



SASP WORKPLACE ENERGISERS



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ACTIVE WORKPLACE ENERGISERS



Some of the activities below could be best described as energisers, i.e. to get people up and moving whilst using problem solving and/or team building skills, whilst others may be more suitable for ice breaking or new groups getting to know one another.

Both can play an important role in helping people integrate and connect with one another in a group environment and can also enhance your objectives by helping to stimulate cooperation and participation and can provide a focus or stimulus for discussion and reflection.

They can be used before, during and after meetings and many will lend themselves well to repeating throughout the day and use as a measure of how they have developed. Many of them will be well suited to more informal usage, e.g. lunchtime, tea break, "cake Friday" type occasions.





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- Name Ball Throw

Once everyone has already introduced themselves to one another and heard each others names, get everyone into a circle.

Give the ball to 1 person who will throw the ball to someone else while saying their name. Continue, with each person having to throw the ball to someone who hasn't already received the ball. Once the ball has made its way to everyone in the group, start again from the beginning following the same sequence (saying the names as the ball is thrown), this time a little faster and adding the name of the person that threw the ball to them.

Once you have finished, you can then try doing the sequence in reverse . For added complexity you can add another ball, maybe of a different size or texture.

- Juggling Ball Game

Everyone stands in a close circle. (If the group is very large, it may be necessary to split the group into 2 circles).

The leader starts by throwing the ball to someone in the circle, saying their name as they throw it. Continue catching and throwing the ball establishing a pattern for the group (each person must remember who they receive the ball from and who they have thrown it to). Once everyone has received the ball and a pattern is established, introduce 1 or 2 more balls, so that there are always several balls being thrown at the same time, following the set pattern.

Can be done as a challenge between 2 or more groups. Who can get the most balls going and maintain it for 15 seconds.



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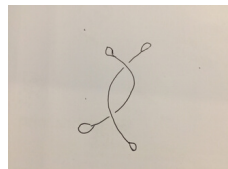
- Jigsaw

Need fairly large, simple Jigsaws – 30 – 40 pieces ideal. Teams of 4 or 5 best.

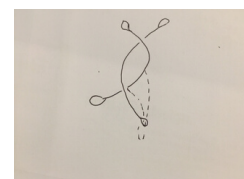
Give teams a jigsaw and ask them to complete it without a picture to guide. Most will complete in a couple of minutes. Then tell them “Well done, but the real challenge is with careful planning and preparation, how quickly can you complete this?” sub 20 seconds should be a realistic target. Think Formula 1 racing team. How do they manage their pit stops? Best done spread over a period of time, e.g. 5 minutes or so early on to do the puzzle and introduce the challenge, 5-10 minutes before lunch to come up with a plan, 5-10 minutes after lunch to practice & refine, and then a 'grand final' towards the end. You might want to ask teams to reflect on how they developed and performed as a team.

- Handcuff Escape

Tie a hand sized loop at both ends of pieces of string (approx 1 meter long). Pair up with someone of similar size, loop the 2 lengths of string together and each person put their hands in the loops. Now ask the pairs to separate. In all probability pairs will try to climb through gaps and arms but to no avail (using longer lengths of string encourages them to believe this is possible).



The only possible solution is to draw a piece from one string, pass it through the loop of their partners handcuff from behind and slit it over their partners hand. Then they will magically separate!



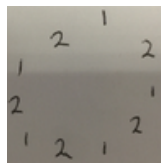


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- Catch & Throw Ball Race



Needs to be an even number in a team. Need 2 balls, ideally of different colours. Split into 2 teams, everyone stands in a circle with teams alternating i.e. can be any number of people. Each team starts with a ball on either side of the circle. Decide whether going clockwise or anticlockwise and on "Go", throw the ball to the next person in your team. Keep going until 1 ball overtakes the other where upon that team has won. Repeat in the other direction.

- Cross the Swamp

Requires hula hoops, approx. 1 per each 4 people. Best done as a race between teams.

Use string to make 2 lines roughly 15 meters apart, the space between being the 'Swamp'. Split group into teams of between 8 & 12. Give each team 3 hula hoops (4 if there are 10 people or more) and tell them that they have to get from one side of the swamp to the other using the hoops as their only safe passage. If any member of the group makes contact with the ground outside the hoop the whole team must return and start again.

- Body Spelling

Ask the group to use their arms and body to spell out chosen words. Use YMCA as an example. COCONUT is a good start, LUNCH, DINNER, CIDER, PARTY, TEATIME are all good. Following a leader works best.



