Motivational Activities

The following activities can be incorporated into an orientation workshop for officers, representatives, committee chairs and committee members. Select a few that will reinforce the message you are trying to convey. A sample schedule for an orientation workshop is found in the book on page 19.

MINGLING ACTIVITIES

CATALOG GAME
Have each student give their name and then identify something that would be found in a Sears or Penneys catalog that her or she would like to have. As each person gives their name and item, they must repeat all the previous items in order.

SPIDER WEB
Begin the activity by stating your name and something you like to do. Then, while holding onto the end of a ball of yarn, toss the yarn to someone else in the room. This process continues until all have shared and a spider web pattern has been created. Now, reverse the process by stating the name and activity of the person who tossed you the yarn, tossing the yarn ball back to him/her, winding up the slack as you go.

DIADS
Two students meet, exchange names, and share something interesting about themselves. These two meet and introduce their first partner to a new pair. Four meet four. Eight meet eight.

INDEX CARD PUZZLE HUNT
To prepare this exercise, the instructor needs half as many index cards as there are students. Write one question per index card and cut each one in half to create two unique puzzle pieces. Scramble the pieces and distribute one piece to each student. Students are to find their match and answer the question on the card.

COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

TINKER TOYS
Divide students into groups of 6-8. Give each group a set of tinker toys. Let them create the ideal student, school, class, teacher, or whatever. When they have their creation finished, each group will explain theirs to the others.

ABSTRACT RECREATION
Draw an abstract design on a large piece of paper. Have one student come to the front of the room and, without showing the design to the rest of the class, explain how to draw the design. Compare creations. Discuss obstacles to communication and specific ways to overcome them.

PEANUT BUTTER AND JELLY
On a table place the following items: a jar of peanut butter, a jar of jelly, a loaf of bread, a knife, a spoon, and napkins. Ask a student to volunteer to tell you how to make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. Follow the directions exactly as they are given: put peanut butter on bread. Place the jar of peanut butter on the loaf of bread. This vividly and humorously illustrates the importance of speaking with clarity and listening with understanding.

RUMOR CLINIC
Have six students leave the room. Tell the first student a 1-2 minute story full of details. Bring in a second student. Have the first student tell the second the same story. This process continues until all six have been told. The last one tells the story to the group, then the leader repeats the original story.

WORKING TOGETHER ACTIVITIES

STRAWBUILDING
Divide into groups of 6-8. Give each group lots of straws (150 or more) and some tape. Tell them they have 10 minutes to build the tallest possible, self-supporting structure of straws. Give them one minute to discuss the planning and organization before they begin the actual construction. During the construction they may not talk.
WORKING TOGETHER ACTIVITIES (cont’d)

COOPERATION SQUARES
Divide into groups of 6 (5 will participate and one will observe). Give each group an envelope containing all of the puzzle pieces. Each person is to be randomly given 3 pieces. Without talking each person is to assemble a six inch square using the pieces given and any others voluntarily given to him or her by other participants. At the end of the exercise, each participant will have a six inch square in front of him or her. For a sample set of puzzles, contact Patti Ireland, Towers High School.

NEWSPAPER SCULPTURE
Small groups use newspaper, tape and scissors to create a sculpture that represents a good school, a good student, a good teacher, or whatever. Upon completion, a spokesperson from each group explains their creation.

HEADBANDS
Make sets of headbands with statements on them such as (a) Laugh at everything I say. (b) Ignore me. (c) Order me around. (d) Cut me down. (e) Make me a leader. Etc.. Without the student seeing what it says, attach the headband to that so everyone else can see it. Have the group carry out an activity or a discussion observing the description on each person’s headband. Afterwards, discuss what it felt like to be treated in a particular way.

LAP SIT
Make a circle with all members closely positioned together. At the signal, all try to sit on the lap of the person behind, keeping the circle together.

LINE UP
Have students, without talking, line up by height. Discuss how they got organized and what they could do to work more efficiently as a group. Repeat with birthdays, alphabetically shoe size, etc..

KNOTS
Groups of 6,8,10, or 12 can do this. The students form a circle. To create a knot, students place their hands in the center. Everyone grabs a couple of hands, no one holding both hands with the same person and no one holding the hand of the person standing next to him/her. Now, untie the knot without breaking hands.

SELF IMAGE ACTIVITIES
IALAC (I Am Loveable And Capable)
Make a sign with IALAC on it. As you go through a day’s activities, tell how your image gets torn up. Tear up the sign as you do this. Then go back and restore the image, putting the sign back together again.

LETTER TO SELF
Have each student address an envelope and write a letter to him/herself reflecting on their current situation and where they hope to be in six weeks, six months, or a year. Instructor should give the letters to the students at the end of the agreed upon time.

CONCEPTUALIZING ACTIVITIES
TAKE IT OFF TO...
In small groups, ask students to take something and place it in the middle of their circle. No repeat items are allowed. Ask students to create from these items the ideal student, teacher, school, etc. A spokesperson will be asked to explain the creation.

COMMERCIAL AWARDS FOR EDUCATION/SCHOLARLY TRAITS
Assign each group a letter of the alphabet. For this letter, the group selects an advertising slogan or product that can be used to teach an educational concept. Design a poster that represents their award. For example, THANKS TO COKE FOR REMINDING US THAT EDUCATION IS THE REAL THING!