

Get The Ball Rolling

Here are a couple of ways that Trainers “break the ice” and help trainees feel more comfortable.

Toilet Tissue:

Begin your introduction by tossing a roll of toilet paper to one person with the instructions to take as many “squares” as he or she wants, and then pass the roll onto the next person and so on until everyone has taken as many squares as they want. Then say to the group, “For each square of toilet tissue you have taken, please share something about yourself.” Class members who took a lot of toilet paper will groan, but the exercise helps build familiarity and camaraderie.

Headlines:

You’ll need a piece of white paper with a 2” x 3” rectangle drawn on it. Within the rectangle, draw an oval representing a person’s face. Make enough copies to give each class member a copy. In your local newspaper there are often 2” x 3” pictures of an individual’s face with headlines like “Local Person Promoted” and a short article.

Tell your class to interview another person in the class for about five minutes. They should then create a headline and a short biography for a “make believe” newspaper and sketch a characterization of their interviewee in the picture frame. Tell them to have fun with this exercise and when they are finished, have each person read his or her article to everyone else in the class. This exercise also helps to stimulate good-natured rapport among the participants.

Although it takes up a few minutes of precious classroom time, an icebreaker of some sort is important in establishing a non-threatening tone and friendly atmosphere for your training session.