



Getting Connected

(For the trainer: For this ice-breaker exercise, you will divide your participants into groups of 5-10 people each, depending on the total number and your available space. You will need a ball of string/twine for each group and printed copies of the following instructions).

- The goal of this exercise is for you to talk to and find connections between the members of your group.
- Speed and focus are important to finish this exercise well and on time.

Instructions:

1. Everyone at the table who is able to do so stands up and faces the center of the table/circle.
2. Someone at your table picks up the provided spool of string and holds the end of the string with one hand and the spool in the other hand.
3. The person holding the string now has to find something he/she has in common with another person at the table (**other than the people immediately to his/her left or right**). The person with the spool of string talks about himself/herself and asks for someone to speak up when he/she discovers something they have in common.
There are suggested topics or prompts at the foot of this page that might be explored as possible points of commonality, but people should not feel limited to these topics or prompts. Anything that two people share or have in common is a connection and satisfies the goals of this exercise.
4. When the person holding the spool of string has found a connection or point of commonality with someone at the table (excluding the people directly to his/her left and right), he/she continues to hold the end of the string and hands the spool of string to the person to whom the connection was made.
5. This connected person takes the spool of string from the person who is handing it off (unrolling the string as needed) and holds onto the string itself with one hand and the spool in the other.
6. It is now this second person's goal to find something he/she has in common with someone else standing around the table (**excluding the people on his/her immediate left and right and the person from whom he/she got the string**). An added challenge is that the same point of connection cannot be used twice at the table, so talk to each other, help each other out and be creative in finding different points of connection.
7. This process continues with the spool of string being passed around the group as connections are being made/found. Each person handing the spool off should keep holding the string to mark the path the string has taken.
8. Each hand-off of the spool (each connection between people) should NOT be with the person to your immediate left or right, nor with the person who gave you the spool of string.
9. When the last person at the table has been connected and is now holding the spool of string, this person must find a connection (something in common) with the person who first picked up the spool and started the exercise. When this final connection has been made, the spool of string should be handed back the person who started the exercise.
10. Everyone standing around the table should be holding onto the string, and the string should connect one person to another in some (maybe random) order, and the person who started the exercise should be holding both the end of the string and what is left on the spool itself.



11. When this has been accomplished, you have successfully completed the exercise. As a group, shout, "We did it!" to let the other groups know you have completed the task, and keep standing (and holding the string) until the other tables catch up.

Possible points of connection to explore:

- What did you study in school?
- Where do you work?
- How long have you been in the field?
- What tasks at work do you particularly enjoy?
- What tasks at work do you particularly dread?
- Are you married?
- Do you have any kids?
- When did you go to college (70s, 80s, 90s, 00s)?
- What movies have you seen lately?
- What books have made an impression on you?
- What TV shows do you like to watch?
- Do you have a hobby or play a sport?