# Energizers

### What is it?

An energizer is a short game used between agenda items. It allows people to get up, move around and have a little fun!

### Why use it?

Energizers are used for a variety of reasons:

* They increase energy and enthusiasm levels
* Standing up and moving around increases blood flow which increases concentration ability
* They encourage team building
* They help people get to know each other
* They can be used as a review tool

### Trainer Notes:

Be sure to choose energizers that are appropriate for your audience and context. Be aware of physical disabilities, language barriers and cultural sensitivities.

## Adhesion

Get into pairs, standing shoulder to shoulder, scattered around the room. You are stuck together like bacteria adhered to a particle in the water. Choose one pair and make one person “It” and one person the runner. “It” chases and tries to tag the runner. If tagged, the runner becomes “It”. The runner may escape at any time by lining up with any pair “adhering” to someone else. The person at the other end of the pair now becomes the runner.

## Big Mouth

Get the group to break off into pairs. Ask a question about one of the topics recently covered in the workshop. Every person begins to talk at once answering the question. The participants must talk continuously without pausing - trying to talk the longest. As soon as one of the participants takes a pause they must stop talking and see how long their partner can continue for. Big Sigh

## Big Sigh

Get into a circle or stand up where you are. The trainer should stand where they can be seen by everyone so that they can follow the trainer’s actions. The trainer crouches on the floor, hands on floor, and slowly rises giving an increasingly loud sigh finishing with arms stretched high and sigh becomes a shout. This activity is very good for relieving tension.

## Biolayer

Divide the room in half and clearly mark the halfway point. Get everyone to stand on one side of the line at the wall and ask two people to be volunteers. Explain that everyone in the large group is a pathogen in a pot of water. The two volunteers are “good bugs” in the biolayer, they must stay on or behind the halfway line. The pathogens then try to run past the good bugs to the other side of the room. If one of the good bugs touches any of the pathogens, they become part of the biolayer and help the good bugs capture the rest of the pathogens.

## Chair Play

Get everyone in the room to move their chairs away from the tables giving themselves enough space to walk around the chair. Explain that the participants should copy your actions. Do an action that involves the chair and call it action 1. This can be sitting on it, leaning on it, standing on it etc. Get everyone to try it. Then do another action, this is action 2. Get everyone to try this one and then get everyone to do action 1 and action 2 in order. Get participants to give their own actions and continue adding them in order until 10 actions have been created. At this point everyone should be able to do all 10 actions in a row as you call out the numbers.

You can extend this game by saying the actions out of order or by saying two at a time and getting the participants to combine them.

## Clean Water Flows

Ensure there are just enough seats in a circle for everyone but you. Explain that you will call out “Clean water flows for everyone who…” and then you will add a description. Everyone who fits this description must get up and change seats with someone else who has that description. For example, “Clean water flows for everyone who wears sandals” or “everyone with two eyes”. You must carry the characteristic of what you call out (i.e. you must be wearing sandals if you are to call out that “clean water flows for everyone who wears sandals”). In the exchange of seats, you try to get a seat for yourself and the person who remains left standing, gets to be the “Clean Water” Caller.

Once the group has gotten used to the game (after 6-8 Calls), introduce the concept of a “Flood”. When there is a flood, everyone moves. As you end the energizer, explain that if at any time during the remainder of the workshop, participants feel they need a quick energizer, anyone can call out “Flood!” and everyone needs to stand up and quickly find another seat.

## Exaggeration

Ask participants to make lines of up to 8 people. The first person in the line makes a physical movement and/or sound, the second person makes the same movement and/or sound but exaggerates it, the third person exaggerates it even more, etc. This continues until the last person in line who will be the most exaggerated. The person in the back then moves to the front of the line and they get to start the movement and/or sound.

## Feather Weight

Find a long stick that is light, wood works well for this. A heavy stick makes this activity too easy. Have the group gather around the stick and place one finger on its underside. Have the group lower the stick to the ground while always maintaining finger contact with it.

## Group Balance

Ask participants to get into pairs. Ask pairs to hold hands and sit down then stand up, without letting go of one another’s hands. Repeat the same exercise in groups of four people. Then form into groups of eight people holding hands in a circle. Ask members in each group to number off in even and odd numbers. At a signal, ask the even numbers to fall backwards while the odd numbers fall forwards, achieving a group balance.

## Knees up

Participants stand in a close circle with their shoulders touching and then turn, so that their right shoulders are facing into the centre of the circle. Ask everyone to put their hand on the shoulder of the person in front of them and to carefully sit down so that everyone is sitting on the knees of the person behind them.

## Machine

Explain that we are going to invent the most amazing water treatment machine ever! It looks and sounds completely different from anything ever designed before. One person begins with any mechanical noise and motion, repeated in machine-like fashion. Others connect themselves when they see a place in the machine where they could like to fit in and also make a mechanical noise and motion.

## Names in the air

Ask participants to write their name in the air first with their right hand, then with their left hand. Finally, ask them to write their name in the air with both hands at the same time.

