

A guide to icebreakers in the classroom



Considerations when developing an icebreaker



Audience

The personalities and skill sets of your audience, as well as familiarity, culture, and language, all affect how you craft your icebreakers. With more conservative and unfamiliar audiences, your icebreakers should be more conservative and content based, rather than personal or fun-driven. The purpose of icebreakers for these audiences differ, so their icebreakers should as well. We will go into this in more detail throughout the session.



Course objectives

The objectives of the course fuel the format more than anything else. If a course is very business content heavy, we lean to use more content based icebreakers, but if a course is a skill building course, we tend to use skill based icebreakers. We do this to set up the participant for the rest of the course. This is just a taste of what the rest of the course entails.

WIIFM/Goal of the activity



This piece is directly tied to the course objectives where we want to establish what will the participant achieve in this activity and does it line up with the purpose of the course overall, as well as the audience.

Format



This is sometimes predetermined and other times you have the choice, but the format of your icebreaker needs to work with the rest of the course. The tools and resources you use have to be able to reach the audience and be effective. For example, if you are running an MSO training, you shouldn't make your icebreaker something they can only do in person. Instead use the features of the format to enhance your activity.

Content based vs skill based

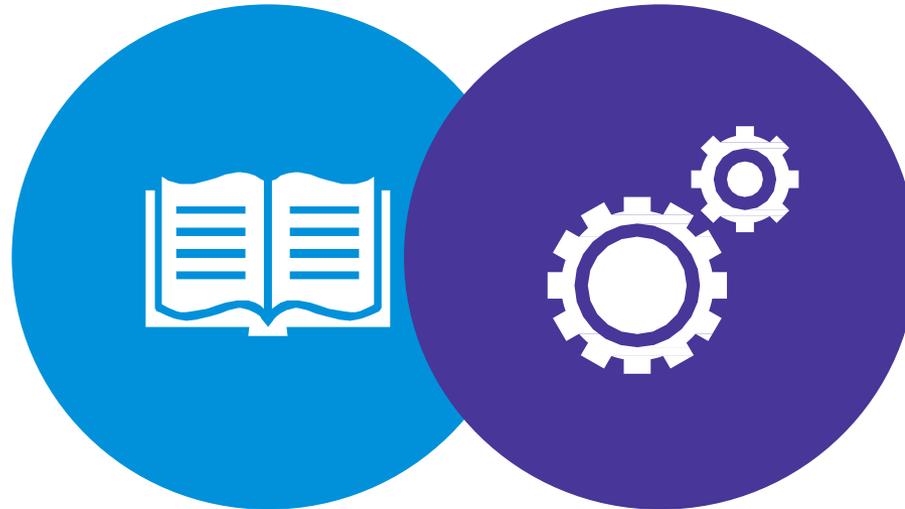
Determine the objective of the icebreaker.

Do participants need to become more familiar with one another?

Or are familiar participants learning new skills or content?

Content based

If participants are from similar level/role and/or are already quite familiar with one another then use the icebreaker to introduce course content. This level-sets the course for participants and demonstrates that this is a business information session, rather than a skill building session.



Skill based

If your participants are new to one another and/or the course is skills based rather than focusing on business content. This allows for flexibility in the actual content and focuses more on how people interact with one another.

Understanding the **WHY** this icebreaker activity is being performed is key to choosing the icebreaker type.

Select your icebreaker by audience type

Less conservative

More conservative



- Could be content or skill based
- Flexibility to be more personal
- More about making connections with people they don't often interact



- Could be content or skill based
- Flexibility to be more personal
- Clearly identified purpose and connection to course



- More content based
- Simple and direct
- Clearly identified purpose and connection to course

Setting the scene

- 1 Each participant is given a card that contains a “Did you know?” fact relating to the topic of the course.
- 2 Participants introduce themselves to their table, including your name, level, location and service line.
- 3 Next each table should stand up and partner with someone they have never met before. One partner begins by reading their card to their partner and the other partner responds to the question.
- 4 Partners should switch roles and repeat, using the card belonging to the second partner. Once complete, partners trade cards and head out to repeat the process with a new partner. The activity ends once everyone has paired up with everyone at their table.



