



Virtual Icebreaker Ideas

Small Group Meetings, Pupillage Teams, Mentoring Pairs or Full Inn Membership

Just as in face-to-face meetings, virtual meetings can also benefit from a little bit of “getting to know you” time, or a short catch-up for those who already know each other.

Here are a few ideas that have been crowd sourced from the American Inns of Court membership:

- Ask people to share some piece of information about themselves and submit it in advance. Create a PowerPoint including the submissions and show it at the start of the meeting. For example:
 - An unusual fact about themselves. Depending on the size of the group, people can share their guess verbally or use a polling feature. If there are a lot of people, you could just pick the top 5/10/20 that are the most interesting or surprising.
 - Something that represents their working from home experience: a view of or from their desk, a picture of “office mates” (kids, pets or other), a tip or just a general welfare check.
- Ask your small groups (pupillage, mentoring or random) to create a Haiku, tweet or limerick that relates to the meeting purpose; have one person “report out” to the full group.
- Pose the question: If you had a time machine, where would you go, when would you go and for what purpose?
- **“Show Yourself!”:** Everyone turns off their cameras and then the “host” states something; if a person agrees or can answer yes, then they turn on their camera. For example, the host states: “Turn on your camera...”
 - If you have appeared in court more than 1/5/15/25/50/100 times.
 - If you’re a vegetarian.
 - If you’ve had another “real” job that wasn’t being a lawyer.
- **“Hello, My Name Is...”:** Each person introduces themselves with their name and a quirky personal fact. Then, the next person introduces everyone who has gone before them, along with their fun facts, before their own introduction. If a person forgets a team member’s factoid, then the introductions start over again with the goal being to go around the circle without making any mistakes.
- **Three Things:** Name a topic and identify a person in the group; that person then has 15 seconds to name three specific items related to the topic. Then, that player chooses another topic and another player to continue. Topics: trial advocacy, Inn history, legal movies, etc.
- **Pictionary-ish:** Divide into teams of three and assign each team a breakout room. The “host” gives a topic and sets a timer for one minute while everyone draws. At the end, the three people hold up their drawings and vote on the best one. The chosen one from each group goes into a semi-final and then into a final.
- **Virtual Show & Tell:** Have participants pick an object in their immediate vicinity and tell a 30-second story about how it came to be in their possession and how important it is to them (this can be as serious or as funny as each participant wants it to be). OR, have one participant identify something they can see another participant’s screen, which they then tell a story about. This promotes public speaking, thinking on your feet and storytelling – all critical advocacy skills – as well as sharing something personal.
- **Watchya got there?** This is a slightly different version of the Virtual Show & Tell. A participant asks another participant, “Hey, [name], whatchya got there?” and the person being asked must tell a story about something showing on their screen without saying what it is or looking at it. The goal is to make the other participants guess what object the speaker is referring to. Participants guess via chat and at the end of a specified time period (30 seconds to one minute), the speaker tells them the right answer.

Tips:

1. Give prompts in advance.
2. Give people opportunities to respond to prompts (plenty of notice) but make it optional.
3. Be non-threatening (don’t go too deep too soon).
4. If you are calling people out, make sure they know ahead of time.
5. Know your audience: Do people already know each other? Is this meeting simply a platform for delivering information? (In some cases, an ice breaker may not be necessary.)

Don’t forget: Your clients may need to break the ice, too! Take just a few minutes to check in with them: How are they coping? What good news would they like to share? Are there additional services they require? How can you help?