This can be adapted to writing the name of your neighbor or new vocabulary.

## Person, Parasite, Filter

If participants are familiar with the game rock, paper, scissors explain that this is a similar game. There are two versions to this game depending on your group size.

### Small group (less than 12)

Divide the group into two teams facing each other. Tell the groups to turn around and secretly decide if they want to be Person, Parasite or Filter. Everyone shouts “Person, Parasite, Filter” and then both teams turn around and each individual strikes their own pose resembling the team’s choice. For example, a parasite can be a monster-like pose, a filter can be a hand motion with the sound “whoosh” and a person can be a model pose.

Person defeats Filter, Parasite defeats Person and Filter defeats Parasite.

### Large group (more than 12 people)

Participants should wander around the room creating pairs. Each time they create a pair they individually decide if they will be a Person, Parasite or Filter. Together they say “Person, Parasite, Filter” and then strike a pose representing their choice. For example, a parasite can be a monster-like pose, a filter can be a hand motion with the sound “whoosh” and a person can be a model pose.

Person defeats Filter, Parasite defeats Person and Filter defeats Parasite.

Once the participants have played a few times with different people and are comfortable with the game, introduce an elimination round. Everyone continues to play but if they lose they are out and have to stand aside or sit down. Once there is one pair left, everyone else circles around and calls out “Person, Parasite, Filter”, the final person must win two of three rounds to claim victory.

## Rainstorm

The person in the centre of the circle directs, rubbing hands together and turning slowly toward everyone in the circle. Imitate the trainer as the trainer faces you, and continue the action until the trainer arrives at you again with another action. The trainer goes around the circle eight times in this order. First time: rubbing hands together, go all around the circle. When you get to the person you started with, start going around the circle a second time, this time snapping your fingers. Third time: slap thighs. Fourth time: slap thighs and stamp feet. Fifth time: stop stamping feet and only slap thighs. Sixth time: back to snapping fingers. Seventh time: back to rubbing palms together. Eighth time: return to silence. Rainstorm is over once you’ve completed the entire circle and everyone has stopped rubbing their hands together.

## Seeing Spots

For this activity you will need colored dots or any other kind of sticker. You should have four or five different colored dots or different stickers. Place a dot or sticker on the forehead of each participant; it is important that the person does not know what the dot/sticker looks like. When you give the signal, participants move about the room connecting with others who have matching dots or stickers. The catch: No talking allowed. All communication must be non-verbal!

## Silence

Participants must arrange themselves in order without uttering a peep! Some examples are to challenge everyone to silently sequence themselves according to height, age, or birth month.

This is a great way to line people up and then number them off into groups for a subsequent activity.

## Simon Says

Explain to participants that they will play a version of Simon Says in which only some people will respond to each command. Tell participants that they must watch carefully as they play the game because at the end, each participant must tell one new thing they learned about someone else. Lead a game and provide directions such as:

* Simon says "Everyone who has travelled to Asia, stand up.”
* Simon says "Everyone who has a dog as a pet, put your right hand on your head.”
* Simon says "Everyone whose favourite sport is soccer, stand on one foot.”
* Simon says "Everyone who speaks more than one language, jump up and down.”

At the end of the game, have participants sit in a circle. Ask each person to name one way in which he or she and another participant are alike. The trait they share must be something they didn't know before playing the game. Students might say, for example, "I didn't know that Katie spoke Spanish" or "I didn't know that Jose was left-handed."

## Slow Flow

One person volunteers to be “It” with the objective of tagging another participant. The tagged person then becomes “It”. In Slow Flow, everyone must use slow exaggerated motions as if swimming through very very thick, muddy water.

## Sports

Pick a sport that is popular amongst the participants and have them mime a game of that sport. For example if the game is soccer put participants into a group of three, one goalie and two players, and tell them they have an imaginary ball and must play a game of soccer.

## Rainstorm

The person in the centre of the circle directs, rubbing hands together and turning slowly toward everyone in the circle. As the director faces each person they copy what the director is doing, and continue the action until the director arrives at them again with another action.

The director goes around the circle eight times in this order:

First time: rubbing hands together, go all around the circle. When you get to the person you started with, start going around the circle a second time, this time snapping your fingers. Third time: slap thighs. Fourth time: slap thighs and stamp feet. Fifth time: stop stamping feet and only slap thighs. Sixth time: back to snapping fingers. Seventh time: back to rubbing palms together. Eighth time: return to silence. Rainstorm is over once you’ve completed the entire circle and everyone has stopped rubbing their hands together.

## The Human Knot

Participants stand in a circle, cross their arms in front of them and join each hand with anyone in the group, not necessarily a neighbor. Keeping all hands joined, the group must unravel the knot. They must maneuver themselves into a circle where they are holding the hands of the person next to them with no arms crossed. Some people may be facing outward to achieve this.

## Touch Blue

Trainer calls a colour “touch blue” and everyone must touch something blue on another person or in the room. Continue with other colours and descriptions.