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- Beach Ball Volleyball

Use a beach ball or a fairly substantial balloon and explain that the group is going to work together to keep the ball in the air for as long as possible by working together to keep hitting the ball into the air. If the ball touches the ground, you need to start again. Each person is only allowed to hit the ball once in a row. Count each time the ball is hit, as the group can then try to better their score.

It is possible to add a competitive element by the leader, judging who was responsible for the ball touching the ground and eliminating them. This may become contentious (which is not always a bad thing!) as the person "judged responsible" may not always be the last person to touch it.

- Number Count, Clap & Jump

Can be any number, even a large group.

Assemble the group in a circle, standing or sitting, establish whether you are going clockwise or anti clockwise.

Start counting in turn around the circle, at each multiple of 3 the person must clap loud whilst saying the number, and on multiples of 7, the person must jump (or stand up) whilst saying the number.

Numbers divisible by both have to perform both actions. After a round or 2, this can be done as a "knockout" i.e anyone who makes a mistake is eliminated until there is an overall winner (hesitation can lead to elimination!).



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- Human Knot

Groups of 6-10 is best, if you have more, break down.

Form the group into a tight circle, standing and facing inwards. Each person should then extend 1 hand into the circle and hold another person's hand across the circle. Ask them to check that the hand they are holding is the opposite side to their own i.e. WITH YOUR RIGHT HAND, HOLD SOMEONE ELSE'S LEFT. Then repeat with the other arm over the top of the already joined hands. Be sure that the 2 hands they are holding, do not belong to the same person and they are not holding the person next to them.

Now that the group is in a large "knot," their challenge is to become untangled without anyone letting go of the hands that they are holding onto. Keeping safety in mind, members of the groups can physically climb over, under or through each other's arms to untie their knot. The aim group should end up in a large circle, though there may be occasions when only a figure of 8 is possible.

- Bump Tag

Get into pairs standing one behind the other, scattered around the room. Choose 1 pair and make 1 person "chaser" and one person the "runner".

"Chaser" chases "runner" to tag them – if tagged, runner becomes chaser. Runner may escape at any time by lining up with any pair from behind which bumps the person at the front of that pair (which is now a trio) off to become the new runner.



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- Dishes and Domes

Need a stack of cones



Lay a large amount of cones out randomly, roughly half facing up (dishes) and half facing down (domes). Split the group into 2 teams (dishes and domes). On "GO" each team has to turn as many cones as possible to their orientation i.e, dishes are trying to get as many cones facing upwards as possible. After a defined time (maybe 2 minutes) call "STOP". Everyone step aside whilst you count and proclaim a winner.

- Rock, Paper, Scissors Tournament

Each round best of 3 (though can be 5 or 7).

Everyone finds a partner, play Rock, Paper, Scissors. The winner moves on to the next round and finds another "winner" to play against. The loser becomes a "fan" of the person who beat them and cheers them on against their subsequent opponents. Continue until you have a grand final, each with by now a large fan base.

As a more active variation, decide a full-body pose that will signify each element e.g.

Rock – person will bend down and hug their knees and curl into a ball so they look like a rock.

Scissors – person will stand with legs apart and both arms up and hands behind the head so they look like a pair of scissors.



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- Match Phrase

The leader chooses a number of well known 2 word phrases, and writes half of each phrase on a piece of paper or card. For example, they write 'Happy' on 1 piece of paper and 'Birthday' on another (the number of pieces of paper should match the number of participants in the group).

The folded pieces of paper are put into a bag and each participant takes 1 piece. They then have to find the person who makes their phrase complete.

- Shoe Boule

Each player removes a shoe.

Use anything to hand as a "jack" (the target). A waste paper bin, a scrunpled piece of paper etc. will be fine.

Each player in turn uses their foot only to launch their shoe at the target, nearest wins. Repeat as often as required, varying the distance of the jack.

- Blindfold Shapes

Need a rope of about 10 meters long.

People do not like being blindfolded so trust them to keep eyes shut.

Each person holds the rope with both hands then closes their eyes. The leader calls a simple shape e.g. square and the group, whilst maintaining eyes shut, try to form that shape. When they think they are done, lay the rope down and open eyes!



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- Name Volleyball

Divide the group into 2 teams (more than 20, 4 teams). Put the 2 teams facing each other on opposite ends of the room.

The teams are going to play an imaginary game of volleyball. When they hit the ball they have to shout the name of the person on the opposite team that they are hitting to. After everyone has been named, add a competitive element.

Points are won if the recipient does not respond to their name quickly enough (hesitation) or if there is no one of that name on the team.

