



Technology – Best Tools to Engage Participants




The tools demonstrated in this Breakout Session, hosted by Chris Doyle, are summarized below for your reference.




Additionally, as Chris discussed on the call, an extensive list of Virtual Team Building Activities is also included.

If you have any questions remaining from the session, or would like to have a more in-depth discussion about these, or any other tools, please feel free to contact Chris directly.

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	Category	App Name	Description	Cost
	Scheduling			
		FindTime	FindTime is an add-in for Outlook that helps you come to consensus on a meeting time across companies. Have you ever spent more time deciding when to meet than actually meeting? FindTime shows what days and times work the best for you and your attendees when available. findtime.microsoft.com	FREE
		Doodle	Doodle is a web-based scheduling tool that promises to eliminate the hassle of organizing meetings via email or phone. You set up the meeting details, include however many time options you wish, and invite others via email to respond to the poll. www.doodle.com	Free w/Ads \$4.50 per month for more

	Category	App Name	Description	Cost
	Collaboration			
		Slack	Slack is a channel-based messaging platform. With Slack, people can work together more effectively, connect all their software tools and services, and find the information they need to do their best work — all within a secure, enterprise-grade environment. www.slack.com	FREE \$7.00 per month for more
		Trello	Trello is a collaboration tool that organizes your projects into boards. In one glance, Trello tells you what's being worked on, who's working on what, and where something is in a process. www.trello.com	FREE \$10.00 per month for more
		Microsoft Teams	Chat, Meet, Call, and Collaborate - All In One Place With Microsoft Teams. Instant Messaging. App Integrations. Call From Anywhere. Host Meetings. Video Conferencing. Cloud Phone System www.microsoft.com	Free *Requires business account.
	Polls/Quizzes			
		SimplePoll	With Simple Poll, you can create *native and simple polls*, right within Slack. Get your colleagues' thoughts in minutes; not in the next meeting.	FREE *For use with Slack
		Zoom Polls	The polling feature for webinars allows you to create single-choice or multiple-choice polling questions for your webinars.	FREE *For use with Zoom
		Survey Monkey	SurveyMonkey is a cloud-based survey tool that helps users create, send and analyze surveys. Users can email surveys to respondents and post them on their websites and social media profiles to increase response rate. www.surveymonkey.com	FREE \$25.00 per month for more
		Kahoot!	Kahoot! is a game-based learning platform that makes it easy to create, share and play learning games or trivia quizzes in minutes. www.kahoot.com	FREE \$10.00 per month for more

Category	App Name	Description	Cost
Document Storage			
	Dropbox	Dropbox is a modern workspace designed to reduce busywork-so you can focus on the things that matter. www.dropbox.com	\$10.00 per month
	Microsoft OneDrive	OneDrive is the cloud storage service developed by Microsoft that allows you to store all your important files securely in one place and then access them virtually anywhere. www.microsoft.com	FREE \$2.00 per month for more
Google (Integrated)			
	Meets	An integrated suite of secure, cloud-native collaboration and productivity apps powered by Google AI. Includes Gmail, Docs, Drive, Calendar, Meet and more.	\$6.00 per month, per person
	Calendar		
	Drive		

Reply All

Duration: 10-15 minutes

Tools Needed: Nothing, but send a quick email prior to the meeting using the provided sample questions

Number of Participants: 4+; break into smaller groups if the group is large

Purpose: Icebreaker

Rules/Description:

Before the start of your meeting, ask a question, or a series of questions, to the group via email, asking them to “reply all”, so that everyone can see the answers. See below for suggested questions to ask your team.

As the meeting starts, either you can give attendees the opportunity to explain their choices, OR you can give the answers. Have the team guess who responded with what answer, and then have the author explain their answer(s) once they have been revealed. If you choose the latter route, do not have the team “reply all” when giving their responses to keep them anonymous.

A few suggested questions:

If you could visit anywhere in the world, regardless of budget or time it took to get there, where would you go?

Who would you have dinner with, either living or dead?

What is the best place you have ever travelled?

If you could pick one superpower, what would it be?

Name That Throwback

Duration: 10-15 minutes

Tools Needed: A video chatting platform, a playlist, a speaker, and if in person some sort of “buzzing in” mechanism

Number of Participants: 3+, works best with teams of at least 2 participants

Purpose: Icebreaker or team building

Rules/Description: Before the start of your meeting, make a playlist of songs that were popular ten or more years ago. There are plenty of throwback playlists online if you do not have the time to make one on your own.

