



Although Canadian Thanksgiving was celebrated the second Monday in October, the states are giving thanks this month. I am thankful for you, my readers, my clients, and colleagues for all of the harvest and blessings you bring. I make an effort to celebrate and thank my team this month with little treats in the mail. Although we may not be gathering at large and lavish parties this year, how are you showing your team your gratitude?

Kristin

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TRY A “TEACH ME” ICEBREAKER AT YOUR NEXT MEETING

I recently gave a virtual workshop on Virtual Teams, and during the wrap-up, several participants mentioned the idea of starting to do a “Teach Me” icebreaker. I’ve been mentioning this technique for years, so I was surprised it was a key takeaway. But then again, we are living in “working from home” times, and teams are desperate for connection and community. And this quick icebreaker provides a fun way to get to know your teammates.

What is a “Teach Me” Icebreaker?

It’s two minutes where one person on the team teaches everyone else something (anything simple!) in two minutes or less. While it can be work-related, many are not. My first teach me moment was “how to make a dirty martini.” I assembled the ingredients and got everything ready, including a little recipe card with a martini glass. At the start of the meeting, I showed the team how to make a dirty martini (shaken not stirred). Ninety seconds later, we had a laugh and proceeded with the meeting. While the topic (dirty martini) isn’t a surprise for anyone who knows me well, you’d be surprised at how creative your team can be!

I have found that people need a little inspiration so they can dig into their own life experiences and come up with their own “teach me” icebreaker:
Teach me...

- How to make a fluffy omelet
- Make an origami bird
- Tie your shoelaces so they don’t untie easily
- How to insert several lines into an excel spreadsheet (some want to keep it work-related, and that’s perfectly okay!)

Or, for a variation on the theme:

- The Key to _____ is.....
- The Secret to _____ is....
- How to _____

Try a “Teach Me” icebreaker at your next meeting and make sure you rotate the role so each team member has a shot at teaching others something **unique**, interesting, or unusual about them!

10 ACTIONS MODERATORS CAN DO AFTER THE PANEL DISCUSSION IS OVER

Congratulations! You have moderated an amazingly successful panel discussion. You met the panel objectives, delivered on the promise, made the panelists look like heroes and the audience received tremendous value.

But it’s not over...yet. Here are ten things you can do to continue the conversation *and* build your credibility with the audience and meeting organizers:

1. **Stick Around.** Stay in the room or designated area to continue the conversation. Stay until all the questions have been answered.
2. **Seek Out Others.** For the remainder of the conference, seek out those people who were highly engaged and connect with them sometime during the conference. You’ll build some great relationships!
3. **Thank You’s.** Send a personal note or email to each panelist, the meeting organizer and anyone else who made your life easier. Add something specific about what they did or said that contributed to the panel’s success.
4. **Summary Report.** Using your notes and Twitter feed, provide a written summary of the panel discussion to the meeting organizer.
5. **Question Cards.** Collect the question cards and coordinated responses from the panelists. The meeting organizer can use this information to continue the conversation.
6. **Repurpose Your Summaries.** Post the highlights, key quotes and photos on the event website, social media, etc.
7. **Recordings.** If the meeting organizer posts the recording, provide links and excerpts from the transcript to use in follow-up communications.
8. **Critique.** Within 24 hours after the session, make a few notes about what you liked and what you might do differently for the next time you moderate a panel discussion.
9. **Debrief.** Chat with the meeting organizer about the session. Review the audience evaluation forms. Ask if there was anything they would have liked you to do differently so you can do a better job next time.
10. **Keep Learning.** Review your own and others’ performances. Integrate your learning into each subsequent panel you moderate or participate in!

10 THINGS

PANEL MODERATORS CAN DO AFTER THE PANEL



How to continue the conversation and build your credibility with the audience and meeting organizers.

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10 Keep Learning



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FROM THE BOOKSHELF: STARTING STRONG: A MENTORING FABLE

For years, I've been searching for a suitable book to give to potential mentees to set the tone for a constructive mentoring relationship. (I used to assign Terri Sjodin and Floyd Wickman's book, [Mentoring](#) – but it is out of print.) After a conversation with Lisa Fain of the [Center for Mentoring Excellence](#), I found the perfect book by Lois J. Zachary & Lory A. Fischler: [Starting Strong: A Mentoring Fable](#): Strategies for Success in the First 90 Days.

It's a quick read (just a few hours) and is in two parts: Part One is the story of the relationship between a seasoned mentor Cynthia, and her mentee, a promising high potential, Rafa. Part Two is the Mentoring Conversation Playbook, which is a nice summary of the key techniques demonstrated in the story.

So here's what I like about this book:

- The story is interesting and shows how a [mentoring](#) relationship should progress.
- The characters are completely relatable. They are NOT perfect and through the storytelling, you recognize how they could do a thing or two better.
- The authors describe not only the actions, but what the characters are thinking before, during, and after each meeting.
- The conversations cover the mentoring basics such as establishing mentoring agreements, getting to know one another, [setting goals](#), creating learning opportunities, managing stumbling blocks, and checking in on progress.
- At the end of each chapter, the authors ask you to “dig deeper” by asking specific questions for reflection about what the mentor and the mentee did.

This book is a fabulous blueprint for effective mentoring conversations. I'll be reading this book each time I become a mentor or mentee!