Icebreakers and Energizers set the tone for the training session, it encourages fun involvement of all participants, energizes the group, and builds cohesiveness and trust. An Icebreaking activity should be no more than 10 minutes and can play an important role by introducing the training topic in a creative way. Here are some examples of icebreakers that you can use:

**String Game**: Participants select pre-cut lengths of string from the group facilitator. Each member holds the string between his/her thumb and forefinger. For each “wrap” of the string around the finger, participants must share one thing about themselves.

**Important Item**: Have each person bring something to the meeting that means something special to them or that they would not have left home without, and then ask them to take turns sharing.

**Two Truths and a Lie**
Ask all players to arrange themselves in a circle. Instruct each player to think of three statements about themselves. Two must be true statements, and one must be false. For each person, he or she shares the three statements (in any order) to the group. The goal of the icebreaker game is to determine which statement is false. The group votes on which one they feel is a lie, and at the end of each round, the person reveals which one was the lie.

**Favorite T-Shirt Game**
Ask attendees to bring (not wear) their favorite T-shirt to the meeting. Once all participants have arrived, ask each person to show the shirt to the group and explain how the T-shirt best resembles their personality.

**Human Bingo Game**
Before the meeting, make a bingo matrix and at the top of each square put something that someone in the group might have done-for example, voted for Ross Perot, served in the Peace Corps, etc. Everyone gets a copy and is asked to circulate, getting other group members to sign one square that is true of them. The first person to get "bingo" wins the prize (a candy bar or some other small thing).

**Lucky Penny Game**
Each person takes a penny or other coin out of their pocket and looks at the date. When it's their turn, they tell the year that's on their coin and recall something spectacular that happened that year.
Interactive Training Methods

There are many ways that you can break up training sessions and keep trainees attentive and involved. The following are a few examples on how to keep trainings interactive:

**Quizzes.** For long, complicated training, stop periodically to administer brief quizzes on information presented to that point. You can also begin sessions with a pre quiz and let participants know there will also be a follow-up quiz. Trainees will stay engaged in order to improve their pre quiz scores on the final quiz. Further motivate participants by offering awards to the highest scorers or the most improved scores.

**Small group discussions.** Break the participants down into small groups and give them work situations to discuss or solve. This is a good way for knowledgeable veteran employees to pass on their experience to newer employees.

**Active summaries.** Create small groups and have them choose a leader. Ask them to summarize the lecture’s major points and have each team leader present the summaries to the class. Read aloud a prewritten summary and compare this with participants’ impressions.

**Q & A sessions.** Informal question-and-answer sessions are most effective with small groups and for updating skills rather than teaching new skills. For example, some changes in departmental procedure might easily be handled by a short explanation by the facilitator, followed by a question-and-answer period and a discussion period.

**Question cards.** During the lecture, ask participants to write questions on the subject matter. Collect them and conduct a quiz/review session.

**Role-playing.** By assuming roles and acting out situations that might occur in the workplace, employees learn how to handle various situations before they face them on the job. Role-playing is an excellent training technique for many interpersonal skills, skill building and problem solving challenging types of calls or situations.

**Participant control.** Create a subject menu of what will be covered. Ask participants to review it and pick items they want to know more about. Call on a participant to identify his or her choice. Cover that topic and move on to the next participant.

**Demonstrations.** Whenever possible, bring tools or equipment that are part of the training topic and demonstrate the steps being taught or the processes being adopted.

**Advantages**

- Interactive sessions keep trainees engaged in the training, which makes them more receptive to the new information
- They make training more fun and enjoyable
- They provide ways for veteran employees to pass on knowledge and experience to newer employees
- They can provide in-session feedback to trainers on how well trainees are learning.
Experiential, or hands-on, training, offers several more effective techniques for teaching employees, including:

**Demonstrations.** Demonstrations are attention-grabbers. They are an excellent way to teach employees to use new equipment or to teach the steps in a new process. Combined with the opportunity for questions and answers, this is a powerful, engaging form of training.

**Coaching.** The goal of job coaching is to improve an employee’s performance. Coaching focuses on the individual needs of an employee and is generally less formal than other kinds of training. There are usually no set training sessions. A manager, supervisor, or veteran employee serves as the coach. He or she gets together with the employee being coached when time allows and works with this employee to:

- Answer questions
- Suggest more effective strategies
- Correct errors
- Guide toward goals
- Give support and encouragement
- Provide knowledgeable feedback

**Drills.** Drilling is a good way for employees to practice skills. Evacuation drills are effective when training emergency preparedness.