30 minutes

Family feud!

Content based
example



25 minutes



1

In table teams, introduce yourselves to one another, including name, location, and service group, and then arrange yourselves in height order. The tallest person on your team will go first.



2

Using Family Feud rules, each team will face a random team to guess items within a particular category. The team with the most points at the end of the activity wins a point towards the overall challenge.



3

Debrief this activity by discussing each item within the category once all answers are revealed.

Check out the Family Feud, Jeopardy, and Who wants to be a millionaire templates on the KBSA Learning Library!

Transformations activity

Skills based
example



10 minutes

- 1** Introduce yourself to your table, including your name, level, location and service line.
- 2** In table teams, identify an every-day object (i.e. a book, a bottle, a cup) and discuss how it could be transformed for other uses and improved using batteries.
- 3** Once complete, select a representative from your team to share your object and its transformation with the rest of the group.

Connections activity

Skills based
example

- 1. Within your table teams, each member will introduce themselves one by one.**
 - Introduce yourself, including your name, location and service group.
- 2. Once you have shared, discuss and identify one common interest or fact between everyone in the group, that you think the other groups wouldn't have in common with you.**
- 3. Select one representative to share your interest or fact to the rest of the group and see if any other group came up with the same idea.**
- 4. Debrief the activity by discussing how the way you present yourself and connect with your clients and peers affects your relationship with your clients.**



Total Time:
15 min

On a mission

More
conservative
example

1. Review the items on your table and select the one to take with you in preparation for a client meeting:
 - Opportunity Scorecard (OSC)
 - Opportunity Pursuit Plan (OPP)
 - Client Interaction Plan (CIP)
2. Introduce yourself by sharing your name, location, service group and which item you chose.
3. As a table team, determine which document you believe is best to have prepared for a client meeting.
4. Debrief by sharing your decision as a group.



Total Time:
15 min



Who am I?

1. Select a Famous card from the middle of the table.
2. Using the Personal Power Statement criteria provided, create one for the famous person on your card.
3. Table teams will introduce themselves to their team, including name, location, service group and Personal Power Statement. The goal is to get your team to guess your famous person.
4. Debrief by sharing an exemplary famous personal power statement and reviewing the key elements to include.

Activity



Some tips for crafting your personal power statement:

- Start high-level.
- Slim it down.
- Say it aloud.



Total Time:
25 min



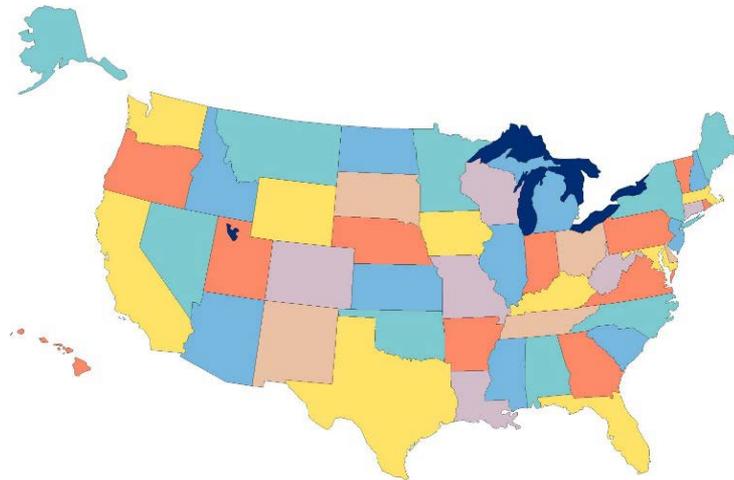
Where in the world?

