

“total group exercises”

by Robert Alan Black, Ph.D.

Prior to the Opening session.

1. Print out and post attendee names by state and encourage the sign-in staff people to recommend that registrants network with people from their state.
2. Post attendee and faculty list by state in key spots.

At the beginning of a session (or during a keynote presentation):

3. stand up and shake hands around you
4. stand up and shift to right or left three people and shake hands around
5. form groups of 4 or 5 standing and share personal info (1.5 min per person)
 hometown (7 minutes total)
 nickname
 hobby
 one creative thing they have done
 one creative thing they would like to do
 one strange gift they have received or given
6. group by state
7. group by region
8. creative “wave”
9. form circles of 8 to 10, use old tennis balls, foam balls, wadded paper
challenge is to throw ball (object) around in alphabetical order (first name)
10. the time the groups to see how fast they can do it.
this is a great communication and group bonding exercise that can be
done in 10 minutes or less.
11. Have rows form in alphabetical order without leaving them row.
12. Have entire group form in alphabetical order
13. Find 2 or 3 people from your state/region
14. form a line by years in the organization or attending the conference.
15. Have everyone blow up a balloon and write their name on it
then have the entire audience bounce them up in the air for 2 to 3 minutes
without letting them touch the floor. (K-Mart 100 balloons = \$2 to \$3.00)
Then the challenge is to grab one and meet that person before breakfast.
(Balloon Brainstorming is what I call it--this one brings the house down and is
a great way to user people out of a room onto the beginning of
something)
16. Have everyone get four autographs from new “friends” or
“buddy” not old used friends.
17. Form groups of 4 or 5 and find 3 uncommon things you all have in common

Bonding Exercises--2

18. Form groups of 4 or 5 and find 1 unique thing about each individual in the group of the 4 or 5 (i.e.: Tom loves prunes, Bill climbs mountains, Mary ...etc.)
19. Play pass the "light bulb" or similar large light weight object
20. group sing-a-long different sections doing different parts
21. group sing-a-long different states/countries doing different parts
22. Form a giant rainbow around the room--every seat has a piece of colored paper or card (similar to card section in a stadium) each seat have a different one of six or seven colors.
23. Everyone has a piece of yarn or string and then the group is to tie their piece to two other people's
24. Everyone gets a piece of twine, string, yarn and a small name tag to write their name on it then string all the pieces and names together in one piece line.
25. Group people by region--each region stand then move together. Do 4 to 6 regions plus continents.
26. Each row signs their autograph to a sheet of paper/poster board.
27. Have poster boards displayed from states/regions/countries and have people sign them with their town.
28. Post a giant map in the hub for people to sign up where they are from.
29. Overhead of U.S. and other continents separately, you or someone on stage write the number of attendees from each state
30. Have a business card (make blanks or small pieces of paper available) pin up map or bulletin board.
31. Put signs on tables indicating home states, countries, continents at first breakfast or at a dinner during the week.
32. Hold a brainstorming contest (to answer a need of CPSI or a world problem) between states, countries, regions continents announce in newsletter who's ahead
33. Have all first-timers stand and challenge at least 5 "old-timers" to greet them and give them 3 to 4 minutes to do it.
34. Have all first-timers stand [give them a networking card (blank 5 x 8 or piece of paper) at registration] and have "regulars" give them their autographs challenging both to get or sign the most. 3 to 4 minute limit.

