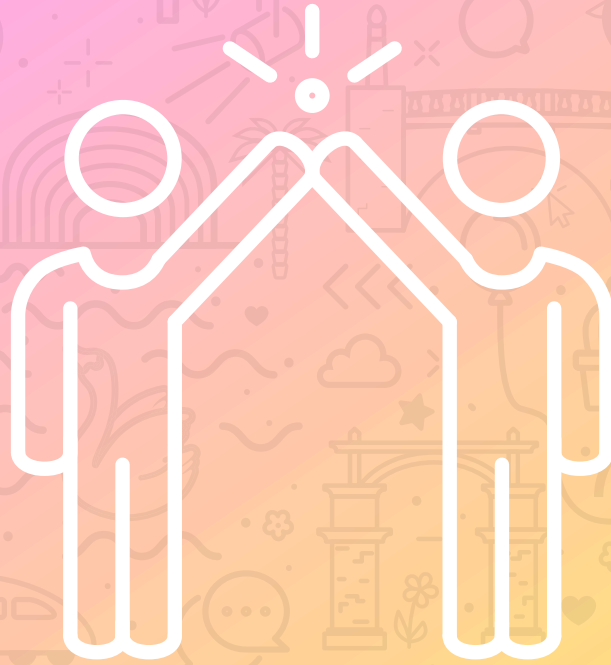


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iLead

Updated January, 2024

Your Interactive Neighborhood Training Source



ICE BREAKERS

PREPARED BY



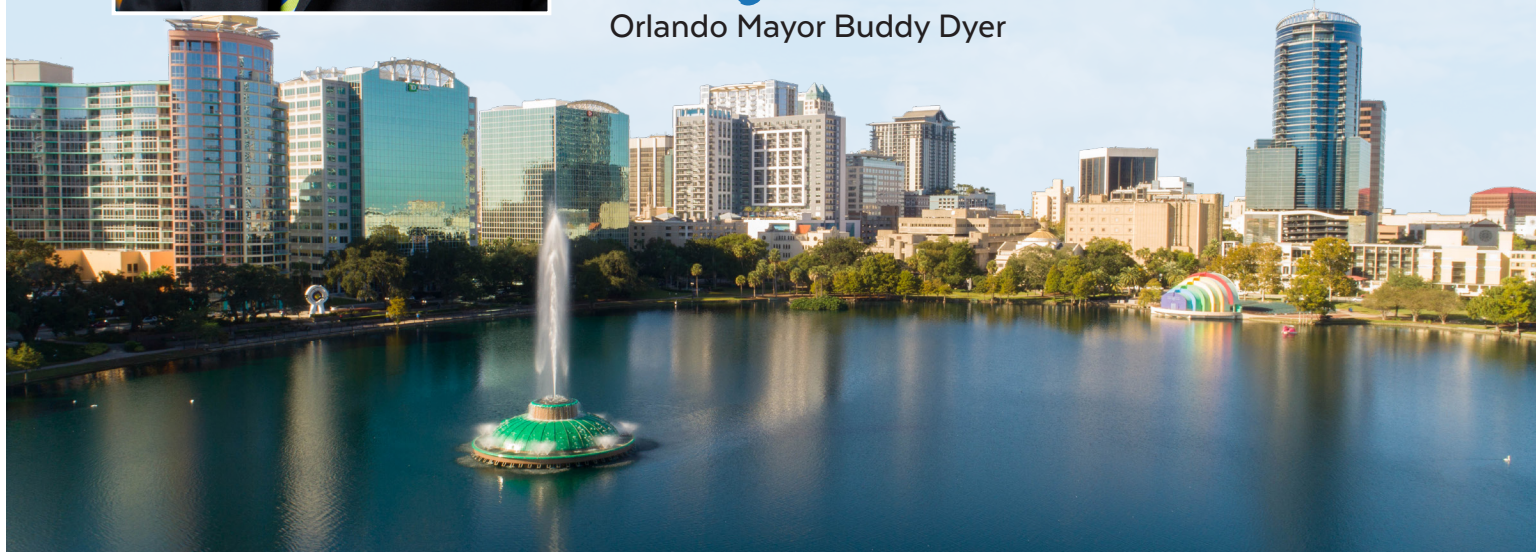
**CITY OF
ORLANDO**

COMMUNICATIONS AND
NEIGHBORHOOD RELATIONS



Our City strives to meet the needs of all residents who choose to call Orlando home. To do this, I have made it a priority for the Neighborhood Relations team to organize, support, mentor and guide residents and neighborhood organizations in their effort to keep Orlando a great place to live, work and play. In 2014, we launched iLead, a comprehensive neighborhood-training program that informs, connects and involves our neighborhood leaders through a series of interactive guides, videos, webinars and workshops. I encourage you to use the iLead program to build and sustain your successful neighborhood organization.

Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer



iLead

Your Interactive Neighborhood Training Source

iLead is a comprehensive program that provides you with the tools to inform, connect and involve your neighbors through a series of guides, videos, webinars and workshops. These tools cover topics such as how to effectively hold meetings, how to utilize a variety of communication tools and how to engage the next generation of leaders. Whether you download a guide, view a video, participate in a webinar or attend a workshop, iLead is your one stop shop for online leadership training.

iLead offers more than 25 comprehensive guides, including:

- Board Orientation and Operations
- Communication Tools
- Effective Meetings
- Engaging the Next Generation of Leaders
- Event Planning
- Ice Breakers
- Leadership Skills
- Neighborhood Grants
- Parliamentary Procedures made Simple
- Writing Your Neighborhood History

View the full list of guides on a variety of topics relevant to neighborhood associations at orlando.gov/ilead.



An ice breaker is an activity used to start a conversation or to lighten the mood in a group, meeting, event or activity. Ice breakers help **REDUCE THE TENSION** from the daily grind and encourage people to relax, open up, interact with others, laugh and are a great way to **START THE FLOW OF CONVERSATION**.



WHAT IS AN ICEBREAKER?

WHY SHOULD A NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION CONSIDER USING AN ICE BREAKER?

An ice breaker is a short and quick activity, lasting anywhere from 5 to 15 minutes depending on the audience size and purpose. A well designed and facilitated ice breaker activity can help get the meeting or activity off to a great start. Consider using an ice breaker when:

- There are many new people attending the meeting.
- People need to bond quickly to work towards a common goal.
- It is a newly formed team or committee.
- The topics are new or unfamiliar to many people involved.

USING ICE BREAKERS AT THE START OF YOUR MEETING OR ACTIVITY IS A GREAT WAY TO:

- Create a friendly and relaxed meeting environment.
- Help neighbors get to know each other.
- Connect neighbors with each other.
- Keep neighbors more engaged in the meeting or activity.

THE SECRET OF A SUCCESSFUL ICEBREAKING ACTIVITY IS KEEPING IT SIMPLE:

- Planning is critical to ensure success.
- Design the activity with specific objectives in mind.
- Make sure the activity is appropriate and comfortable for everyone involved.

WHAT IS THE ICE IN AN ICEBREAKER?



When using ice breakers the very first step is determining what you want to accomplish with the activity, think about the “ice” that needs to be broken. Here are just a few examples you may face as a neighborhood leader:

- Like-minded people coming together - the “ice” may simply reflect the fact that people have not yet met.
- People of different education and income levels - the “ice” may come from the difference in status between participants.
- People of different backgrounds, cultures and outlooks - the “ice” may come from people’s perceptions of each other.

(1) The above information is from About.com (2013). What is an Ice Breaker? (Online). Available humanresources.about.com/od/glossary/g/what-is-an-ice-breaker.htm (Accessed May 20, 2013)



USING ICEBREAKERS

The key to a successful ice breaker is:

- To make sure it is specifically focused on meeting your objectives.
- It is appropriate for the people involved.

Planning is critical to the success of your ice breaker. Start with answering why you are considering using an ice breaker and what value it will add to your meeting and objectives.

Ice breakers play a significant role in meetings when communication and participant comfort level are important factors. They help you ensure that all attendees are equal participants. They break down the barriers that exist naturally.

Once the “ice” is established, clarify the specific objectives for the ice breaker activity. For example, when meeting to solve a neighborhood issue, the ice breaker objectives may be:

“To establish a productive working environment for today’s meeting with everyone participating.”

IDENTIFYING THE RIGHT ICE BREAKER

Here are some suggestions on when to use ice breakers:

- When participants know each other and you want to warm up and get the discussion flowing comfortably.
- When participants are strangers, an ice breaker is a comfortable, simple way to make introductions, help people start communicating and sharing thoughts and generally, warm up the room.
- When participants don’t know each other but share a mission, an interest or an idea and have a lot in common, an ice breaker warms up the group prior to more serious discussion of the topic.



