KPMG

The little book of energizers
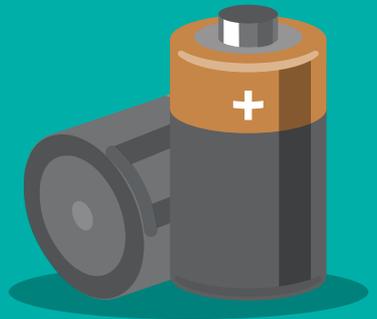
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General advice

— Try to get participants standing up every 50–60 minutes.

— Anytime there is a debrief: Instead of having people sit down, do the debrief with everyone standing and gathered around flipcharts (where applicable).

— For class discussions: Have the speaker stand up and pose the questions to another member of the class.

— Have participants use sticky notes to continue discussions: Have them stand up and add the sticky note to a flipchart at the front of the room.

— Consider having a different facilitator join the class to facilitate energizers. This gives a change of voice, pace, and tone.

The humming game

Materials:
Bits of paper with well-known songs written on them

How it works:
1. Copy a well-known song title onto two separate bits of paper.

2. Repeat this until you have enough bits of paper for everyone in the group (you may or may not need to join in this game as you need even numbers for it to work).

3. Hand out the bits of paper in secret and at random.

4. On the count of 3 the players must start to hum their song.

5. They then have to move round the space and try and find the person who is also humming their tune. When they find their 'duet' partner they must stand together.

6. The first people to make a 'duet' win, but keep going until everyone is paired up.

7. Finish the game by getting every pair to share their song with the rest of the group by humming it until someone guesses what it is!

A word of warning:
This game only works if everyone knows the song they have been given, so check with each individual as you hand out the song titles.

Debrief:
— What did the winning team do well that allowed them to complete their duet the fastest?

Assembling teams
Sport sorting

Materials:
Envelopes containing pictures of different sports

How it works:
1. This exercise requires a bit of prep work.

2. Hand out an envelope to everyone and get them to open them at the same time without showing anyone the contents. The envelopes contain a card illustrating a sport, e.g., synchronized swimming, rugby, karate, etc.

3. Everyone, without speaking, then has to act out their sport and find the other person (or persons) with the same sport. This is a recipe for total chaos and lots of laughs.

4. Give out prizes for the most expressive team, or for the first team to find each other.

5. If you do it as a large group you are all ready to split into your subgroups.

Debrief:
— What did the winning team do well that allowed them to find its teammates the fastest?

Variations:
— It doesn't just have to be sport—you could do it by profession, i.e., chefs, policemen, pilot, etc.

Materials:
A flipchart stand, flipchart, pens, and flipchart paper

How it works:
1. This game requires a little bit of prep.

2. In advance, work out how many pairs you are going to have. Each pair needs its own sheet of flipchart paper.

3. Tear each sheet up into 5 distinctive pieces. Put one piece from each sheet aside and pile all the other bits into the center of the room.

4. Give each team one of the starting pieces.

5. Their challenge now is to make a perfect sheet of flipchart paper as quickly as possible. The first team to do this wins.

6. Make sure they don't cheat by hiding other teams' pieces.

Debrief:
— How did the pairs collaborate and make decisions?

— What could they have done differently that would have made them more successful?

Assembling teams
# Flipchart games (Airplane)

Materials:
A flipchart stand, flipchart, pens, and flipchart paper

How it works:
1. Give everyone a sheet of flipchart paper and give them 2 minutes to turn it into a giant paper plane.

2. Line everyone up along one wall and on the count of 3 they are to throw them as far as they can.

3. The plane that covers the greatest distance wins, although you might want to also award prizes for best crash/design, etc.

Debrief:
— How did the pairs collaborate and make decisions?