Bonding Exercises--3

35. Tie opening sessions "meeting" experiences with others at the closing session.
36. Group or stand people by field.
37. Group or stand people by height
38. Group or stand people by hair color
39. Group or stand people by length of or absence of hair
40. Group or stand by hobby
41. Give tiny colored dots or stickers indicating region/location or other demographic info to put on "Badges" at registration then have areas in auditorium pre-labeled (a logistics headache perhaps but easily solved through immediate volunteers)
42. Have rows tie continuous string out of small pieces then at end they are to tie the long one into a circle and attach their names creatively.
43. Hold a "hoola hoop passing" contest -- you would need about 30 hoola hoops and donate them to a local school or day care center
44. All stand alternating rows turn towards each other greet and find out something unique about each person they can (minimum 5)
45. Lay room out like a political party convention center with posters, signs, symbols, etc. to guide people where to sit
state, region, country, hobby, professions
46. Form Worlds--one person per region, country, continent only and then have these groups get to know each other.
47. Ask regulars to stand and then have them meet 3 new comers minimum.
48. Group people by color of clothes
49. Play **Pass the Message** in each row..."I am Tom from Michigan, You are Steve from New York. Then the next person says I am Betty from Wyoming you are Tom from Michigan and you are Steve from New York, so on and so on.until they reach the end of the row. As a row completes then they stand up and cheer.
50. Pass objects/things representing the states, regions, countries from the back of the room with the objects needing to get to people from those areas or other demographic factors.
51. Have people from each demographic factor shout hello. Then have them say their names simultaneously
52. Have each demographic factor group stand then **rapidly** shout out their names from the front to the back or back to front or side to side or a mixture.

Bonding Exercises--4

53. Put sheets of cheap paper on tables for people to doodle on, sign their names, or leave some creative thought behind
54. Brainstorm bulletin boards throughout the halls.
55. Brainstorm for ideas about world problem with boxes in hub to collect them
56. Post sheets of "Kilroy Was Here" sign in sheets for people to sign in and leave a thought behind in all session rooms.
57. Have a giant organization cartoon/doodle posted for people to add to during the program signing their work.
58. Challenge attendees to personalize their names badges by adding something about themselves on, around or next to it so we can learn more about them.
59. Have people give each other nicknames (one on one or in groups of 4 or 5)
60. Hold an exercise-a-long, fun or silly exercise
61. Hold an exercise-a-long, fun or silly exercise, each area doing a different exercise.
62. Hold a "body language" stand off--silly in one section, very serious in another, happy in one, sad in another, glad to see you, don't want to see you, etc.--basically have each section of auditorium do a separate type of body language (a list of typical types is included). A professional speaker friend, who specializes in body language does this and every group has a ball doing them.
63. Hold a be creative contest during the week. . .
most unusual tie
 badge
 nickname
 personalize license plate
 hat
write up samples in newsletter each day giving name, location, and brief description
64. Offer giant group games at lunch time
65. Encourage giant group exercise or accomplishments
66. Spell out creativity with people and photograph at lunch time
67. Spell out organization's name with people and photograph at lunch time

Bonding Exercises--5

68. Post "Have You Met 10 New Buddies" lately in all major areas and dining rooms--involve Joel some how in the promotion of anything along this line using a cartoon or photograph of him.
69. Shake hands with ten people in 2 minutes then sit down in a new location.
70. Find 5 people with 3 things in common, you announce a short list of categories, i.e.: have designed a house, sing, paint, invent, want to be more creative.
71. Have two rows join hands in a ring or loop then have them rotate to each other's row. Then have them drop hands once they are all in their new rows respectively then have them meet the new row behind them.
72. Have people meet each other up the rows rather than along them (5 to 6) 2 or 3 towards the front and 2 or 3 towards the back.
73. Have someone tell a Story (fable or fairy tale) involving the states, regions, countries and have the groups stand each time their group is mentioned.
74. Have someone tell a Story (fable or fairy tale) involving the states, regions, countries and have the groups stand one time, cheer the next, wave their arms the next when their group is mentioned.
75. Form a continuous human chain, looping back and forth across rows and walk out of the auditorium to rousing music that way after some one has spoken about the organizational family we all belong to in spirit.
76. Form a giant circle around the room or interlocking circles around the seating groups in the aisle ways similar to the Olympic symbol.
77. Pass names around sections simultaneously--Hi my name is Fred, Hi Fred my name is Tom, my name is Tom, Hi Tom my name is Brenda, Hi my name is Brenda. Start at one corner of the seating group and snake around it to the furthest person from the front corner.
78. Divide audience into groups of people by letter spelling **a word key to your presentation** . Then have them form groups that spell the word. **I. E.- Creativity** 600 people equals 60 groups of 10 so you count out 10 groups of 60 give them a letter and then let total bedlam break lose. Bedlam yes but fun and a chance to meet people you wouldn't have met. This is a logistic challenge but not impossible just fun and challenging.
79. Lead cheering spelling out **a word key to your presentation** using entire audience or another key word for the organization.
80. Lead cheering spelling out **a word key to your presentation** using separate sections per letter or another key word for the organization.