Play the songs through your video chatting platform and have people “buzz in” through the text chat. They can simply type in an “x” and send it or something of that nature to show who buzzed in first. Points can be awarded if you want to make it competitive!

This one will have your team tapping their feet to the beat, laughing, and chatting about the nostalgic songs while creating a little healthy competition.

Word association

Duration: 5-10 minutes

Tools Needed: List of prompts, chatting platform (video preferred but not necessary)

Number of Participants: 3+

Purpose: Icebreaker or team building

Rules/Description: Pick a prompt that’s relevant to your meeting and ask people to either write down or verbally share one word they associate with that prompt. For example: if you are leading a meeting about your company’s culture, ask the group to share one word that they feel best describes the organizational culture.

A possible prompt could simply be: “Pick one word that best describes our company’s culture”. Some possible answers may be: “fun”, “supportive”, “wacky”, “interesting”. Another prompt could be: “Describe how you feel about this week’s project using only one word”.

Then when you feel you have enough answers for that prompt, discuss the results.

Consider recording the responses live on a shared document or communal board as a visual aid. This icebreaker helps the group explore their thoughts on a common issue or goal before diving into the meeting agenda.

Take a Picture

Duration: 5-10 minutes

Tools Needed: Email, and a smartphone or camera

Number of Participants: 3+

Purpose: Icebreaker or team building

Rules/Description:

This one works best for remote groups and not in-person teams. Ask participants to take a picture of an object, or objects, in their work area. The photos may be fidget toys, family photos, desk organizers, or

even some cool art. The responses you'll get will be all kinds of interesting items! Have the team email you the images with a little description so that you can screen share them during the meeting, or just have them hit "reply all" to your initial message so everyone can see!

This can spark interesting conversation and provide insight into what each co-worker is like. Do they have kids? Are they super organized? Do they work on their couch? Alternatively, you could ask team members to take a picture of the view out their window, or the workspace as a whole. As a result, you'll gain new insight into the wide variety of locations and settings of the group. The cool part about remote teams is that they are from all over the country, or globe, and work in very different settings!

Who Is It?

Duration: 10-15 minutes

Tools Needed: Email prior to the meeting to collect the facts

Number of Participants: 4+

Purpose: Icebreaker or team builder

Rules/Description:

This activity is great for both new and old teams! Prior to the meeting, ask each player to send you a fact about themselves that others do not know about them yet. During the meeting, read them aloud to the group so the responses are kept anonymous.

Have the team guess which fact belongs to which team member! They can either cast votes and discover if they got them right at the end, or vote as you go along. Whichever you think is best for your team!

Baby photos

Duration: 10-15 minutes

Tools Needed: Email, baby photos, a list of each team member

Number of Participants: 5+

Purpose: Icebreaker

Rules/Description:

Remember in high school when the best part of the yearbook was guessing whose baby pictures were who? This icebreaker is inspired by that age-old tradition. While it does require a bit of preparation, it is all worth it!

Before the meeting, send out a request for baby photos from each individual on your team. Make sure they do not hit “reply-all”, or else this guessing game will be spoiled! Once you’ve compiled the photos place them all up onto your screen sharing program, numbering each one. A great way to do this is to put each photo into a slideshow or a document of some sort.

Once this is set up, the game is simple. Participants must guess which photo belongs to which employee by writing a name beside the corresponding number, filling out the answers on a sheet of paper and later holding it to the video camera, sending in their response via email or chat, or however you feel it is best to submit.

Photography competition

Duration: 5 -10 minutes during the meeting, varies for each participant when taking their photos

Tools Needed: A device with a camera (i.e. smartphone) or a camera

Number of Participants: 3+ (this is great for both large and small groups)

Purpose: Icebreaker or team builder

Rules/Description:

This activity doesn’t require any fancy equipment, photo editing programs, or cameras – anybody with a smartphone can participate! Photo competitions are a great way of uniting people around a popular shared hobby...everyone is a photographer these days thanks to Instagram. They also allow people to share insight into their own lives, and show their teams what their lives and hometowns are like.

This activity is simple, and gives people the chance to express themselves in a way that can’t happen over a conference call. If you choose to, there can also be a theme around the photography competition such as: family, hobbies, nature, architecture, and so much more!

A great idea for the winner of the competition is to get them a framed professional print of their photo! You may learn something unexpected and interesting about your team. You will get a view of their lifestyle, interests, and personality!