Try and encourage people to perform energetically e.g. to leap in the air and hit the ball. The leader may penalise a person for "lacking reality". When the teams become used to the game, add the rule that they can hit the ball to one member of their team before it has to go over to the other side. This can add confusion and more fun.

- Copy Cat(s)

Participants sort themselves into pairs (larger groups can also work). Each pair or group decides which one of them will be the performer, whilst the other(s) become the mirror. The mirror(s) person then copies (mirrors) the actions of their performer.

After some time, ask the pair to swap roles so that other persons can be the 'performer'.



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- Pass the Ball

Use soft, squidgy balls.

Participants split into teams and each team forms a line. The line passes a ball under their chins. If the ball drops, it has to go back to the beginning of the line. The game continues until 1 team has finished passing the ball along their line. Can be adapted by using other parts of the body e.g. Alternating between armpits and knees.

- Group Circle

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 and to carefully sit down so that everyone is sitting on the knees of the person behind them.

- Group Circle 2

Requires a reasonably strong rope.

Sit in a circle facing the middle and with at least an arms space between each person, pass a rope around the back of the circle and securely tie the ends. Each person takes the rope in both hands, keeping it behind them and then shuffles back to take up any slack. On the command, the group has to stand up without using hands or knees.



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- The Sun Shines

Participants sit or stand in a tight circle with 1 person in the middle. The person in the middle shouts out “the sun shines on...” and names a colour or articles of clothing or characteristic that some in the group possess. For example, “the sun shines on all those wearing blue” or “the sun shines on all people wearing socks” or “all those from the top floor office” or “the sun shines on all those with brown eyes”.

All the participants who have that attribute must change places with one another. The person in the middle tries to take one of their places as they move, so that there is another person left in the middle without a place. The new person in the middle shouts out “the sun shines on...” and names a different characteristic.

- Fruit Salad (adaptation of The Sun Shines)

Divide the participants into an equal number of 3 to 4 fruits (depending on the size of the group, maybe more), such as oranges and bananas. Participants then sit on chairs in a circle. 1 person must stand in the centre of the circle of chairs.

The middle person shouts out the name of one of the fruits, such as ‘oranges’, and all of the oranges must change places with one another. The person who is standing in the middle tries to take one of their places as they move, leaving another person in the middle without a chair. The new person in the middle shouts another fruit and the game continues. A call of ‘fruit salad’ means that everyone has to change seats.



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- In the Right Order

Lay a rope, string or ribbon in a straight line on the floor. Get the group to assemble with both feet on the line, all facing the same way. Now ask the group to arrange themselves in a particular order e.g. alphabetical surname order but without stepping off the line. If someone makes contact with the ground away from the line, stop the group and restart with a different criteria, e.g. age order, alphabetical Christian name, height order, distance travelled to be there etc.

- Things We Have in Common

The leader calls out a random characteristic e.g. "people who have children". All people who fulfill that characteristic should move to one corner or end of the room. whilst those that do not. move to another designated area. Leader calls out more characteristics, such as "likes football", "goes skiing", "has bought a house" and people with the characteristic move to the indicated space, whilst those that don't, go to the other side. If possible be topical with the characteristics and speed it up to keep people moving.

- Solar Eclipse

Ask each person to choose someone who is their sun and someone who is their moon (without telling them). People start to move around the space and make sure that for the entire time the moon is between them and the sun. After a defined period of time, stop and ask people if they had worked out if they were someone's sun or moon.



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- Mixed Arm Clap

Sit in a tight circle on the floor or around a table. Everybody then places their hands flat on the surface, the arms crossing over with those of the neighbours.

Start the game by clapping 1 hand on the surface. Let the clap run around the circle in the sequence of hands not people (i.e. so that always the hand claps that is next to the one that clapped last). After practicing this for a couple of rounds, introduce a complication. If a hand claps twice, the direction of the clap changes direction. Again, practice. When everyone has understood you can add a competitive element.

Now, any hand that claps out of turn or doesn't clap is 'out' and should be put behind the person's back. Hesitation may also be penalised! When somebody loses both hands they are eliminated. Increase the speed of the game as you go along.

- Stand Up

Works best with younger, more agile participants.

Ask participants to find a partner of similar size and weight. Ask everyone to sit on the floor, back to back with their pair. Ask the pairs to hold their arms while keeping their backs together. Tell everyone their goal is to stand up, while keeping the arms locked and backs touching.



