

PLAIN NAME GAME

A GROUP EXERCISE TO LEARN NAMES

NOTES

Once a group completes Plain Name Game, most of the participants will know the names of most of the other participants. It takes time, but it is very effective. We have used Plain Name Game with groups as large as 60 participants.

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

Up to 60

Allow at least a minute per participant for the entire exercise. The first members are finished in seconds, but each participant takes progressively longer to repeat the preceding names.

MATERIALS

None

INSTRUCTIONS

Participants must remove their name tags. The group forms a circle, an arm's length apart, alphabetized by first name. (Alphabetizing the group makes the game move faster; you might not remember the name, but you know it starts with "J.")

The first participant says his or her first name: *Ann*. The second participant first repeats the name of the first person, and then says his or her own name: *Ann, Beth*. The third person repeats the first person's name, then the second person's name, and finally his or her name: *Ann, Beth, Christy*.

Each participant continues in turn, repeating all the preceding names and ending with his or her name.

When all participants have had a turn, the facilitator may end the exercise by:

- Having the whole group do all the names together, keeping the same order
- Asking a group member to run through all the names in reverse order
- Having the group mix up the order and then having a couple of folks try to run the names in the new order