

Name Games

First Letter of Name Introduction & Ball Game

Name Games offer tools to help people remember names – through association or activity, like the two offered here. We often start orientation programs with name games. Gather 8-12 people in a circle and the leader of the game will explain the following:

First Letter of Name Introduction:

After gathering everyone in a circle, move around the circle doing introductions. You can ask that they share information such as name, what country they are from, what they plan to study, etc. But, to facilitate memory, it is helpful to have them identify something they like that starts with the first letter of their name. As the leader, I always model what I'd like them to do first. "I'm Susie, I'm from Colorado, and I played Soccer for 16 years." Then you go back around the circle, saying, Susie likes Soccer, Alice likes Alaska, Paul likes Pasta," etc.

Ball Game:

The Leader will take one ball and will slowly move people through this exercise. Give the following instructions:

- Everyone raise your right hand.
- I will say your name before I throw the ball to you. Once you catch the ball, lower your arm. Then you will say choose a person who has a raised arm, say their name, and throw them the ball. Remember to whom you threw the ball.
- Instruct them that you, the leader, will be the last person to whom the ball will be thrown.
- It's ok to ask people for their names.
- After you have gone around the entire circle, all the arms are down, and the ball has returned to the leader, remind them again to remember who they threw the ball to and send it around the circle again in the same order. Always say the name of the person before throwing the ball so that they will be ready to receive it.
- After they are comfortable, the leader will begin introducing more balls.

Handout by Susan Bender, Director, Office of International Students & Scholars, University of Nevada-Reno, May 2003.