

Virtual Icebreakers

19 Activities for Virtual Team Building!

1 Quick Questions Related to the Current State of Working from Home

- What is something that happened recently that really made you belly laugh?
- If you had to write your fortune in a fortune cookie during this pandemic, What would yours say?
- What are you grateful for today?
- Who am I checking in on or connecting with in my network today?
- What expectations of normal am I letting go of?
- How am I getting outside today?
- What desk stretch am I doing today? (you can ask the person to demonstrate it)
- What rainbow will I eat today?
- What is the most humorous COVID meme you saw in the last week that made you laugh? (you can also have people share their screen or pop the link to the meme in your group chat)
- What item did you find on the grocery store shelf that made you smile?
- What is the one thing that you are secretly pleased that you do not have to do now that you are social distancing?
- What pet peeves have you discovered in quarantine?
- What is your number one tip for combating distractions when working from home?
- What is your quarantine nickname? (how you feel + the last thing you ate) for example, creative pasta

2 Rose / Thorn

- Start your virtual huddle or meeting by having everyone share their rose (any positive that makes them feel grateful, happy, etc.) and their thorn (a challenge). A rose can be work or non-work related along with their thorn.
 - For Example...
 - Work Related:
 - Rose: I got an event partner to give me a refund today!
 - Thorn: A different event partner will not give me a refund.
 - Non-Work Related:
 - Rose: I found time to go for a walk today.
 - Thorn: There was no time to go for a walk today.



Share a Virtual Snack

Ahead of the meeting, have everyone gather one of their favorite snacks and bring it with them to the video chat. They can then share with everyone. As we know, sharing food is a common way to connect with others, and it can be a fun conversation starter.



Share a Snapshot of Your Life

Have the team take a photo of an object, or objects in their workspace... these can be things like a fidget toy, a coffee mug, a family photo, cool art, a certificate, anything. The team can email you (whoever is leading the meeting) their photo (or upload to our group chat on teams when we start the video call) with a little description so that you can share them during the meeting. This could spark some interesting and fun dialogue in what everyone is like. Do they have kids? Are they super organized? Do they work on their couch? (hopefully not if they read our working remote tips).

- Alternatively, you could ask each of us to take a picture of the view outside our window...gaining insight into a wide variety of locations and settings.



Ask Each Meeting Participant a "Social" Question

So, you could find out what someone enjoys doing outside of work, or ask if he or she has a funny story to share about something that happened recently (did a kid pop in during your virtual team meeting). Ask everyone the same question, or different ones if you want more variety in responses. Some example Social questions:

- Give an example of something you have done this week that you feel proud of.
- If you were not on this call, what would you like to be doing?
- If you could eat any dish right now, what would it be?
- What has been your favorite activity while staying at home (something related to what we are dealing with today with coronavirus?)



Aliens Have Landed

This icebreaker can be useful for teams with remote participants with language and cultural differences. Tell the group to imagine aliens have landed on Earth and want to learn about your company. But since they do not speak English or understand your product, it needs to be explained with 5 symbols or pictures. Ask each participant to upload 5 simple images to the team that best describe and communicate your company's products and culture. Take a few minutes and look at all the images. Are there common themes?



Guess the Desk

fun virtual energizer that helps teams get to know each other and share best remote working practices.

- Start by having each participant take a photo of their desk or remote working set-up and send them to the facilitator who then puts them into a shared whiteboard or Google Doc. Do not tell anyone whose desk is whose!

- During the first round, select one member to be the Desk President– they cast the vote on whose desk is who is after a group discussion.
- After each round, the previous Desk President elects the next and the group moves to guess the next desk.
- Here’s the fun part– if your desk is up, it is your job to convince everyone it belongs to someone else. If the group votes incorrectly on your desk, you get a point! If you successfully guess the right desk while you are Desk President, you also get a point!
- After all the desks have been guessed, debrief and point out any good remote working set-ups and best practices you notice and want to share!



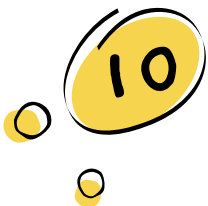
18 & Under

This is an engaging way to get to know your teammates better and share funny or interesting stories with each other. Simply take turns and share one accomplishment each that you had before you turned 18. You might learn that “I bought a PlayStation when I was 10” or “I won the school football championship”. Maybe you will discover some hidden skills in your teammates that you never expected.