Company bake-off

Duration: 10-15 minutes

Tools Needed: Notecards and writing utensils

Number of Participants: 5+

Purpose: Icebreaker

Rules/Description:

This one may sound like it is for in-person teams, but virtual teams can bake for one another too! Have everyone bake something representing their culture, the country they live in, something they love to make, something their mom used to make them when they were little, really anything that represents their story.

Have them mail their baked goods to each other! Maybe they are assigned one person to swap with, or send each person one depending on the group size.

You don't have to turn it into a competition – sampling yummy things from around the world is pay-off in itself!

Movie Night

Duration: 10-15 minutes

Tools Needed: A shared movie platform

Number of Participants: 5+

Purpose: Icebreaker

Rules/Description:

Agree to watch the same movie or TV episode during the week, then challenge members to share and compare something about what they saw. It could be suggested alternate endings, favorite character, an early plot twist that would negate the whole point of the show, or anything else your imagination suggests. Share reviews and get requests for the next movie night selection!

Geographic Fun Facts

Duration: 10-15 minutes

Tools Needed: Nothing!

Number of Participants: 3+

Purpose: Icebreaker or team builder

Rules/Description:

Before the meeting, ask members to be ready to share three unusual fun-facts about the city/state/country they live in that aren't commonly known. This can be a good way to learn something new, while improving understanding of the location and cultural environment where your teammates work.

If you want to take this to the next level, have the participants create and share a one page slide that includes a map of their favorite places in town, or a little slide of facts and pictures.

Post a goal

Duration: 10-15 minutes

Tools Needed: Nothing

Number of Participants: 3+

Purpose: Icebreaker or team builder

Rules/Description:

Teams should be there to help each other achieve their goals! Encourage each person to share a non-work related goal that they want to achieve, why it's important to them, and the date they want to accomplish it by (think SMART Goals).

Post it to the team's shared calendar. As the date approaches, ask for updates and encourage them. This can be a good way to help build in some accountability as they strive to reach their goals.

See What I Mean?

Duration: 10-30 minutes

Tools Needed: Participants to have a paper and pen or a computer drawing program

Number of Participants: 4+ (even numbers work best, but not required)

Purpose: Icebreaker or team builder

Rules/Description:

You don't need to be a master artist to have fun with this game! In this challenging team building activity one participant draws a picture using only basic shapes. A selected team member then describes the picture that was drawn to everyone else.

Without seeing the picture, each person must attempt to reproduce the picture based only on what the selected team member is saying to them! The ultimate goal is that everyone is able to create the same picture as the original.

This can be done through video chatting software and chat rooms. It's like the classic telephone game, but with art!

Try as you might, it is unlikely that anyone in the group will reproduce a carbon copy – although some pictures will be more similar than others. See What I Mean emphasizes how important verbal communication is while working with others, and also how communication can be interpreted differently by different people. You should do a few rounds at this game to really drive the point home, and also give more participants to try different roles. This exhibits how some people interpret directions and communication differently from other people, and how certain methods are more easily understood than other methods.

Let's see what you've got, Picasso!

Shark Teams

Duration: 25-30 minutes

Tools Needed: Participants to have a paper and pen or a computer drawing program

Number of Participants: 4+ (need enough for a few teams)

Purpose: Icebreaker or team builder

Rules/Description:

This unique team building program is based off of the popular television show Shark Tank. This event can take three different shapes: (1) Participants come up with ideas for use in their own company (2) Participants can work with a local charity and make a donation at the end (3) Unrestricted where teams are unlimited in their ideas.

Teams will put their fins...erhm heads... together to create a new product or feature for your company (or charity) that would actually sell in the real world.

Each team will engage in product development, process improvement, and marketing. Teams must put as much thought into their presentation as their invention because they have to wow the sharks!

Have your team present their ideas over your video chatting platform, and consider having some VIP's from your company (if possible) to help "judge" the competition!

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI®)

Duration: 20-30 minutes (can be much longer, or over the course of a few smaller sessions)

Tools Needed: The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI®) assessment

Number of Participants: 4+

Purpose: Team builder

Rules/Description:

This program will help your team understand themselves so that they can better understand one another to improve team dynamics. Everyone has different strengths and weaknesses, and the MBTI program will give everyone the tools and common language needed to harness individual potential!

