sometimes, writing and answering get-to-know-you questions is the best way to learn about each other without pressure—new hires are nervous enough on their first day. Write down several questions and put them in a hat. Pass the hat around and have each new hire pull a question to answer. You can go around several times. Host a trivia game with questions about the company. Undoubtedly, many of the new hires will already know facts about the business from their interview prep. This game is also helpful in teaching the new hires more about the company's mission and accolades. Pair up the new hires during orientation and let them mingle for about five to 10 minutes. Then, have everyone introduce their partner to the group—it's a nice twist on introductions that new hires may appreciate. Who knows? Maybe they'll even make a new friend on their first day. Sometimes, you only need a quick get-to-know-you icebreaker to start a meeting. These rapid-fire icebreakers are excellent for checking in with each other at work. What was everyone up to over the weekend? Did they do anything fun? Start Monday morning off right by having everyone tell a six-word story about their time off. Six-word stories are short and to the point, giving others enough time to share something interesting and get down to business. Before starting a virtual meeting, ask the team a "would you rather" question. For instance, would they rather run a country or a business, or live in a big city or a remote mountaintop? Attendees can then type their answers in the chat box and spark a conversation while you touch on the meeting topics. This game is excellent for understanding everyone's mindset on particular projects or issues. Have each team member express the following opinions: Rose: Something positive that happened or a win Thorn: Something they're struggling with, such as a work assignment Bud: Something they're excited about or would like to share Pro Tip: Play this game with teams of 10 or fewer people to keep it quick. This activity is fun if you have a large team with diverse backgrounds and cultures. Get a world map printed on a large poster. Everyone can then write their name on a small tag and tack the paper to wherever they're from on the map. It's an excellent way to visually bring the team together and celebrate what makes them unique. Everyone loves their furry friend, so take a few minutes for employees to share a funny story about their pet. You might even invite everyone's dogs, cats, and other animals to the next virtual team meeting for an animal meet and greet. Hopefully, each team member loves working at your company—but there was likely a past job that wasn't their favorite. Spend a moment for people to share about their worst job. It could be working in fast food as a teenager or something else. You never know who can relate to those experiences. Take a minute or two before a meeting for employees to snap selfies with each other. Then have them send the photos to a designated work email. When visitors come to the office, you can display the photos in a digital picture frame at the front desk. It's an excellent way to showcase workplace friendships and teamwork. Goal-setting doesn't come quickly to everyone, so collaboratively working on creating goals for the upcoming year is a good idea. Speak with your team about what they accomplished last year and what they look forward to in the year ahead. They can then help one another devise a plan to achieve their goals. Before every meeting—in-person or virtual—ask a "favorite" get-to-know-you question, such as your favorite food, book, or sports team. Employees may find it easier to bond with their coworkers over similar interests. Watch our video below to learn how to warm-up any meeting with these 8 icebreakers: "Work isn't supposed to be fun," said no one ever. Actually, teams will probably get along much better if they can all laugh and have a good time. Charades is a popular party game enjoyed by many people—it's also bound to cause a few laughs. Although charades may not necessarily have teams getting to know each other on a personal level, the game can help them relax and grow more comfortable around one another. Split a large group into smaller teams, having them come up with an interesting movie pitch to share. They might include details from their lives to make the movie more interesting. At the end of the share, everyone can vote on their favorite movie pitch. Have one employee sit in the hot seat for five to 10 minutes during each meeting. Their coworkers can then ask them questions within that timeframe to get to know them better. If it eases some people's worries, you might volunteer to be the first in the hot seat. Attendees can learn more about their managers that way, too. Guess the childhood photo Send an email to the team requesting them to bring a childhood photo to the next meeting. Show each picture to the attendees and have them guess who it is. This game is excellent for playing with small, large, or virtual teams. Every team member should write their name backward on a sheet of paper and toss it into a bowl or container. Someone will draw the name and read it aloud, and then everyone needs to guess who it is. Whoever gets the most points at the end of the game wins—you might even reward them with company merch such as a mug or pen. Go around the room and have people share who they would invite to dinner—the person could be dead, alive, a celebrity, or a personal acquaintance. These fun get-to-know-you icebreakers are great for sparking conversations about coworkers' values and who they admire. Have teams write down five items from their bucket list before the meeting. Then, go around the room and let them share what they want to do in their lifetime. Some coworkers may have actionable tips for helping others cross the items off their lists or have done the activities themselves. For fun, have everybody write down their favorite