Somewhat
conservative
example

1. **Each person on the team will plot the following three locations on the map, using the stickers provided:**
 - Your hometown
 - Your office location
 - One location on your bucket list
2. **Teams should compare their responses with one another, and evaluate locations that they have in common.**
3. **Debrief by discussing how we relate to one another and can find connections with clients in**

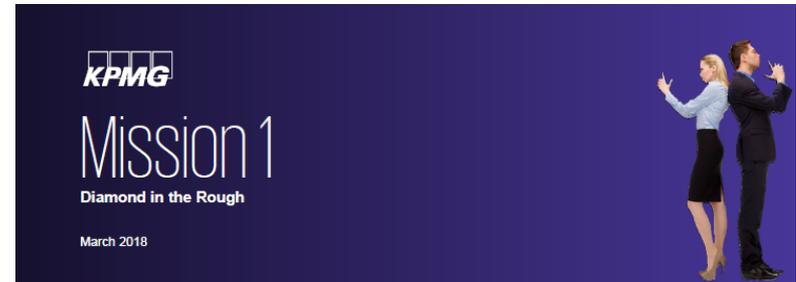


**Total Time:
10 min**



Mission 1: Diamond in the rough

1. In table teams, locate the details of your first mission on the Mission Portal on the scavenger hunt list (provided within the Mission) to find the listed items.
2. You have until the music stops (2 minutes) to collect as many items on Char Lee's list, using what's in the room only.
 - Teams will only be able to use what they can find in their purses, computer bags, tables, etc.
3. Once complete, count the number of items you collected with your team. The team with the most items collected wins a point towards the overall course challenge.

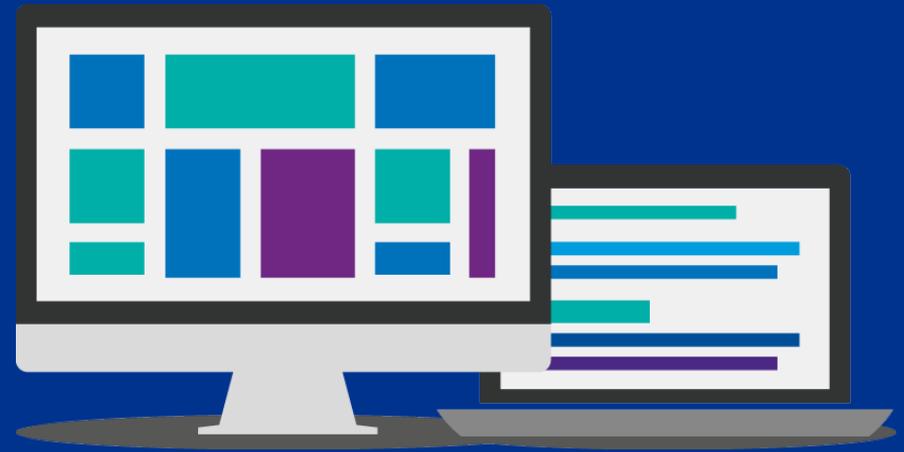


Working with your team... and against the 2 minute clock... gather as many items as you can on Char Lee's List below in your baskets. Items can only be found in this room. When time is called, the team that has the most items will earn their first Shining Star!

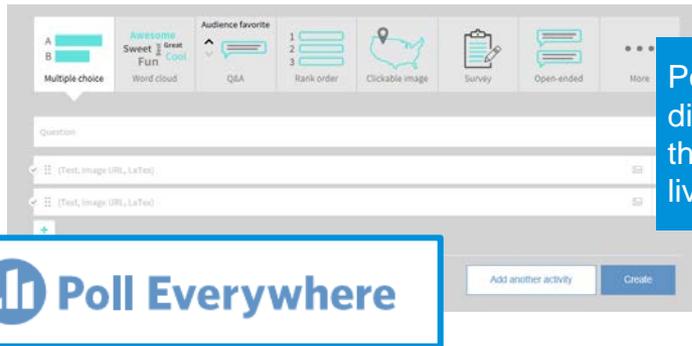
- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gum | <input type="checkbox"/> Flash Drive | <input type="checkbox"/> Energy / Granola Bar |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child's Toy (Rattle, Matchbox Car, Etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Cell Phone | <input type="checkbox"/> Sunglasses |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lifesavers Or Mints | <input type="checkbox"/> Memory Card | <input type="checkbox"/> Foreign Currency |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Safety Pin | <input type="checkbox"/> Bottle Opener | <input type="checkbox"/> Straw |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Calendar | <input type="checkbox"/> Agenda / Planner | <input type="checkbox"/> Dental Floss |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Comb | <input type="checkbox"/> White Out | <input type="checkbox"/> Phone Charger |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grocery Receipt | <input type="checkbox"/> Nail Polish | <input type="checkbox"/> Hand Sanitizer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shopping List | <input type="checkbox"/> Wallet | <input type="checkbox"/> Tissues |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pink Lipstick | <input type="checkbox"/> Shopping Discount Card | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> iPad | <input type="checkbox"/> Coupon | |