**Advantages**
- Hands-on training methods are effective for training in new procedures and new equipment
- They are immediately applicable to trainees’ jobs. They allow trainers to immediately determine whether a trainee has learned the new skill or procedure
Employees can conveniently access online or e-learning trainings from their station or a centralized location within the agency. Some examples include:

**Web-based training.** This method puts computer-based training modules onto the Web, which then you can make available to employees on the intranet. These courses provide a hands-on, interactive way for employees to work through training presentations that are similar to PowerPoint, on their own. Training materials are standardized because all trainees will use the same program. Web-based training programs are also often linked with software (a learning management system LMS) that makes trainees’ progress trackable, which makes recordkeeping very easy for the training administrator.

**Tele- or videoconferencing.** These methods allow the trainer to be in one location and trainees to be scattered in several locations. Participants are networked into the central location and can usually ask questions of the trainer via the telephone or by a web chat feature. Lectures and demonstrations can be effective using this method.

**Audio conferencing.** This method is similar to videoconferencing but involves audio only. Participants dial in at the scheduled meeting time and hear speakers present their training. Question and answer sessions are frequently held at the end of sessions in which participants can email questions or call in and talk to a presenter.

**Web meetings, or webinars.** This method contains audio and visual components. Participants dial in to receive live audio training and also follow visual material that appears on their computer screens. These presentations are similar to CD-ROM or PowerPoint presentations and sometimes offer minimal online interactivity. Q & A sessions may also be held at the end of sessions.

**E-mail.** You can use e-mail to promote or enhance training. Send reminders for upcoming training. Solicit follow-up questions for trainers and/or managers. Conduct training evaluations through e-mail forms.

**Advantages**
- Online or e-learning programs are effective for training across multiple locations
- They save the company money on travel expenses
- They are useful for refresher training
- They are good for self-directed learning
- They can be easy to update with new company policies or procedures
- They offer trainers a growing array of choices for matching training programs to employee knowledge and skill levels
A game is a type of structured learning activity used to make learning fun. It can provide a review of material that has been presented to strengthen the learning or evaluate how much learning has occurred. Games can also be used to:

- Help people prepare for learning by testing current levels of knowledge
- Apply a newly learned skill
- Learn as they play the game
- Practice what has been presented to reinforce the learning

Benefits
Games improve knowledge transfer by:

- Increasing participation among all involved.
- Improving the learning process by creating an environment where people’s creativity and intelligence are engaged
- De-stressing learning by making it fun
- Addressing the different ways in which different people best learn - through movement, hearing, and seeing
- Adding variety to a training program, which helps to keep people actively involved

When to Use
Games are usually used in conjunction with other learning methodologies, such as presentations and discussions. When you use them, or if you use them at all, depends on the learning you are trying to convey and whether games will help you meet your learning objectives. Games used at the beginning of a program can measure existing knowledge and build immediate interest in the training material. Games used during a program can help people discover the learning themselves (which strengthens recall and commitment), practice using new knowledge or skills, or reinforce initial learning. Games used near the end of a program can test knowledge gained and people’s ability to apply it in their work settings.

How to Use
For games to be effective, they must:

- Be related to the workplace by providing knowledge, reinforcing attitudes, and initiating action that is important to job success
- Teach people how to think, access information, react, understand, and create value for themselves and their organizations
- Be enjoyable and engaging without being overly simplistic or silly
- Allow for collaboration between learners
- Be challenging but not unattainable
- Permit time for reflection, feedback, dialog, and integration. In other words, games should be debriefed
Examples of games:

- Quizzes
- Scavenger hunts
- Quiz show games, including those modeled on television game shows such as Jeopardy or Family Feud
- Board games, such as GOER's Supervision Central
- "Name that" games
- Sports-related games
- 20 questions

Free PowerPoint games:
Download the templates and modify the games to fit your curriculum needs.
http://jc-schools.net/tutorials/PPT-games/

Password
The PowerPoint game is simple to setup. Type a word on each slide in the subtitle text-box. Then press F5 on the keyboard to start the game.

**Wheel of Fortune**
Give each participant an index card with a number from 1-8. Participants are instructed to write a review question, on their card. Click the Spin Button. When the wheel hits the number on the index card, the student chooses who will receive the question on their card.

**Jeopardy**
Use the Find/Replace feature of PowerPoint to replace the Headings (H1, H2, H3, etc.) with your headings. A zipped file is available to speed the download time.

**Who Wants to be a Millionaire** (with music)

**Guess the Covered Word**

**Hillsborough Squares**

**Holiday Squares**

A creative variation of games
**Courtesy of Mark E. Damon**

**Courtesy of Joanne Whitley**