



Unit: Ground Rules
Skill 29: Breaking the Ice
Activity A: What's In A Name?

Activity Skills:

Memory.

Leadership Skills:

Learn a simple strategy for helping remember names, and why calling people by their name is important.

Suggested Level:

Beginning

Time:

15-20 minutes

Supplies needed:

- Small ball or something light-weight that can be easily tossed

Do Ahead:

N/A

Source:

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BACKGROUND:

Everyone has a name, and most people tend to think of their names as part of their identities. Some people don't like their given names, and choose to go by a nickname instead. Consequently, when we call someone by name, it is a way of acknowledging them. When we remember a person's name, it is a simple statement that we value you them enough to remember who they are.

As fundamental as our names are to us, what does it indicate when you don't remember someone's name? There are a number of ways that leaders can acknowledge people, and calling them by name is one of the easiest. So effective leaders learn the tricks for how to remember people's names!

WHAT TO DO:**Part 1:**

Form a circle and have the first person toss the ball to the next person in the circle. The thrower has to state his or her name with a descriptive adjective that starts with the same letter of the alphabet. For example, if Tony starts, he might say, "Terrific Tony" and toss the ball to the next person. The second person then repeats the name and descriptor of the first person as well as their own; "Terrific Tony and Artistic Allison" and so on. The last person in the circle should be able to repeat all the names given how many times the names have been repeated!

Part 2:

Now take the ball and have one person start it randomly to any other person around the circle. Just as the thrower is tossing the ball, he or she states the name of the person who is to catch the ball. Try and keep the ball moving as fast as possible to various people in the circle. To increase difficulty, slowly add more balls into the mix, so several people are all throwing and catching simultaneously.

TALK IT OVER:**Reflect:**

- Did you know everyone's name before this activity?
- Was it hard to remember the names? What made it easier?
- What did you do if you forgot a name?

Apply:

- Why does it matter if we remember names?
- What other techniques can help us remember?

Skill 29: Breaking the Ice

Activity A: What's In A Name?

Notes:

- Do you know or have you played other name games?
- How might playing a “name game” get a group more comfortable with each other?

BEYOND THE BOX:

Optional Homework:

Do some research into your own name, first and last. What meanings and origin does your given name have? What history and origin does your family name have? Is it representational of your ethnicity? Are your names common or uncommon? How do you feel about your names? Do you go by another name? What and why?

Resources And Web Links:

<http://www.behindthename.com>

<http://library.thinkquest.org>

<http://www.theninemuses.net>