

ICEBREAKER: PROBLEM SOLVED

DESCRIPTION OF SESSION

This session introduces participants to the creative process by having them brainstorm and then devise solutions to problems.

CATEGORY

- Life Skills – social skills
- Life Skills – team building
- Life Skills – problem solving

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Design a project, idea, or solution that solves a specified problem.

SUPPLIES

- Pads of sticky notes—one per participant
- Pens or pencils—one per participant
- Simple materials to create prototypes—see Activity 4
- Materials to create solutions—see Activity 5

ADVISOR NOTE: Text in italics should be read aloud to participants. As you engage your post in activities each week, please include comments, discussions, and feedback to the group relating to **Character, Leadership, and Ethics**. These are important attributes that make a difference in the success of youth in the workplace and in life.

ADVISOR NOTE:

Activity 5 is optional. If there is no time or materials are not available, making the solution can be omitted. If that is the case, be sure to let participants know that the goal of this session is to *design* a solution, not necessarily to *build* a solution.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1

Brainstorming Materials

Start by having participants brainstorm materials. Examples: sticks, felt, cardboard. Have each person suggest three to five ideas or leave it open-ended and allow participants to brainstorm as many as they want in a specified time.

Participants should write down each material on a sticky note (one per note) and stick them all on a common wall or table.

Activity 2

Brainstorming Problems

Then, have participants brainstorm problems that they encounter or things that annoy them. Examples: traffic, stinky feet. Give them a suggested number to brainstorm or leave it open for participants to generate as many as they want in a specified time.

Participants should write down each annoyance or problem on a sticky note (one per note) and stick them all on a common wall or table but separate from the materials notes.

Activity 3

Brainstorming Themes

Finally, have participants brainstorm themes. Examples: Olympics, colors, Halloween. Again, give them a suggested number to brainstorm or leave it open for participants to generate as many as they want in a specified time.

Participants should write down each theme on a sticky note (one per note) and stick them all on a common wall or table separate from the materials and problems/annoyances notes.

Activity 4

Designing a Solution

Now, have each participant choose one material, one problem/annoyance, and one theme. Explorers can choose from all the ideas generated or from their own ideas.

Then, their challenge is to develop a project, idea, or solution that addresses their problem/annoyance, using the specified material, along the chosen theme.

Participants should work individually.

The project, idea, or solution can remain as a simple idea that is shared aloud, or participants can be encouraged to sketch it out or prototype it with simple materials (paper, markers, paper clips, tape).

Have the participants then share their ideas with the larger group.

Activity 5

Making a Solution

Now that participants have brainstormed and designed their solutions, give them 15-30 minutes to create their solutions with materials that are available. Participants can work individually or in groups.

After the solutions have been created, have participants share their solutions.

ADVISOR NOTE

Some sample questions are below. They are designed to help the participants apply what they have learned to their own interests. You are welcome to use these questions or develop your own questions that relate to your post or specific focus area.

REFLECTION

- *How did what you learned help you gain more insight into being creative?*
- *How does this icebreaker activity help you understand and practice creativity?*
- *What were the benefits of doing such an icebreaker/activity?*
- *Were you surprised by what you could accomplish without many resources? Why or why not?*
- *How might you use this in life or in college?*
- *Why is this important?*

ADVISOR AND OFFICER REVIEW

After the meeting, address the following:

- Identify what was successful about the meeting.
- Identify what needed improvement.
- Schedule an officer and Advisor planning meeting to prepare for the next post meeting or activity.

Or use the Roses, Buds, and Thorns evaluation tool described in the Leaders Guide.

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