

The Climer Cards miniBook

Team Activities Using Climer Cards

by Amy Climer



climerconsulting
creativity training • team transformation • leadership development

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Teambuilding Activities

Climer Card Introductions

Purpose: This activity is a get-to-know-you activity and works well with groups meeting for the first time or with groups where some or all individuals know each other well.

Do: Before the activity spread all the Climer Cards (or other images) face up on the table or floor so everyone can see them. I try to have at least twice as many cards as people in the group to allow for plenty of choices. Invite everyone to stand in a circle around the cards.

Say: *Not yet, but when I say “go”, you will move to the middle and select a card that somehow best represents you. It can be literal such as “I like to bike” or it can be a more metaphoric meaning. If two people want to share cards they can, they will just link elbows to indicate they are sharing cards. Once you get your card, return to the circle. Ready?... Go! Once everyone has their card...let’s go around the circle and share your name and which card you chose and why.*

Notes:

- For groups larger than about 15 divide the group into smaller groups of 6-10 before beginning this activity. For ideas on how to divide the group refer to the Sorting Activities section.
- If the group knows each other well challenge them to pick a card that will allow them to share something about themselves that most others in the group don’t know.

Shape Sharing

Purpose: To use the shapes on each card as categories to generate conversation.

Do: Before the group arrives, write the five questions listed below on a flipchart or create a handout to give to each small group. With the group, arrange them into smaller groups of 4-5. Give each group several cards (10-12).

Say: *You all have a small stack of cards. Place your stack of cards in the center of your group. Each card has a shape on it and each shape coincides with a particular question. In your small group, each person will draw a card from the deck and answer the corresponding question sharing your answer with the group. Continue until everyone has answered two questions.*

-  Circle – what is one thing you really like to do that makes you feel whole or complete?
-  Square – What is one feature your dream house would have?
-  Triangle – share one goal you are working towards right now. Why is it important to you?
-  Pentagon – what is one restriction you have in life that you wish you didn’t have?
-  Star – Who is a “rock star” in your life? (Someone who you think is awesome)

Teambuilding Activities

Story Time

Purpose: This is a fun way to get people talking, thinking of creative ideas, and collaborating on a simple, but creative task. It can also be a great precursor to a writing activity or brainstorming session.

Do: Before you begin make sure everyone has a card and sort them into groups of four to five. You can allow each person to select their card or randomly draw from the deck.

Say: *In your groups take 5 minutes and develop a story incorporating all the images in your cards. Get creative and develop details. You will then get to tell us your story.*

Do: After the groups are finished invite each group to share their story. Follow each story with thunderous applause. Once all groups have finished, invite conversation and reflection on the creative process. Questions may include:

- How did you come up with the ideas? Did you go with the first idea presented or did you explore several ideas before selecting one?
- How did the story change as you were designing it?
- Who led? What did their leadership style look like?
- How could you have been more creative?

Variations:

- If time permits give them longer to plan and have them act out their story.
- Have them deliver the story without revealing which cards they had. Then ask the audience to guess which cards they drew.



Teambuilding Activities

Get 20

From: *Playing With a Full Deck* by Michelle Cummings

Purpose: This is a problem solving initiative designed to get folks talking, interacting, and even doing a little math.

Do: Before you begin make sure everyone has a card and sort them into groups of four or five. You can allow each person to select his or her own card or randomly draw from the deck.

Say: *In your small group your challenge is to use the numbers on your cards to design a math equation that equals 20 using all the cards in your group. Rearrange yourselves and then present the equation to the group. You can use any math function you would like.*



Note: Occasionally you will have a group that cannot make their cards work. You can decide to let them repeat numbers, trade cards with another group, trade cards with the deck, add another card from the deck, or invite members from other groups to join them. Sometimes groups will figure out these variations on their own. Encourage their creativity!

Once each group has shared their math equation you can facilitate a debrief discussion. Possible questions/topics:

- How did you group work together to come up with 20?
- Were you able to come up with more than one solution?
- Who was the leader in your group?
- How did you involve everyone in the group?