TYPES OF ICEBREAKERS

INTRODUCTORY ICE BREAKERS

Introductory ice breakers are used to introduce participants to each other and to facilitate conversation.

THE LITTLE KNOWN FACT



Have participants share their name, if they are married, do they have children, what street they live on, how long they have lived in the neighborhood, why did they choose to live in the neighborhood and one little known fact about themselves. This “little known fact” becomes a humanizing element that can help break down differences and encourage future interaction.

TRUE OR FALSE



Have participants introduce themselves and make three or four statements about themselves, one of which is false. Now have the rest of the group vote on which fact is false. As well as getting to know each other as individuals, this icebreaker helps to start interaction within the group.

INTERVIEWS

Have participants pair off. Each person then interviews his or her partner for a set time while paired up. When the group reconvenes, each person introduces their interviewee to the rest of the group.



PROBLEM SOLVERS



Have participants work in small groups. Create a simple problem scenario for them to work on in a short time. Once the group has analyzed the problem and prepared their feedback, ask each group in turn to present their analysis and solutions to the wider group.

For example: The neighborhood association would like to hold a summer picnic. They have never done so before. How can the association recruit picnic committee members to organize the event?

HELPFUL TIPS

- Choose a fairly simple scenario where everyone can contribute.
- The idea is not to solve a real problem but to “warm up” the group for further interaction or problem solving later in the event.
- The group will also learn each other’s styles of problem-solving and interaction.

TEAM BUILDING ICE BREAKERS

These icebreakers are used to bring together individuals who are in the early stages of team building. This can help the people start working together more cohesively towards shared goals or plans.

BALL CHALLENGE



This exercise creates a simple, timed challenge for the team to help focus on shared goals, and also encourages people to include other people.

Arrange the group in a circle and ask each person to throw the ball across the circle, first announcing his or her own name, and then announcing the name of the person to whom they are throwing the ball (the first few times, each person throws the ball to someone whose name they already know.) When every person in the group has thrown the ball at least once, it’s time to set the challenge – to pass the ball around all group members as quickly as possible. Time the process and then ask the group to beat that timing. As the challenge progresses, the team will improve their process by standing closer together and learning to work as a team.



HUMAN WEB

This ice breaker focuses on how people in the group inter-relate and depend on each other.

Begin with a ball of yarn. Keeping one end pass the ball to one of the participants, and have the person introduce themselves and their role in the organization. Once this person has made their introduction, ask him or her to pass the ball of yarn on to another person in the group. The person handing over the ball must describe how he/she relates (or expects to relate) to the other person. The process continues until everyone is introduced. To emphasize the interdependencies amongst the team, the facilitator then pulls on the starting thread and everyone's hand should move.

HOPE, FEARS AND EXPECTATIONS



Best done when participants already have a good understanding of their challenge as a team. Group people into twos or threes, and ask people to discuss their expectations and what their fears and hopes are. Gather the group's response by collating three to four hopes, fears and expectations from pairing or threesome.

When participants are diverse: various ages, ethnic groups, profit and nonprofit organizations, job titles within their organizations and have unknown areas of commonality and shared interests, an ice breaker is essential to get people talking, generate laughter and start with an initial level of warmth within the room.

TOPIC EXPLORATION ICE BREAKERS

Topic exploration ice breakers can be used to explore the topic at the outset, or perhaps to change pace and re-energize people during the meeting or activity.

WORD ASSOCIATION



This ice breaker helps people explore the area under discussion. Generate a list of words related to the topic of your event or training. For example, in a goal setting workshop, ask participants what words or phrases come to mind relating to "goals". Participants may suggest: 'objective,' 'aim' 'end,' 'target,' 'purpose,' etc. Write all suggestions on the board, perhaps clustering by theme. You can use this opportunity to introduce essential terms and discuss the scope (what's in and what's out) of your training or event.

BURNING QUESTIONS



This ice breaker gives each person the opportunity to ask key questions they hope to cover in the event or training. Again you can use this opportunity to discuss key terminology and scope. Be sure to keep the questions and refer back to them as the event progresses and concludes.

BRAINSTORM



Brainstorming can be used as an ice breaker or to re-energize during an event. If people are getting bogged down in the detail during problem solving, for example, you can change pace easily by running a quick-fire brainstorming session. If you are looking for answers to attendance problems, try brainstorming what kind of activities might entice people to attend, rather than focus on why they don't attend. This can help people think creatively again and gives the group a boost of energy.

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