— What could they have done differently that would have made them more successful?
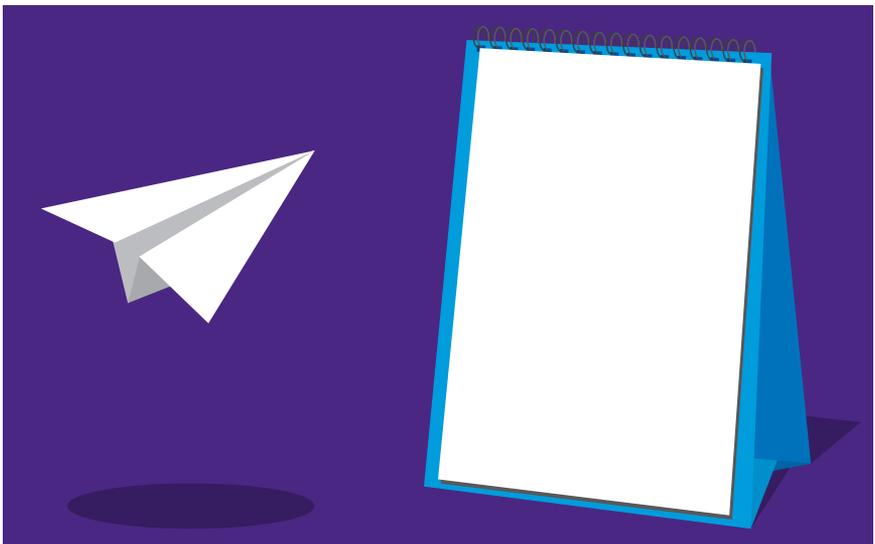
Helium stick

Materials:
Broom handle or large ruler for each team

How it works:
1. Divide the group up into teams of 6 or 8 and get each team to line up in two equal rows facing one another.

2. Tell everyone to hold out their hands with their palms facing down.

3. Lay the broom handle on top of everyone's outstretched fingers.

4. The object of this game is to try and lower the broom handle down to the ground. The first team to do so wins!

5. There is just one rule: Everyone must be touching the broom handle at all times! It sounds very easy but in fact it is very hard as the broom handle will "float" upwards even though they are trying to put it down!

Debrief:
— How did the team communicate and work together?

— What could they have done differently that would have made them more successful?

Tossing objects

Materials:
N/A

How it works:

1. Have everyone stand up and then explain: "In a minute I am going to toss an imaginary ball to someone in the room."

2. Say "Yellow, ball" and make eye contact with someone. Then toss the imaginary ball. Tell the recipient to say "Yellow ball, thank you."

3. That person then turns to someone else and says "Yellow ball" and tosses the imaginary ball to someone else, etc.

4. Have participants move the imaginary ball 2–3 times.

5. Then turn to someone new and say "Red ball" and toss the imaginary ball. The recipient should say "Red ball, thank you"

6. Then repeat the process, introducing a 3rd and 4th color ball.

7. Then call time and ask: "Who has a ball?"

8. When participants raise their hands, look for things like: do more people raise their hands than colors you have introduced, do the colors line up with the colors the facilitator introduced. There should be a bit of confusion and inaccuracy at this stage.

9. Begin a new round. This time, present a different type of imaginary object instead of a ball (you can pick anything). Pantomime using the object (e.g., cradling an imaginary baby and walking it gently to someone else, paper airplane, heavy box, a tray of drinks, etc.).

10. Encourage people to be present in the moment and interact with the object in a realistic way.

11. At the end, call time and ask who has an object. Most likely all objects will be accounted for, no duplication, etc. You should have a different result than you saw with the colored balls.

Debrief:

— The exercise highlights the importance of context. Context is what helps people remember.

— Emphasize the importance of being present (link to coaching and feedback discussions) in order to have a meaningful interaction.

Change it up

Materials:
N/A

How it works:
1. Have participants pair up and look at each other.

2. When facilitator says "go", direct the participants to turn around and change one thing about their appearance (e.g., move their watch to the opposite hand, roll sleeves up, etc.).

3. When the facilitator says to turn back, participants identify what changed about their partner.

4. Repeat for round 2: This time participants must change 4 things about their appearance, and the other person has to try and identify what changed when the facilitator tells them to turn back.

5. Round 3: Participants change 5 additional things—at this point people usually see all the changes.

Debrief:
— Focus on themes of change, commitment, fear, uncertainty, being focused on others/present in the moment, being open to change.

Cell phone

Materials:
N/A

How it works:
Have participants work in groups of three. Ask one person to be the observer. Explain that there will be three rounds and the participants will swap roles each round.

1. Round 1: The facilitator says "When I say go, one person is going to explain to the other what a cell phone is, but pretend the person is your 75 year-old grandmother, who does not use technology, and does not know what a cell phone is." Give them about a minute to do the explaining while the observer observes and takes notes.

2. Round 2: Rotate positions—a different person is the observer, etc. Facilitator says: "Explain to the other person what a cell phone is— pretend the person is from the 1950s."

3. Round 3: Rotate positions/roles. Facilitator says: "Explain what a cell phone is to a person from the year 1652."

Debrief:
— Call on observers to share what they saw. Topics to discuss:

   – Understanding your audience.