Not only is this program an opportunity to take an assessment and for participants to understand themselves, it is also a practical workshop where everyone leaves with a plan in place to utilize their newly learned skills.

Navigating conflict, communicating effectively, contributing to a team, solving problems, and capitalizing on strengths are all skills that will be honed during this program. There are no extra points on the assessment for laughing, but is sure is encouraged!

DiSC™ Training

Duration: 20-30 minutes (can be much longer, or over the course of a few smaller sessions)

Tools Needed: The DiSC™ assessment

Number of Participants: 4+

Purpose: Team builder

Rules/Description:

This is not your traditional personality test – the DiSC™ Assessment Training is an experiential and immersive program. Each participant will complete the assessment which generates their primary personality style(s), and then the epic fun begins!

Participants are grouped by the four profile dimensions, and complete an exercise which will illuminate individual strengths, challenges, and motivations.

The four DiSC™ profile dimensions can also be thought of as the four P's: Project (Dominance), People (Influence), Persistence (Steadiness), and Procedure (Conscientiousness).

Dominance – focuses on moving fast, taking action and solving problems

Influence – focuses on people, having fun and liking each other

Steadiness – focuses on patience, persistence, and calm listening

Conscientiousness – focuses on structure, rules, and procedures

This program will give participants a deeper understanding of their own selves as well as their peers.

There are many online resources to help you come up with discussions to have with your team surrounding the DiSC™ profile assessment!

The lessons learned directly and positively impact employee and organizational culture. Participants will understand how to motivate and communicate more effectively with those who share and those who do not share their style.

Corporate Quiz Bowl

Duration: 20-30 minutes (can be much longer, or over the course of a few smaller sessions)

Tools Needed: Video chatting platform or screen sharing program with chat

Number of Participants: 4+ (can do teams if possible, but individuals are sometimes easier through virtual platforms)

Purpose: Team builder

Rules/Description:

Let's get quizzical. This battle of wits and nerve is sure to stir up some competition and teamwork! This event is fast-paced and laugh-filled and will challenge teams to answer questions from all general areas of knowledge.

Some suggested subjects include: as history, science, literature, arts, sports, current events, and pop culture. Also, a great way to spice things up is to tailor some of the questions to focus on your company or organization.

Some suggested question types include: first letter, multiple choice, and numeric answers. To add to the fun, some special questions can include photos and audio displayed on a projector or TV.

Each team or individual should "buzz in" through the chat to keep the game even more exciting (and fair!). Teams or individuals will earn points for correct answers, and bonus points for being the first to ring in.

Who will have the brains and teamwork to win this game of wit?

Virtual coffee break

Duration: 10-15 minutes

Tools Needed: Video chatting platform

Number of Participants: 4+

Purpose: Team builder

Rules/Description:

In a physical office, workers often interact in a coffee or break room. Host a morning or afternoon coffee (depending on different time zones) where the team has 15 minutes – 30 minutes on video chat to catch up over a cup of joe.

While these meetings are excellent opportunities for building rapport among coworkers, they can also serve as functional meetings for operations and projects. Encourage participation by all workers and try to frame these as open and fun discussions. Friendship and respect can be built virtually, but there needs to be opportunities like this for that to happen.

Enable a virtual water cooler

Duration: 10-15 minutes

Tools Needed: Video chatting platform

Number of Participants: 4+

Purpose: Team builder

Rules/Description:

Another break opportunity used by people who work together in an office environment is the water cooler. Water cooler talks are about anything other than work. Topics may be a popular streaming show, current events, family news, or other lighthearted discussions.

Many who work remotely note that they miss these moments of casual conversation.

Create a group chat on Google, Slack, Hangouts, or anything like that, and give the team a place to talk throughout the day. Memes will be sent. Photos of their days will be seen. And relationships will blossom.

Let workers use the chat for unstructured discussions. Consider making a “business” chat and a “just for fun” chat to keep the two separated!

Team building icebreakers are great at bringing people together and expediting the socialization process. Naturally, there will always be some pushback to icebreakers and team builders, especially with a virtual team who is very siloed, so you might as well make yours easy and fun!

These easy icebreakers to use for virtual meetings will not only help participants see how they can apply their newly learned or honed skills to their work, but also how to use them in everyday life situations. Understanding one’s co-workers, how they think, why they think the way they do, and what makes them tick, can make communication and collaboration much easier. This leads to increased productivity, lower stress, and more connection with the work that sometimes feels a bit lonely.