Bonding Exercises--6

81. Use a short movie or story about creativeness or creative growth, i.e.: Dot and the Line. Assign different sections a role to cheer or boo/hiss!
82. Pass a continuous ribbon, rope, etc. around the room
83. Have demographic factor meeting spots at social gatherings (signs, posters, etc.)
84. Have demographic factor sign spots at social gatherings
85. Form a world of people outside at a lunch time to photograph
86. Have the each state, region, country stand up find/select a volunteer from each and have others from the same s/r/c to meet this person to network by announcing their name.
87. Use unique demographic info to get people involved. . .
 - All those who have written a book stand up
 - All those who have read a book stand up
 - All those who can paint stand up
 - All those who can fingerpaint stand up
 - All those who have ever gotten paint on themselves stand up
 - All those who forget to use "Right Guard®" this morning stand up
88. Hands in air. Join hands above heads and chant or do a sing along do last part or chorus standing holding hands.
89. Hands in air. Join hands with two people not in your row. Purpose is to join everyone together. Then pass on a warm greeting in both directions. Then in one direction and then reverse. Or any combination of these.
90. All stand up join with three people with three different parts of your body no two matching between any two people. This is very funny. Some times it requires a brief demonstration on stage.
91. Divide audience up in sections or by rows and assign a different trait of creative people and have them talk about how important it is in real life. [limit to 10 or eight items]
92. Divide audience up in sections or by rows and have them discuss different things that need to be improved through the use of creativeness and creative thinking. [limit to 10 or eight items]
93. Divide audience up in sections or by rows and have them talk about creative examples from business, industry, education, life in general. [limit to 10 or eight items]

Bonding Exercises--7

94. Have entire audience deliberately spread out with one sit on either side of them empty throughout the auditorium. Then have different sections move to fill in the empty seats in other sections. One by one.
95. Have audience members share a funny sign, billboard, license plate or bumper sticker they have seen.
96. Break audience into groups of 4 or 5 and have them come up with names of 5 creative people they all agree on.(living or dead).
97. Have audience move to aisles, or 10 to 12 separate open spots in the auditorium then assign the groups separate numbers. Then individuals from each number group are to join up with individuals from the other 9 or 11 groups. Then introduce each other and then arrange by number in sequence and then finally they are to sit down in one row all together.
98. Count off audience by number 1 to 10 or 12. Then have them locate to particular aisles or open areas in the auditorium. Taken a minute and half once they are together to meet 10 of their "number". Then have them rapidly get with 9 or 11 other people and sit together somewhere in the auditorium. This is hectic and chaotic plus creates a lot of energy in the room.
99. Have the entire group form a world inside the auditorium and then sit down.
100. Have each person find a **"new buddy"**. Talk for 1 1/2 minutes. Then have them find another pair of **"new buddies"** to form a foursome of **"new buddies"**. Talk for 1 1/2 minutes. Then have them find another foursome of **"new buddies"** and then share for 1 1/2 minutes and sit down in a **"new buddy" eightsome**. This can be done in 6 to 7 minutes.
101. Have each person find one new friend and sit in a new location. Wait a few minutes after you have down part of the program and ask them to introduce their new friend each to two other new friends and then sit down and then continue with the program.
102. Divide audience into separate groups and have them make sounds of different animals.
103. Divide audience into separate groups and have them stand and make movements or actions of their animal.
104. Divide audience into separate groups and have them make different musical type sounds.