Virtual icebreakers

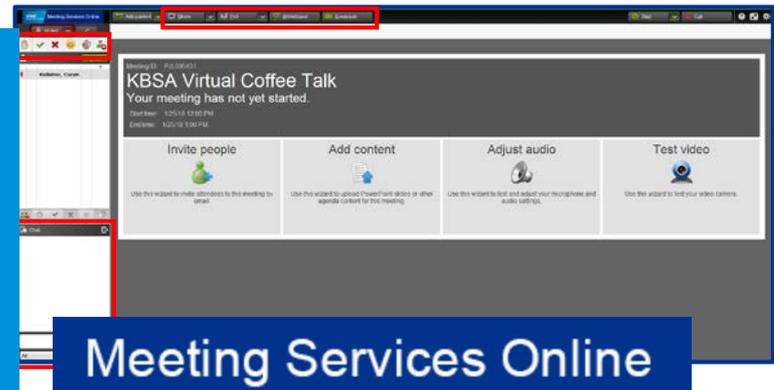


Tools you can use to create virtual icebreakers



Poll Everywhere helps you create polls for discussion, word clouds, and surveys and more that participants can answer either in advance or live and discuss.

If your course can fit into the WebEx format, consider using a whiteboard, polling, and breakout room features to have participants interact with one another. For example, you can have people mark their location on a map, find Waldo, or even use the chat feature to have participants introduce themselves and discuss particular prompts or topics.



Picture this!

1. Each person on the team will take a picture of the view from where they are sitting in advance of the meeting and email it to the facilitator.
2. All photos will be displayed on the slide. For each photo, guess who the photo belongs to, and where the photo was taken. For example, *“That photo was taken by Caryn, and that is a view of her backyard from her home office.”*
3. As the answers are revealed one-by-one, keep track of how many people and places are guessed correct. Each one is worth one point.
4. Tally up all points and the winner will receive two points towards the overall course challenge!



Total Time:
10 min

Personality quiz

- 1. Prior to the session, complete the Meyer Briggs exam sent out by your facilitator.**
- 2. One-by-one, introduce yourself, including your name, location, service group, and your determined personality type.**
- 3. Facilitator will navigate a discussion around the results of the Meyer Briggs exam, how different personality types work together, and how your personality type can work within this course.**
 - Use the interactive Meyer Briggs website to show all results and indications of each personality type to aid in discussion.



**Total Time:
10 min**

Fun facts

Virtual
example

1. **Prior to the session, email one fun or unique fact about your self to the facilitator.**
2. **One-by-one, each fact will displayed on a slide with the author anonymous. For each statement, guess who the fact is about.**
3. **Once your statement is revealed, introduce yourself to the group, including your name, location, role, and some detail about your statement.**



**Total Time:
10 min**

Popular opinion

- 1. Individually, select between two various opinions displayed on screen.**
- 2. Within your table team, discuss and attempt to persuade the other team members until a consensus is made for the entire group.**
- 3. Every participant will chime into the discussion. Once your opinion is revealed, introduce yourself to the group, including your name, location, role, and some detail about your opinion.**
- 4. Debrief by displaying the poll results for the entire group, and discussing how each table team came to their consensus opinion.**



**Total Time:
10 min**