A Penny for your Thoughts

- Ask each participant to bring a penny to the virtual meeting or provide images of coins with different years on them. When I did this, I asked that everyone’s penny be the year 2000 or above so they do not have to think back too far
- Ask participants to look for the date on their coin and share with the rest of the group something significant or interesting that happened to them in that year.
- Encourage participants to think outside the box. If the penny is dated before you were born, think about what happened in the world that year that might have had an impact on your current life.
- For large groups, send them into breakout rooms for 3–5 minutes.
- Have participants share their responses in their small group. Ask participants to take a screen shot of the questions so they have the prompts once they move to the breakout room.
- For smaller audiences, have each person take turns sharing their story with the group.
- You may need to give a few hints to younger children. For example, it might be a year that their brother or sister was born, or maybe it was the year their parents got married.



Tiny Campfire

- Who does not love a good campfire? Create a virtual campfire by having everyone bring a candle and their favorite S’mores ingredients and share a reflection while making an eating a fun snack.
- Have participants take turns sharing something ‘sweet’ or a reflection they have with the group.



Number ID Icebreaker (Virtual Adaptation)

A creative and numerical strategy to get to know people, Step-by-step instructions:

- Instruct each person to have a blank sheet of paper and a marker or pen.
- Instruct everyone to write their first name on the top half of the paper.
- On the bottom half, ask each person to write a series of numbers and letters which represent a set of interesting facts about themselves.
- For example, 1964-14Y-1K could represent a person born in 1964, married for 14 years and has one child (kid).
- Encourage people to focus on interesting aspects of their life and experiences.
- When ready, invite one person at a time to show their paper to the camera so that everyone can see their name and numbers (we suggest moving into break out rooms so smaller groups can discuss and get to know one another)
- The groups task is to guess what the numbers represent. This is not a test, so allow a short time for guessing before the person holding the papers tells their group what the numbers mean.



Emoji Storytelling

There are hundreds of emoji's out there just waiting to tell a story 😊

- Gather your team in a video conference room, and then divide your group into smaller teams.
- Task each team with the job of creating a story told entirely via emojis. Set a goal for coming up with a complete story in less than 10 minutes with about 100 emojis.
- Then, bring the group back to the meeting and give each group another group's emoji story.
- The groups get another 10 minutes to try to decipher the emoji story of another group into words.
- When you meet as a large group again, one representative from each small team reads the group's translated version of the emoji story.



Brady Brunch Icebreaker

- Have everyone switch to gallery view and call out one person at a time.
- Each person introduces themselves and everyone else points to them "Brady Bunch" style.



Memory Test

- Read from a list of words while your team listens.
- Once you are done, have them try to write down as many words as they can remember.



Storytelling Dice

- Download the "Story Dice" app.
- Roll the dice and have your team come up with a story using all of the icons on the dice.
- Each person picks one dice to tell their part of the story.



Cartoon Caption Challenge

- Pick a cartoon from the internet and cut out the caption.
- Show the cartoon to your team and give them 20 seconds to view it.
- Take the cartoon away and have them come up with a funny caption from memory.
- The caption that gets the biggest laugh wins.



Drawize

- Go to Drawize.com and create a new game.
- Send the link to your teammates and have them take turns drawing and guessing.



Back-to-Back Drawing

- Pick a simple drawing of geometric shapes.
- Have one person describe the picture by the shapes' size and locations.
- Have everyone follow along and draw.
- See who comes closest to the drawing.



Kram Dralloc Icebreaker

Step-by-Step instructions:

- Gather your group as one large group, or divide into smaller groups for greater intimacy.
- One by one, ask each person to say their name out loud to the others as if the letters of their name were arranged in reverse.
- Demonstrate by sharing your own name first, eg Mark Collard becomes Kram Dralloc.
- Next, ask the group to speculate where in the world would a person with that name live if it were real.
- Continue around the group until everyone has shared.

Variation – **Name Acronym**: Separating into small groups to workshop this one, ask each person to invent a nonsensical acronym of their first (or second) name, and then present it to the larger group. For example, KEVIN becomes Kangaroos Eat Vegetables In November and MARK could represent Magic Ankle Repair Kit.