

Appendix C: Meeting Activities – Introductions

Ideas Collected from Various Group Leaders

We want people to get to know each other, and yet without a bit of clever planning, introductions can become a low-impact part of the meeting, when people may tune out. Here are some ways to keep it fun and engaging, compiled with the help of various Group Leaders at the annual GL Summit.

Activities – In-Person or Virtual

Meaningful Photograph

In advance of a meeting, ask each member to email a photo of themselves that depicts them doing something they love to do, a family photo, a high school picture, enjoying an extreme activity, etc. The images are shared to the group and everyone needs to guess which of their fellow members are in the photo. See who gets the most correct. After everyone has had a moment to guess, one by one, the member in the photo stands up and talks about the significance behind the photo.

Jack and Jill

Start the activity by saying "Jack and Jill went up the Hill, fell down and....." Point to someone and they add the next sentence to the story. Try to imagine a great order based on the professions in the group. For example, the first storyteller may be a personal injury attorney who says "So the parents called me, sent the medical records and we learned they tripped over a brick", next point to the Insurance person in the group, "so it turns out that the company had insurance....." and so on. Each person adds to the story by applying their professional skill set. Boosts creativity and fun as each member adds to the story.

Meaningful Song

Ask members to email their favorite song to one contact in the group. The contact downloads snippets of each song to a media player. In the meeting the snippets are played. First - Name that Tune, Second - guess which member is associated with the song and Third - Have the member tell everyone why that song is meaningful to them.

Stick Figure

Each member takes a quick minute to draw a stick figure depicting what their profession is. Very simple and creative. The group is shown each figure - members guess the profession. Then the members describe what the picture intended to show and adds a nickname to the drawing.

Myth Busters

Each profession has commonly held misconceptions. Each member makes a short list of 5 items - 3 myths and 2 truths. The group must guess which items are myth and which are real. Each member can take a moment to address the misconceptions.

RSVP Scramble

Take the photo-list and separate the photos from the descriptions. Let the group try to match the photo with the right description. See who makes the most matches!

Member Jeopardy

Read member descriptions outloud and have the group match the description to the member. A great way to see if the members message clearly reflects their personal brand. Play Jeopardy music for added fun.

Family Feud

Group Leader puts a selection of questions together (about members using information from their bio) in the format of a favorite game show and then creates teams to go up against each other.

Thanksgiving

Request members to send in a picture that reflects something they are grateful for. Sometimes it's something wonderful and sometimes it's a struggle that was overcome. Transformational life events. Very emotional.

7 Words Distill

What you do in a 7 word pitch! Very funny.

Open Up

Each member talks about their Biggest Failure and what they learned from it. An exercise in vulnerability and insightfulness.

The Hot Seat

Pass out numbers to all members. Randomly choose a number and that person is now on the Hot Seat. Pre-curate a number of 'get to know' questions and have the member answer a randomly selected question. This exercise helps to learn more insight about each member.

Are You Smarter Than a <Fifth> Grader?

Invite a young relative (ideally someone between 11-13) to the introductions portion of the meeting. Tell members they have 30 seconds to introduce themselves and explain their profession in a way that this 11yo guest can understand. After each introduction, the young guest can give a thumbs-up or thumbs-down if they understood what the person does for a living. Keeps it moving and forces people to find simple, funny ways to explain what they do.

Press Release

Invite a PR professional to your group. Breakout in small groups and help each other write a short Press Release. Share with the PR professional for feedback. (If you do this in a virtual meeting, you'll need to use Zoom breakout rooms.)



Introduction Prompts - In-Person or Virtual*

Instructions: Pick one and send it in advance of the meeting so people can reflect and form their thoughts. Let them know how much time they'll have to answer so they know how brief to keep it – and what else you'd like them to include: eg. "Share your name, business and specialization, then respond to this question. Each person will get about two minutes in total." If you have a lot of people attending or if you choose a topic that's likely to elicit a longer response, consider using breakout rooms.

"The worst thing you write is better than the best thing you didn't write." Tell us briefly about the best thing you haven't yet written, or, alternatively, the best (or worst) thing you have.

The Dalai Lama wrote in his autobiography, "I found, as every teacher does, that there is nothing like teaching to help one learn." Briefly share one thing which you've learned through teaching, either students, your children, your employees, or elsewhere.

I've been reading a lot of books lately, and find something pleasantly nostalgic about the one that's not on my phone or iPad, but rather real paper pages. Tell us briefly about something you fondly recall from your younger days, which seems to either be gone – or is going to be gone – soon.

Briefly share a favorite story your parents or siblings always tell about you. Nothing political, and modesty not allowed.

As a basketball coach starting his career, my son has been navigating difficult but typical waters. He's far more knowledgeable than some of those over him, but it's a competitive environment, and he has to pick and choose when and where to contribute for the good of the team. Each of us has had moments when we've decided to speak out beyond our pay grade. Briefly describe a time you've taken the leap to speak out in your life and the results.

A moment in your early life which defines something important about you today.

The rain can be distressing – driving, the cold, leaky roofs. But the payoff is in brilliant days, green hills, and stunning flowers. Tell us about how a 'rainy day' turned out to be beautiful for you, either personally or in business.

How you met your best friend (other than spouse or significant other) and what made it stick. What quality does that friend possess with which you would like to be better?

We're a week into Spring, traditionally a time for cleaning after the long winter. If you were to pick one thing to clean up in your world this Spring – business or personal – what would that be?

Novelist/essayist Arthur Koestler, in *The Act of Creation*, wrote, "True creativity often starts where language ends." Tell us briefly about one thing you do to underscore what kind of person you are, which doesn't involve the written or spoken word.

Activities – In-Person Only

Cinco de Mayo

Place 3 sombreros on the floor next to each other and then create an outer circle of members. Each sombrero has trivia questions in them (questions should rotate) and if a member tosses a coin into the hat and answers the trivia question, they win a prize.

The Envelope

Break into groups of 6 or 7. Give each member an envelope and have them write their name on the outside. Everyone passes the envelope to the left. Using Post-It notes, each member writes one word on the note that they feel best describes the person listed on the outside of the envelope and then places it in the envelope. Pass the envelope to the left. Continue to leave notes in each envelope until your envelope returns to you. Take a moment to read and reflect on each word in your envelope. Take the one word you appreciate the most and share it with the group. This exercise helps members measure how others see them and to gauge whether they need to work on their outward persona.

The Penny

Gather a handful of pennies (find ones with appropriate dates that all members can relate to) and scatter them around the room on seats, tables, etc.. Each member should select a penny and when called upon, talk about what was going on in their life during that year. Good, bad, interesting.... and personal moments are shared. Many memories are shared and everyone gets to know each other a bit better.

Fortune Cookies

A fun activity in January/February (so it corresponds with the Chinese New Year) is to bring fortune cookies for each group member. Place one at each seat. When the meeting starts, instruct people to unwrap and crack the cookie but not open it or read the fortune yet. Then when you're ready for introductions, go around and ask each person to introduce themselves, then quickly open the cookie, read the fortune out loud and say the very first thing that occurs to them.

Charities

Members at the meeting contribute funds to a 'pot.' Go around the room and each person talks about a charity that is important to them and why. All business cards are also put in a Pot and one is selected. The funds collected are donated to the charity of the member whose business card was chosen. Wonderful way to learn more about each member and a charity.

White Elephant Book Exchange

Each member brings a book that has had a meaningful impact on them. Choose a random order for members to select the book that they would like to have. The Book can be 'stolen' up to 3 times by other members. If 'stolen', the members who had to give up their selected book get to choose another book. This continues until each member has a new book to read.