



# TEAMFIRST DEVELOPMENT

Building Empowered Teams

## WARM-UPS

Start daily stand-up meetings with a 3 minute improv warm-up. These warm-ups are the same ones used by Improv teams in order to meet their goal of building an empowered team. The warm-ups practice the art of Collaboration, Creativity, Communication, and Trust. These qualities are the core components we want to build into our scrum teams.

## LEGEND:

- C** Concentration & Focus
- I** Imagination & Creativity
- L** Listening & Communication
- N** Newcomer Friendly
- T** Trust & Collaboration

**ALPHABET CONVERSATION** **I L N** - Each person starts their sentence with the next letter of the alphabet. Attempt to carry on a conversation or story.

**BARNEY** **I N** - Each person uses the next letter of the alphabet and fills in the phrase \_\_\_\_ sells \_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_. e.g. Alice sells Apples in Algeria. This can be done with calling on the next person in order to improve focus. This is also true for many of the warm-ups.

**BIG OLE SENTENCE** **C I L** - The first person comes up with a simple and short sentence. Each successive person repeats the sentence, adding another detail. The progression could go something like this: "There's a car." "There's a red car." "There's a red sports car." "There's a red sports car on fire." The game goes until the sentence gets too long for people to repeat, at which time a new sentence must be started.

**COLORED BALLS** **C L T** - Leader says "Greg, red ball". Then Greg names someone else followed by "red ball". After the red ball is correctly passing around the phone or room the leader adds another colored ball. People should avoid changing the color of the balls. Allow anyone to recover a color that gets lost.

**COUNT TO 20** **C L T** - Anyone starts by saying 1. Someone else says 2 and so on. If two people speak at the same time everyone says "awwww" and the team starts back at 1. This is difficult but very rewarding when you finally get to 20.

**FIVE THINGS** **I T** - Leader asks next person for a list of 5 things e.g. sports teams, movies, made up words. Everyone yells "Yes" after each one. When the person finishes they ask the next person for a list of 5 things. This can be a list of things you would find somewhere, a list of things you would say if \_\_\_\_\_, or a list of things you might do if \_\_\_\_\_.

Variation: Use some other number than 5.

Variation: Rather than yell Yes, the group repeats the word that was said.

**FORTUNATELY, UNFORTUNATELY** **C I L N** - The first person starts a story with the word fortunately. The next person continues the thought, but their first word is unfortunately, then fortunately, and so on. e.g. Fortunately, I found a magic lamp. Unfortunately, there wasn't a magic genie inside. Fortunately, it was gold. Unfortunately, it was just gold plated.

**FREE ASSOCIATION** **I L N** - The first person says a random word. Each subsequent person tries to say a word that has some connection to the previous word. Everyone must listen for when the topic changes. If someone is stuck they should toss out any random word.

**GIBBERISH DICTIONARY** **I L** - A person makes up a word and asks the next person for the definition of the word. The next person repeats the word and then provides a definition, then they make up a word and ask the next person to define it.



For more warm-ups and information, please visit: [teamfirstdevelopment.com](http://teamfirstdevelopment.com).

**MINISTER'S CAT** (I N) - Each person uses the next letter of the alphabet and fills in the phrase "The Minister's cat is a \_\_\_\_ cat", where blank is replaced with an adjective.

**NAME THAT PERSON** (L N T) - Start by having everyone say their first and last names. Then call out someone's first and last name from the group. Then they call out another person's name. Don't call the person that called on you. Go as quickly as possible.

**OBSERVATION MEMORY** (I) - Leader picks a category like: Animals, Movies, Names, Cities/States or Occupations. If the leader picked Animals they might start with Cougar, using the letter C. The next person might say Deer using the letter D. Each person uses the next letter of the alphabet for their item.

**OVER THE WEEKEND** (T) - Describe something you did over the weekend.

**QUESTION** (T) - This could be played every day forever. The leader asks a question and everyone answers in turn. This could be:

What is something in your car that is interesting or unusual?

What's the oldest thing in your refrigerator?

How would you blow \$200? or maybe \$200,000?

Describe your perfect week long vacation.

**SENTENCE REPEAT** (C I L) - Leader creates a sentence that starts a story or conversation. Each subsequent person repeats the previous person's sentence. Then they say a sentence of their own to continue the story or conversation.

**SING A SONG** (I T) - Each person sings a line or two of a song they know. If you are a bad singer go ahead and be very bad. The leader should start and be scary bad. That makes everyone willing to take this leap.

**SOMETHING I LOVE** (I N T) - Each person tells the team about something they love or enjoy.

**SUPER HEROES** (I T) - Each person makes up a superhero name and describes their special power.

**TWO WORD STORY** (I L N) - Leader starts with two words and each person adds two words to the story. Feel free to use a period or other punctuation mark in place of a word. When people are on the phone have the leader type the phrase so everyone can see it.

**WORD RHYME** (I L) - Leader tosses out a single word. The next person says a single word that rhymes with the last word. If someone can't find a rhyme they just toss out a new word. Leader should start with an easy to rhyme word. When people are on the phone have leader type the words so everyone can see them.

**YES, AND...** (I L N T) - This warm-up is the basis of all of Improv. The leader starts off with a statement. Each subsequent person responds with "Yes, And" followed by a sentence that builds upon something the previous person said. You could play this same warm-up every day forever and still get something out of it. This is used to teach people to build upon the ideas of others rather than crushing ideas into dust.

**YES, LET'S!** (I N T) - Each person proposes something. This can be anything. Everyone supports this by saying, "Yes, Let's!". Next person proposes something else to do.

**ZIP, BONK, SKIPO** (C L) - Use a circle or a list of names on the phone. The leader starts with "Zip" sending the control moving to an adjacent person. The 3 words that move the control are:

Zip - Control moves in its current direction.

Bonk - Control reverses direction.

Skipo - Skips a single person.