Teambuilding Activities

Get it Back

Designed by Chris Cavert and Diane Phillips, found at www.fundoing.com/blog

Purpose: To provide an experience demonstrating task versus relationship behaviors and get the group thinking about how to balance those two group needs, which are both important for any group to succeed.

Do: Make sure everyone has one card from the deck. Invite everyone to stand in a circle or large clump.

Say: *Take a moment and take a good look at your card. Remember which card is yours. In a moment you are going to mingle around the room trading cards with as many different people as you can. Feel free to say hi and share names if you don't know each other. Continue until I yell "get it back". When I yell "get it back" continue trading cards until you have your original card back. Once you have your original card step to the outside of the group and begin to form a circle. We will go until everyone has their original card back. Any questions?*

Once everyone is back in a circle ask, *what did you notice happened in the group when I yelled "get it back"?* Continue soliciting answers until someone talks about how focused they were on getting their card to the extent of ignoring everyone. I've seen people snatch their cards from others or walk around shouting "who has the elephant?" until they find their card.

We are going to play another round. Let's do an experiment and this time continue to focus on the people you are trading with even after I yell "get it back". You are guaranteed to get your card back, right? Let's see what happens. Ready? Begin.

After the second round continue the conversation by asking questions such as these:

- How was round two different from round one?
- Why did they feel different?
- Where do you have similar experiences in your organization(s)?

You might also talk about the importance of balancing task-focused behaviors and relationship-focused behaviors. Both types of behaviors are important for a successful group. If you want more information this podcast episode provides a nice overview: climerconsulting.com/034.

Teambuilding Activities

Metaphor Prompts

Metaphors have been used in experiential education for years as a tool to help participants gain deeper meaning from their experiences. The images on Climer Cards can evoke meaningful metaphors for clients. However, the type of metaphor they create is usually based on the question posed by the facilitator. Facilitators have often asked me how to create good questions. In some ways it is an intuitive process that evolves after years of facilitating, but that is not a very helpful response. I have designed several fill-in-the-blank prompts you can use to spur conversation amongst your group and help them develop meaningful metaphors.

Think about the general topics you are exploring (leadership, conflict, etc.) or a specific issue that is relevant to your group. Insert that topic or issue into the blanks of each statement. Select one that is most appropriate for your group.

Select a card...

- that is a symbol or metaphor for what comes to mind when you hear the word/phrase _____.
- that represents your view of _____.
- that represents what you think is important about _____.
- that explains your style of _____.
- that symbolizes how you are feeling about _____.
- that displays how you think _____ and _____ connect.

For example, you might say...

- Select a card that is a symbol or metaphor for what comes to mind when you hear the word leadership.
- Select a card that symbolizes how you are feeling about the group's performance in the last activity.

Do: Before posing a question spread all the Climer Cards face up on the table or floor so everyone can see them. I try to have at least twice as many cards as people in the group to allow for plenty of choices.

Say: *When you are ready, select a card (insert prompt from above). If two people both want the same card that is ok, they can share. Once everyone has their card we will go around and share.*

Notes: Depending on the topic and nature of the group this process can bring up deep feelings for some people. Be prepared as a facilitator to support what comes up and allow space for a range of emotions.

Teambuilding Activities



The Final Take Away

Purpose: This reflection activity can be used at the end of a training or after a teambuilding activity.

Do: Before the activity spread all the Climer Cards (or other images) face up on the table or floor so everyone can see them. I try to have at least twice as many cards as people in the group to allow for plenty of choices.

Say: *In a moment you will have the opportunity to select a card that represents something you learned today, something you want to remember, a take away from our experience. Then you will be invited to share what you learned with us. You may go ahead and select a card. Once everyone has their card... let's go around the circle and share which card you chose and why. Who would like to begin?*

Variations:

- Instead of sharing with the whole group, participants could meet with 1-2 other people to share what they learned.
- You can also allow each person to keep their card as a real “take away” to remind them of the experience and what they learned.

