



Ice-breakers versus Warm-ups versus Mental Sets

Ice-breakers are designed to get people talking with one another...to promote bonding between a group and to create a memorable experience.

Warm-ups are designed to help people engage their creativity, so that they are more likely to consider new ideas.

Mental sets are designed to provide a common experience or story that can be used to link new information to. (We can't learn new material without something we already have in our experience to “hook” the new information to.

Some activities check two—or all three— of these boxes.



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Super-powers (an ice-breaker)

In your breakout room, share:

If you were to magically become a SUPERHERO right now...

- 1) What trait or talent do you already have that could be your super-power if it were amped up a bit?
- 2) What would your superhero costume be?



We will take eight minutes for this activity. Remember to leave enough time for both persons to share.



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Thunks (a warm-up)

1. If I compose a song but never play it, is it music?
2. Are you the same person you were 20 minutes ago?
3. Would life be better if you could never fail?
4. Is your shadow part of you?
5. Can you choose to like a piece of art?



In your breakout rooms, you will engage in a five-minute debate on your assigned statement from the list above.

Divide your room into two teams (alphabetically by first name), the first half argues for YES, the second half argues for NO.



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Reflection (a mental set):

*Have you ever gone to a great workshop / class / training / meeting and been excited about **using** what you learned?*

*Did you actually put that learning to use? When you did put something to use, what **actions did you take to make that happen?***

*What can you do **in a meeting or training** like this to make it more likely that you will go back and try out promising approaches?*

Jot down some notes about this for yourself.



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Ice-breakers versus Warm-ups versus Mental Sets

In your small group, take turns with the following:

- 1) Introduce yourself briefly and then share the objective you hope to accomplish in an upcoming meeting.
 - 2) Brainstorm (as a group) ideas for ice-breakers, warm-ups, or mental sets that you could use to get the meeting started that are related to the objective in some way.
- *We will spend twelve minutes on this activity. Make sure that everyone gets a chance to talk about their objective.*
 - *We encourage you to make notes of things that sound promising for your own meetings.*



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