

Inspire! Ice Breakers & Openers



Activity: Haven't We Met?

Overview

This silly ice-breaker may cause players to have an identity crisis. Each player writes his or her name on a note card and proceeds to mingle with everyone else. Each time a player makes another acquaintance; they switch note cards and take on that person's identity. After two or three exchanges, the goal becomes for each player to find his or her name again.

Props

- Felt-tip pens: one 5" x 3" notecard per person.

Instructions

- Pass out the note cards and pens. Have participants write their first name on the card.
 - Explain that players are to walk around and engage each other in conversation.
 - They begin every conversation by saying, "Haven't we met?"
 - The person that they approached responds with, "No, I don't believe we have."
 - The first player responds, "My name is [stating the name appearing on the card]."
 - The second person would respond, "My name is [again, whatever name appears on the card]."
 - The two people exchange cards, and state to each other, "Now, I am [the person's name on their new card]."
 - Players continue to mingle, switching cards and identities with each conversation partner.
 - It is very important to remind group members to keep the writing on their card hidden so that others in the group cannot see the name on the card. Otherwise it would be very easy for a person to track down his or her identity.
- The encounters continue until each person receives his or her own name (original note card) back.
 - When a player meets someone with his or her name card, that person has finished the activity and becomes a coach helping others to "find themselves."

Variations

Have participants right their own name and one fact (unique interest, great experience, curious hobby, amazing accomplishment, unknown talent, or strange eyewitness) about themselves on their card, the more interesting and funny, the better. Then, when players introduce themselves, they also must reveal the "fun-fact" on the card about the person whose identity they have adopted. The game will often turn on conversations about these facts. If you want to increase the fun, ask players to state the fact on the card and then embellish the story. Each subsequent player then states the fact and all subsequent embellishments he or she was told before note cards (or identities) were switched, and each player adds more to the story. Players need to explain the fact as if they did it, and be convincing for the other person. By the time the note card returns to its owner, players may barely recognize the original fact after all the embellishments are shared. Typically players begin to laugh hysterically when another player introduces himself or herself with the original player's name, fact, and now hilarious embellishments to the original fact.