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- Lower the Stick

Split the group into 2 (more than 14 separate into 2 groups) and ask the 2 groups to line up facing each other. Hands into the middle at shoulder height with index finger extended. Lay a cane or similar long stick across all of the index fingers and then ask the group to lower the stick to the ground whilst maintaining complete contact with all fingers. Leader to observe and be strict about maintaining full finger contact.

- Spot the Difference

Participants break into pairs. Partners observe one another and try to memorise the appearance of each other. Then 1 turns their back while the other makes 3 changes to his/her appearance; e.g. putting their watch on the other wrist, removing their glasses, and rolling up their sleeves. The other player then turns around and has to try to spot the 3 changes. The players then switch roles.

- Pass the Ball

Best used at the beginning or end. Use a soft squidgy ball.

To encourage people to share what they hope to get out of the day or for people to reflect on the activities of the day. Ask the group to throw the ball to each other randomly. When they have the ball, participants can say one thing about their expectations or what they got out of the day.



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- Have You Ever?

Form a circle of chairs (1 for each person) and then take 1 away.

1 person stands in the middle and calls a question beginning with "Have you ever", e.g. "Have you ever eaten watermelon". Everyone who has eaten watermelon then jumps up and moves to a place vacated by someone else who has moved. The last person who is left without a seat remains in middle to call out something else beginning with "Have you ever.....?"

The activity can be made more competitive by taking away a chair at each stage.

- Tide is in

Use a rope or string to represent the seashore and nominate 1 side as land and the other as sea.

Ask participants to stand behind the line on the land. When the leader shouts "Tide's out!", everyone jumps forwards over the line (out to sea).

When the leader shouts "Tide's in!", everyone jumps backwards over the line (back to land). The leader can then try to catch people out by calling "Tides out" when they are already on the sea side. People who get it wrong or who hesitate can be eliminated.



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- Drop the Coin

Participants divide into 2 lines (more if the group is large). The 2 people at the end of each line start the race by dropping a coin down their clothes, starting from the top and shaking it down. When it drops free on the floor, they hand the coin to the next person in the line who does the same. The race continues until the coin has reached the end of 1 of the lines.

- Chinese Whispers

Participants sit in a circle. Think of a long message, such as "This evening I am going to dinner with my neighbour and we will be having oysters and asparagus. After that we will be going to the theatre to watch The Inspector Calls".

Whisper this message to the person sitting on your right. That person then whispers the same message to the person on their right and so on. Once the message has been passed around the circle, ask the last person to say the message aloud.

Compare the final message with the original version.

- Name and Action

Get everyone in a circle.

First person starts and steps forward into their circle saying their name and doing an action at the same time (e.g. Tanya and a curtsy). They step back into the circle and then the whole group steps forward and says the first person's name while simultaneously doing their action i.e. the whole group says Tanya and curtsies.

Continue until everyone in the circle has had a turn. You can add more levels by including extra descriptions.



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- Orchestra Louder, Faster, Quieter, Slower

Divide the group into 2 and ask half to slap their knees and the other half to clap their hands.

Establish a rhythm or tune. The leader acts as the conductor of the orchestra, controlling the volume by raising or lowering their arms and the speed by widening or narrowing arms. The game can continue with different members of the group taking the role of conductor. The group can be further divided and more instruments added e.g. stomping feet, clicking fingers etc.

- Chingalaka Ching, Boomalaka Boom

The leader calls chingalaka ching and the group responds by saying boomalaka boom. The leader controls the volume so if they call quietly, the group responds quietly. If the leader is really loud, the group responds really loudly.

The leader also controls speed and rhythm e.g. if the leader says chingalaka, chingalaka, chingalaka ching slowly the group responds boomalaka, boomalaka, boomalaka boom slowly.

The activity can be developed by reversing the leaders volume or speed i.e. Leader loud = group quiet, leader slow = group fast etc.



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- Build the Clock Face

Best done as a race, teams of 4 or 5 is best.

Take a full suit from a pack of cards (13 cards) and lay them out randomly face down in a clock face with the 13th card in the middle.

The objective is to build the clock face in the correct order (Ace being 1 o'clock, Jack 11, Queen 12 and King in the middle). Team lines up about 10 meters back, then each person in turn approaches the "face", chooses a card and looks at it. If it is not the Ace, replace it face down, return and tag the next person.

When the Ace is found they place it in the 1 o'clock position and slide the card already there into the gap the Ace came out of (without looking at it). Move on to finding the 2 and proceed until the clock face is complete. Encourage team members to communicate!

You might want to ask teams to reflect on how they developed and performed as a team!