   – Tailoring your message to your audience, speaking in terminology they understand, not just reverting to the same talk track over and over, using/flexing your empathy skills.

   – Often what we see is that people start to talk slower and louder the further back in time you go; talking down to the person receiving the message.

Storytelling

Materials:
N/A

How it works:
1. Have participants work in pairs. Think of a fun way to pair them up.

2. Say: "When I say go, one person will be the storyteller and one will be the listener. You have one minute to tell a story about yourself. It can be anything."

3. After one minute, say: "Stop."

4. Say: "When I say go, the person who just heard the story needs to repeat the story back in 30 seconds."

Debrief:
— What you think is important and what you think everyone must have heard isn't always the case in terms of what your audience grabs onto.

— The "repeat backs" also usually doesn't have the same emotion or level of detail.

— You can control what you say but you can't necessarily control which parts the audience absorbs.

A one-word story

Materials:
N/A

How it works:
1. Have people work in groups of 10 or less. The goal is to construct a story, one word at a time.

2. Each person in the group adds one word to the story. Go around in a circle and each person adds one word to the story.

3. The facilitator will not provide a theme/guidance on what the story should be. The team decides.

Debrief:
— You can contribute to the story, but you can't force the direction of the story. (What you will see is some people get frustrated because they have an idea but by the time the story comes to them their idea doesn't work or all they are able to contribute is "a" or "the").

— You need to think about what the story "needs" versus what you "want" the story to be.

— You have to give yourself up to the greater good of the story. No one person is dictating; as a leader your focus is on others—if others succeed you succeed.

Variations:
— **Alternate approach #1:** Give the team a question and instead of a story, they have to come up with an "answer" one word at a time.

— **Alternate approach #2:** Give them the first sentence (e.g., "one day a cheetah delivered a pizza to my door") and last sentence of the story ("now I have a new job at work") and they have to connect the story from the beginning to the ending with each person adding a new sentence to the story in order to move the narrative along.

The Beginning and The End

Materials:
Index cards (at least 2 for each team)

Prep:
— On half the index cards write "The End" on one side and a random closing sentence to a made-up story on the other side (e.g. "As a result, I got a promotion at work."; "Since that time, I always wear a shower cap on the train."; etc.). On the other half of the index cards write "The Beginning" on one side and a random opening sentence to a story on the other side (e.g., "Last night, the pizza I ordered was delivered by a rabbit"; "Last night's hockey game went into triple overtime"; etc.). (Hint: make things up, make some super crazy, make others less crazy).

How it works:
1. Put all the index cards with their sentences face down on a table in the front of the room so that all the participants see are "The Beginning" or "The End".

2. Break the group into teams of 5–7 people. Tell each team to elect one person to be *the Lead* and one person to be *the Closer*.

3. Ask *the Lead* from each table to come up to the front of the room and take a "The Beginning" card and go back to their tables. Don't look at it yet!

4. Ask *the Closer* from each table to come up to the front of the room and take a "The End" card and go back to their tables. Don't look at it yet!

5. Explain: each table will line up in a row with the *Lead* on one end and the *Closer* at the other. The object of the exercise is for each table to create a plausible narrative based on the beginning and the ending cards selected. How it works is that the *Lead* starts the story by reading their card; then the *Closer* reads their card (so that the group knows the ending goal of the story). Starting from the *Lead*, the next person in line is responsible for moving the narrative towards the ending. (Hint: You should limit each person to one sentence or one thought. Note: The hardest position will be the person next to the Closer because that person will have to tie the story together).

Debrief:

— Teaming, communicating, working toward a common goal no matter how absurd the ending (or the beginning)

Variations:

— You could setup this activity at the beginning of the day, and have one team do the exercise as a lead into or back from breaks throughout the day. That way you can spread them out over the entire day, and it would also be a fun energizer. You could even have the class award points after each group goes for their story based on creativity; plausibility; humor (or whatever criteria you choose) and add them to running team scores.

Two truths and a lie

Materials:
N/A

How it works:
1. Get everyone to come up with three secret facts about themselves that they want to share with the group.

2. Two of the facts must be true and the other one needs to be a lie (but not an obvious one as that makes this game far too easy).

3. Taking it in turns, participants have to share their 3 facts and it is up to the rest of the group to guess which one is the lie.