actor, cartoon character, color, or other person or object on a nametag — it can be a different theme for every meeting. Then call on them by whatever's written on their name tag when it's their turn to speak. Studies show 86% of employees and managers say a lack of collaboration results in failures at the office. These get-to-know-you icebreakers can help cultivate teamwork by encouraging conversation and connection. There are many ways to play the compliment game with your team—you can toss a small ball around and have the person who catches it give a compliment to someone else. They'll then pass the ball to them so they can compliment another person. You can also have employees approve the person sitting beside them and go around the conference room. Similar to the previous game, have team members say a one-word compliment about their coworkers. This game might be most straightforward by putting everyone's name in a bucket and letting everyone pull a name and give a compliment. Allow an employee to teach the team a hobby—this is something you can do monthly or bi-monthly. With so many unique talents and interests, coworkers can enjoy learning about their officemates and participating in something they enjoy doing. Collaboration is all about sharing and commingling great ideas, so why not have everyone create a neverending story? Start a story with one sentence and have the next person give another sentence. Go around the room to find out how crazy the plot gets. Professional learning and development occur when coworkers can depend on each other. Go around the room and have each employee share something they're struggling with in their jobs. Allow the rest of the team to help them develop solutions or offer to mentor them on a specific task or skill set. Everyone has likely met incredible people throughout their careers and mentors who've imparted profound advice to help others achieve professional success. Why not have everyone write down the best advice they've ever received and hang it on a bulletin board in the conference room? It can be a beautiful way to inspire each other's greatness. Have one person stand with their hands on the hip, making a true statement about themselves. If someone feels the same way about themselves, they should link arms. The idea is to create a chain of employees around the room to demonstrate likeness. Volunteer work enables team involvement in personal interests and causes, allowing them to work together and make a difference in the community. Have your employees share what they're passionate about if there is an organization they follow. Then brainstorm a volunteer activity they can do, such as a park clean-up, toy drive, or food drive. Split people into pairs or small groups and ask what they hope to learn during the meeting. Allow them to talk about various topics and listen for answers during discussions. Afterward, they can follow up with their partner or team to ensure they heard everything correctly and square away misunderstandings. It may prove challenging to get the office introvert excited about participating in get-to-know-you icebreakers—most tend to dread these activities. However, studies show introverts can actually do well in social situations and adapt. Get to know your introverted coworkers and make them feel a part of the team with these five low-stress icebreakers. The positivity game is excellent for shy introverts who get nervous about speaking in front of people. Tape a piece of paper on everyone's back and allow people to write one positive thing on whoever's back they're facing. People get to know each other well and boost each other's confidence this way. This game requires only a short, one-sentence answer about a topic—ideal for introverts who repel the spotlight. Questions could include the following: What's for dinner tonight? Do you have a family tradition? What's your earliest memory? Coworkers can answer these questions quickly and get to know their less-talkative officemates comfortably. Pro tip: Introverts often need a moment to think through their answers. Give them a few seconds to gather their thoughts. Surveys show 74% of employees work better when they feel heard—even shy introverts. Give introverts a chance to speak on matters at the office, contribute fresh ideas, or ask questions by allowing anonymous shares. Before every meeting, people can write down an anonymous comment on a sheet of paper to be read and discussed among the group during the session. This will take the spotlight off someone shy. Go around the room and ask everyone to share one positive thing that happened to them recently. It could be work-related or something from their personal lives. Starting any meeting off with good news sets the tone and sparks joy amongst coworkers. Many introverts prefer spending time alone or in small groups than in a crowd—and that's OK. You can foster workplace friendships by creating an ideal atmosphere for coworkers to get to know their introverted colleagues. Create groups of three people to make conversations more manageable and less stressful for introverts. They can then feel more comfortable sharing ideas and sharing details about themselves. Get-to-know-you icebreakers are excellent for fostering deeper connections among coworkers. Here's a quick recap: Icebreakers can be as simple as having a meet-and-greet or coffee mingle before the workday begins. Plenty of excellent ways exist to engage remote teams and cultivate a friendly work-from-home culture. Fun get-to-know-you icebreakers should spark discussion but not pry too deeply into people's personal lives. Some icebreaker games encourage teams to help each other achieve their professional goals. Introverts shouldn't be left behind—several "quiet" icebreakers ensure shy coworkers get heard. Helping your team bond with each other can be good for business. Closer team members may result in higher performance, greater inclusion, and a sense of belonging.