

“Speed Dating” Exercise

Purpose: To help foster trust and development of a shared team identity by helping team members to learn about the unique skills, characteristics, knowledge, and experiences of each individual team member.

Overview: This exercise is akin to a “speed dating” approach. Each member of the team spends three minutes of time with another team member, learning about each other, and then moves onto the next team member.

A variation on this exercise involves pairing team members together. Each pair takes a few minutes to elicit background information from the other, and then each member of the pair introduces the other person to the team.

Materials/Setup:

Space to move around, small tables for team members (or one large one) to sit across from one another, a timer or bell, and notepaper for each team member

Process:

1. Introduce the concept – explain to the group that the purpose of the exercise is to learn about key aspects of each other’s unique skills, characteristics, knowledge, and experiences.
2. Ask the team members to pair up and consider some basic questions to spark their conversations.
 - What are two things that people who work with you should know about you?
 - What are the major milestones in your career timeline?
 - What are you passionate about in work? At home?
 - What are four skills you excel at; four skills you struggle with?
 - What was the biggest challenge you overcame as a child? In your career?
3. Set the timer for 3 minutes and instruct the participants to start their discussions.
4. When the 3 minutes are up, ring the bell and ask the participants to move to the next spot/location. Repeat the process until every team member has had time to meet each other.
5. Bring the group back together to facilitate a discussion. Look for areas where the group differs, where they are alike, what they may be missing in terms of skills, and what are their strengths.

Sample Setup:

