

Professional Learning Energizers

Group Problem Solving Index Card:

At the beginning of the meeting have each participant write down on a file card (3x5) a problem that they are facing with which he or she would like some assistance. They are to write their name and position on the paper as well. The cards are passed around, for the first 15 – 20 minutes and the other participants record their thoughts and solutions on the card. The card continues to circulate to each participant until everyone has had a turn at responding then it is given back to the originator who now has several suggested solutions to their problem.

Metaphorically Speaking:

At the beginning of your meeting have each participant fill in the blanks to the following statement: "Professional Learning is like _____ because _____." Each member of the table will then share their metaphors with each other. After that has been completed then they are to reach consensus over which one they will share with the larger group. There are no right or wrong answers, participants can use this to get to know one another, and it can create a positive energy, and offers a wide variety of associated responses amongst the participants. Other beginnings include: Staff meetings are like. Staff Development is like, Administration is like

Graffiti Chart:

Prior to your meeting have charts of paper with key questions listed for participants to respond to as they arrive to your meetings. This acts like a sponge activity, as people are arriving at different times. This will create a public display of information about the audience that is present and provide the presenters with some guiding information. Some ideas may include; Who are you?, Where do you come from?, What is your role?, and What brought you here? It can also provide you with some of the questions that people have regarding the session that they would like to have addressed.

Case Study Review:

Provide participants with a short case study on the topics that are being addressed at the meeting. This will access prior knowledge by the participants and will provide them with a common problem or situation to discuss at their tables. An example of this could be on the topic of decision-making. Provide the following scenarios and ask participant to identify which strategy they would use to address the problem. (See attached sheet A)

Who Knows?:

Participants write (3x5 index cards) down something that they have accomplished in their lives that they would like to share with the other participants. The cards are listed 1 through to 20 depending on how many people are in attendance. This activity is good for people who do not know one another as well as for established groups who have worked together for a long time. The cards are placed on the wall throughout the room and people move about reading them and trying to find out which card represents which person. Each participant is provided with a nametag. Give them about 5 – 20 minutes (depending on the size of the group) to mingle with one another and have them ask each other questions to see if they can find out some information regarding the cards. After the allotted time participants write down their responses as to who is represented by each card.

Famous Players:

On a table have a selection of pictures of famous people, Educators, Philosophers, Athletes, Actors, Writers, Civil Rights Leaders, etc. Each participant is to choose one of the famous people and pair up with another person to state why they chose this choice. Conversations might focus on their character, qualities, and the impact that they had on society. The exchange of ideas and reasons provides for a rich conversation and acts as an ice-breaker activity for the participants. Another version of this is to have 2 or more copies of the same picture (depends on size of group), after people have chosen their picture they are to find the person that has the same picture. After pairing up they exchange ideas as to why they chose the picture. Offers different views and reasons for choosing the person.