

FOCUS

A Herff Jones IMPACT Resource For Advisors

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August FOCUS SCHEDULING and ICEBREAKERS

SCHEDULING EVENTS

Scheduling events is very important to the success of your student activities program. School districts have different procedures on how student activity events are scheduled but here are some general guidelines.

1. **Plan ahead.** Ask the questions...who, what, when, where, why and how. Yes, details are important. Find a "clean" date. If there are several events happening at the same time, no one will be successful.
2. **Establish a goal.** What do you hope to accomplish with this project? Does the plan meet the objective?
3. **Know your limitations.** Are the resources available to achieve the goal? Can the project be successful? Are the expectations realistic?
4. **Try to poke holes in the project.** Play devil's advocate. Can it be shot down? Brainstorm. Is it still standing?
5. **If you arrive at a realistic goal and have a "clean" date on the calendar, then check the 7 P's of scheduling.**
 - A. Permission and reserved space
 - B. Promotion
 - C. Presence
 - D. Punctuality
 - E. Participation
 - F. Preparedness
 - G. Planning
6. **If all of this seems to be too much trouble, try scheduling anything without advance work.** It is worth the trouble.
7. **Can scheduling be made easier?** Remember, easy is not always better. Work and tweak the daily little details and your project will run smoother and easier. This is a truism.
8. **A schedule is a plan.**
9. **It is always better the second time that you do a**

project if you have done a good job of evaluating its successes and failures.

10. **Take a proactive attitude toward scheduling.**



TYPES OF ICEBREAKERS

When meeting with a new group it is very important to help those people feel comfortable with one another, have fun, learn more about each another, and, in general, promote a smoother meeting, project, event, etc. Icebreakers can be divided into 5 different groups.

1. **Openers and warm-ups.** These can be tried in a variety of settings. Icebreakers used here will loosen inhibitions by stimulating, challenging, and motivating the participants. They heighten the creative

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resources of the group and lead to playful interaction. The group leader may use icebreakers and warm-ups to begin a program, meeting, or session or after a break, or to get everyone ready for new information, or to shift the direction.

2. **Getting acquainted.**

These provide group members with an opportunity to learn more about one another in a non-threatening manner. The participants share information such as name, jobs/duties, goals, dreams, plans, etc. These are great for quickly mixing the group and lowering barriers.

3. **Games and brain teasers.**

These icebreakers stimulate creative thinking, alternative perceptions, and the examinations of basic assumptions. Sometimes the participants work in teams in a competitive situation.

4. **Energizers and tension reducers.**

These icebreakers shift the emotional nature of the group. They are best used when participants appear “flat” or too anxious. These require some physical effort.

5. **Feedback and disclosure.**

These are aimed at establishing interactions of a personal nature. Going beyond mere introductions, these activities explore thoughts, feelings, perceptions, impressions, and reactions. Select when to use these icebreakers cautiously and only after the group has worked together for a period of time.

One important key to the successful use of icebreakers is the leader’s ability to bridge the gap between the activity and the material that follows. In other words. “Why did we do that activity?” And, yes, sometimes the answer is just to have fun and get to know one another and be able to work better as a team. Sometimes the icebreakers could lead to discussion such as how important for leaders to think creatively.

**ICEBREAKER
GRIN AND BEAR IT**

This is an icebreaker where the participants attempt to make each other smile. It takes about 10-15 minutes and the group size is unlimited. Place the group in two lines and the person opposite becomes their partner. They will take turns trying to make each other smile. They may make faces and/or use appropriate body actions but

no verbal communications. The person who smiles first becomes a judge and on cue the winner finds a new partner. A draw is declared if neither has smiled after two minutes. Continue until one person is left or about ten minutes has elapsed. This can also be done by forming two teams and at the end of ten minutes the team with the most players left wins. In this case, the person who smiles first sits down and the player does not chose a new partner. It is also done one set of partners at a time rather than the entire group.



Herff Jones, Inc.
4625 W. 62nd St.
Indianapolis, IN 46268

