

Filling Your Extension Toolkit: Warm Up Activities



Walking Around (or the Walking Sandwich Board – though calling it that gives it away)

This is a creative activity held at the beginning of a workshop to help participants get to know each other. Not only do participants learn interesting information about each other, they almost always find something in common with another participant. It also challenges them to visually present information.

The facilitator determines a few pieces (4 or 5 max) of info that each participant should reveal. Leave room for interpretation – that helps make things interesting. List the items on a flipchart. For example, tell us:

- Your name (and nicknames)
- Where you come from (a lot of room in this)
- Your interests
- Your favorite tool and why

Sounds easy, right? Too easy. Add a twist:

- Each participant will provide this information on a piece of flipchart paper.
- The participant can only use 5 single words; but can use as many pictures as desired.
- Give them 10 minutes to create their flipcharts. Then call time.

Next:

- Participants hold their sheet of paper in front of them and walk around the room to look at each others, learning about the other participants and noting commonalities.
- A Big Twist: They cannot talk! They can gesture, but no talking!
- Give them about 20-30 minutes.
- Variation: Call time and ask them to stand next to someone they have something in common with. Can be pairs or larger groups. Then give them 5 minutes to discuss – and yes, they can talk now!
- Have everyone post their flipchart and encourage them to continue finding common interests and connect.
- Flipcharts and markers.
- Tape for wall.
- This takes 30-45 mins, but is a really good way to help people get acquainted – especially useful if they will be spending several days together.
- The facilitators should prepare their own sandwich board as an example.
- Very important to debrief this. There's a lot of learning in it. And some people will be out of their comfort zone.

Required Materials

Facilitation Tips