4. Those who guess correctly get awarded one point.

5. The person with the most points at the end of the game wins.

Debrief:
— Was there a strategy to determining which "fact" was a lie?
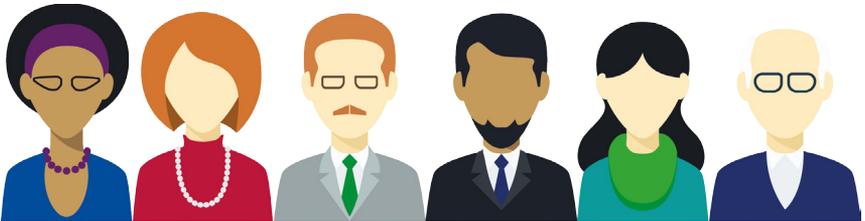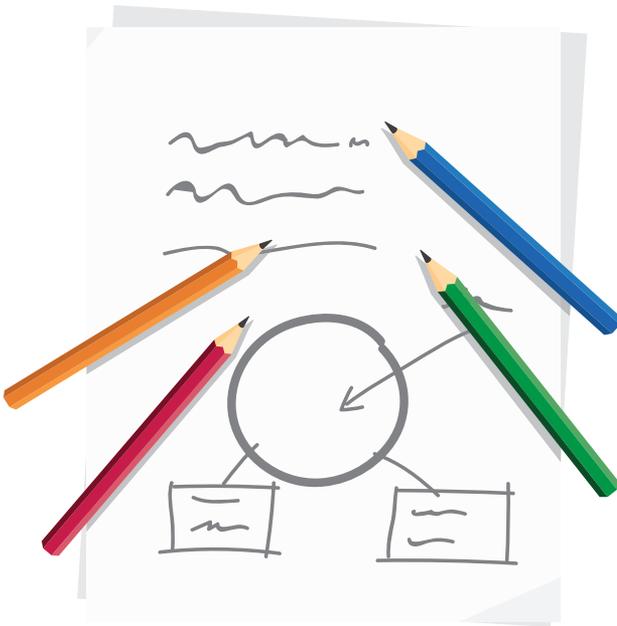
Finish drawing

Materials:
Enough half-finished drawings—one per person

How it works:
1. Hand out identical half-finished drawings to each person.

2. Everyone should finish their drawing in a way that says something about themselves.

Debrief:
— How did you decide what to draw?

Materials:
N/A

How it works:
1. Split the group up into pairs. You may or may not have to join in depending on numbers. Tell them you want them to count to three as follows:

   Person A: 1

   Person B: 2

   Person A: 3

   Person B: 1

   Person A: 2, etc.

2. It is harder than it sounds so give them a little while to get good. When everyone seems to have grasped it get them to clap their hands instead of saying "2." Give them several goes at this before getting them to stamp their feet instead of saying "3."

   Person A: 1

   Person B: Clap

   Person A: Stamp

   Person B: 1

   Person A: Clap, etc.

3. Stand back and watch them repeatedly mess it up.

4. The final stage is to replace '1' with a click of their fingers so that now it is all actions and no numbers.

5. Stop the exercise and ask the group what they found easiest—numbers, actions, or a mixture of the two.

Debrief:
— Most people say they prefer either one or the other—very few cope well with the mixture of the two.

— Link: "Today is going to feel a little bit like that game. It will be a bit strange at times but the more we practice the behaviors and techniques the easier it will get. If we kept playing this game for a few minutes more you would all become very good at it."

Company logos

Materials:
Sporcle Link (https://www.sporcle.com/games/g/corplogos)

How it works:
1. Direct participants to the quiz link on Sporcle (https://www.sporcle.com/games/g/corplogos)

2. Give participants six minutes to complete the quiz, identifying as many of the logos as they can in that time.

3. Ask participants: "Which of the logos were you NOT able to identify?"

Debrief:
— Why do you think certain logos are more recognizable/memorable than others?

Pictionary

Materials:
— Flipchart

— Markers

— List of Pictionary Words (written on small slips of paper)

— Timer

How it works:
1. Divide the class into two teams. (If you have a large class, you can form four teams).

2. Have each team nominate their first person to draw (the artist).

3. Have the artist pull a Pictionary word from the stack. The artist has 5 seconds to view the word and must then begin to draw a picture of the word on the flipchart.

4. Teams have 60 seconds to try to correctly guess they word. If they correctly guess within the allotted time, the team is awarded 1 point.

5. Have teams take turns drawing, each time nominating a new artist until each team member has had a chance to draw (or for a set amount of time).

6. Remind participants of the following rules:

   – The artist may not make any hand gestures or audible noises.

   – The pictures drawn cannot have any numbers or letters.

