



# 1 Hello

**H**ello is an opener that is directly related to the workshop topic. This strategy is in contrast to the typical icebreakers that are just fun without any relevance to the training topic.

## **Purpose**

To establish expectations, baseline of experiences, application areas, and alternative definitions related to the workshop topic

## **Participants**

Minimum: 8

Maximum: 52

Best: 12 to 32

(Participants are divided into 4 teams.)

## **Time**

20 to 40 minutes

## **Supplies**

- A deck of playing cards
- Sheets of flip-chart paper
- Felt-tipped markers
- Timer
- Whistle

## **Preparation**

**Assemble a packet of playing cards.** Estimate the number of participants. Divide this number by 4, round up the answer if necessary. From a deck of cards, remove this many cards of each suit. Shuffle this packet of cards and use them for allocating participants to the four different teams.

*Example: You have 29 participants. Dividing this by 4, you get 7.25. You round this up to 8. From the deck of cards, you remove Ace, 2, 3 . . . 8 from each of the 4 suits. You shuffle this packet.*

## Flow

**Brief the participants.** Explain that you are going to conduct an activity called Hello. This activity involves all participants collecting and sharing some useful information about ourselves.

**Introduce the four topics.** Explain that you are interested in these four topics:

- **Expectations.** What are you looking forward to in this training session?
- **Experience.** How much and what type of experience do you have that is related to the workshop topic?
- **Current project.** What are you currently doing in your job to which you plan to apply your new skills and knowledge?
- **Definition.** How would you define the workshop topic?

**Explain the activity.** Tell participants that you are going to organize them into four teams. Each team will be assigned one of the four topics. Instruct the teams to collect information from all participants—including members of their own teams—related to the topic assigned to them.

**Set the agenda.** Explain the following schedule:

- 3 minutes for planning how to collect the information from everyone
- 3 minutes for collecting information from everyone in the room
- 3 minutes for analyzing all the information that teams collected
- 1 minute (for each team) to make a summary presentation of the information

**Make team allocations.** Shuffle the packet of playing cards and ask each participant to take a card. Ask participants to find other members of their teams who have cards of the same suit. Invite each team to gather around in a convenient corner. Assign the topics to the teams in this order:

**Clubs:** Expectations

**Hearts:** Experience

**Spades:** Current project

**Diamonds:** Definition (of the workshop topic)

**Coordinate the planning activity.** Ask each team to begin planning how to collect information from everyone in the room (including members of their own teams). Announce a 3-minute time limit and start the timer.

After 2 minutes, announce a 1-minute warning. After 3 minutes, announce the end of the planning period.

**Coordinate the information-collection activity.** Announce that each team now has 3 minutes to collect information on the topic assigned to it. Get out of the way as everyone tries to talk to as many others as possible. Announce a 3-minute time limit and start the timer.

After 2 minutes, announce a 1-minute warning. After 3 minutes, announce the end of the planning period.

**Coordinate the analysis activity.** Ask members of teams to return to their teams. Invite team members to share and tabulate all the information they collected. Distribute

sheets of flip-chart paper and ask teams to summarize their information on this sheet. Announce a 3-minute time limit and start the timer.

After 2 minutes, announce a 1-minute warning. After 3 minutes, announce the end of the analysis period.

**Coordinate the reporting activity.** Randomly select a team and ask it to display its flip-chart poster. Ask a representative from this team to present its results and conclusions. Start the timer and announce the end of the reporting period at the end of 1 minute.

Repeat the procedure until all teams have given their reports.

## **Debriefing**

Discuss the findings with participants. Present your training objectives and an outline of the workshop format. Relate these items to participants' expectations, experience, and current projects. Give your definition of the workshop topic and explain how it relates to their definitions.