7. The team with the most points wins!

Debrief:
— What made someone a successful artist (artistic ability aside)?
   Ex: Did they try new ways to get people to guess the word if their first drawing attempt was unsuccessful?

Paper cups

Materials:

Dixie cups (25 per team)

How it works:

1. Give each team 25 Dixie cups.

2. Tell them to work with their team to create as many different structures as they can.

3. Note: Don't tell them that they can add to the cups or deconstruct the cups.

4. The winning team is the team that makes the most different structures in the allotted time.

Debrief:

— Did your team add to the cups or deconstruct the cups? Why or why not?

— Think about why you do things the way you do:

– Are you a rule breaker?

– Do you ask permission or seek forgiveness in deciding how you will proceed?

– How did these decisions impact your level of innovation?

— Discuss the problem with "This is the way we have always done it."
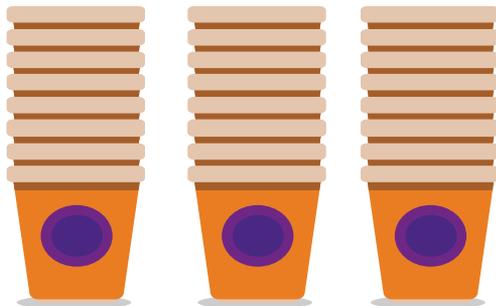
Networking
Smartphone game

Materials:
N/A

How it works:
1. Ask: "What song on Spotify/your phone do you listen to a lot?"

2. Call on a few participants to share their responses.

3. As each person shares their song, ask the class to raise their hand if they also listen to that particular song.

Debrief:
— Even something as simple as a song can help us to make connections with people we have just met or we may think we have nothing in common with.

Lightning Round

Materials:
— Something to use as a 5-second timer (phone, watch)

— Topics or questions written on cards or pieces of paper—
select topics relevant from that day's training modules

How it works:
1. Assemble participants into a circle.

2. Pick a player to start, the person to their right is the one in the "hot seat."

3. The starting player draws a card and reads the topic out loud

4. As soon as the card is read, the timer starts and the person in the hot seat has 5 seconds to give 3 answers for the topic.
   – For example: "Name 3 offerings the firm provides" or "Name 3 traits of a successful engagement team."

5. To keep track of points, the player in the hot seat keeps the card.

6. If the player in the hot seat cannot name 3 correct answers before the 5 seconds are up, they get no points and the play continues to move to the right.

7. The next player then gets 5 seconds to try to answer the same question. ***The tricky part is that they can't use any of the answers from the previous player(s).***

8. Play continues around the circle or as many rounds as the facilitator wants.

Debrief:
— There are no specific debrief questions, but the game is a very helpful approach to recapping key takeaways from a module or summarizing the day's content.

Variations:
— If someone cannot come up with 3 answers on a card/topic, you can eliminate that card and start with a fresh topic for each player.

Stand on a square

Materials:
30 discs (2 sets of 15)

How it works:
1. Put 15 discs down (you need a lot of observers).

2. Have participants stand on all except 1 disc—facing each other (7 on each side). The disc in the middle is empty.

3. Have two sessions running, one on each side of the room.

4. Explain that the people on the discs are consultants and the people in the audience are their resources.

5. Rules: You can move one ahead or jump (over someone) one ahead. Those are the only motions you can make and you can't get off the discs. There's a time limit on the game: 15 minutes.

6. Goal of the game: Which team can do it faster. They must move all fourteen people to the opposite side (so at the end the 7 people on left are on the right and vice versa—and are facing away from each other).

Debrief:
— This is a metaphor for working for the client and not having a process in place. Most teams don't use the audience resources, and the 14 people on the discs try to muscle it out and don't stop and plan, etc.

— Most teams are completely inefficient. How does taking the time in the beginning save you time and headaches in the end? Are you really serving a client if you are not thinking ahead and using your full set of resources?
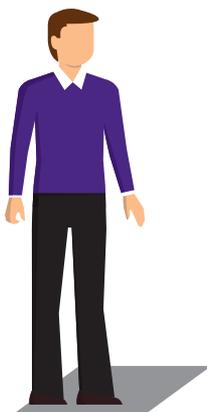
Apps

Materials:
N/A

How it works:
1. Ask: "What new app(s) are you using now and why?"

2. Call on a few participants to share a brief description of their app and have them explain how the app helps them to achieve work/life balance.

Debrief:
— Can apps help us to achieve a work/life balance?

— Will you try any of the apps that your fellow classmates described? Why or why not?

Notes:

kpmg.com/socialmedia