Sorting Activities

Climer Cards provide several ways to sort a large group into smaller groups or pairs. This can be particularly helpful if you want people to interact with new people and not clump with their closest friends or colleagues. Instead of Climer Cards you can also modify the direction to use with a regular deck of playing cards.

Say: *On one side of your card you will see a shape with a number inside of it. Not yet, but when I say “go”, you will find everyone else in the room with the same shape as you and form a circle facing each other. “Go!”*

Notes: You can also give them additional directions about what you want them to do after they are in their groups. Or you can wait until they are in their groups, get their attention, and then give them the directions.

Giving similar directions as above you can also sort groups into these variations:

- By numbers - 10 numbers total, plus 2 “?”, up to groups of 5 per deck
- By colors - 6 colors, up to groups of 9
- By shape - 5 shapes, up to groups of 10
- In pairs where their cards must add up to at least 5 or any other number. The higher the number the more difficult it will be for it to work for everyone.



Tips for Facilitating

Have you ever had the experience of facilitating and knowing exactly what you were going to do, but then in the workshop it flopped? Here are some tips to help you succeed when facilitating.

Use an attention-getting technique: the classic hand raise

When leading experiential activities people get loud. They talk, laugh, and focus on each other, which is exactly what you want them to do. Except for when you don't. Eventually you want them to be quiet and focused on you. Before the first activity you need to teach them how to refocus back on you. The technique I use the most and have the most success with is the classic hand raise. Once you start using it you'll realize how powerful and helpful it can be. You'll never try to shout over a crowd again! Here's what I say and do:

Say: Once you start talking and moving about it's going to get loud in here, which is great. At some point I'll need to get your attention back up to the front. So to do that I'll raise my hand like this (demonstrate). When you see my hand raised finish your sentence, but not your whole paragraph and turn and face me. Ok, let's practice. Go ahead and talk amongst yourselves. (After they've talked for about 10-15 seconds raise your hand.)

Nice job!

Do: When you raise your hand follow these tips:

- Keep your elbow bent slightly, otherwise it's like your shouting at them.
- Keep your body still when your hand is raised and look at the group. Don't walk around or stare at your notes otherwise they will be confused about your intention and ignore you.
- Wait until the room is actually quiet before you begin talking. It'll take a few moments, but it will work. If you start talking too soon you will train them that you aren't really serious about it.
- Thank them or praise them for being attentive, especially the first couple times.

Create a plan, practice it, and be ok with ditching the plan

One of the biggest mistakes I see new facilitators make is to not take time to plan what they are going to do. I think this stems from seeing experienced facilitators and presenters deliver a great training without looking at notes or seem to be going off the cuff. The reality is those facilitators spent a lot of time planning to make it look like they were carefree and easy going. Once you have a plan in place try practicing what you will say to make sure you are clear and succinct. Be open to changing the plan based on how the group is responding. Always having some extra activities ready in case you need to use them.

Tips for Facilitating

Deliver directions when they need it

As humans we can only process so much information at a time, especially if we are distracted or not paying full attention. Therefore, give out the directions in small chunks right before the information is needed. Sometimes facilitators will verbally give several different steps in a row and the group gets lost. For instance, if you need everyone to form three groups of 10, then introduce themselves, then brainstorm marketing ideas for the next year, write it all down, and generate a list of their top 3 suggestions - don't give them all those directions at once. Instead tell them to form the groups. Period. Then you can give them the other directions as need. Generally, forming groups causes people to forget all the other directions. Run your own experiment. Try delivering the directions in different chunks and see which way is best received.

Notes:

Each deck of Climer Cards includes 52 images of watercolor paintings by Amy Climer. They were initially funded through a Kickstarter.com campaign. Nearly 100 people supported the project and they were first manufactured in 2012. See the full story online at www.climercards.com.

Where to Learn More

Climer Consulting provides a range of services and products to help facilitators lead amazing trainings.

Workshops

Climer Consulting offers professional development workshops on experiential training, teambuilding, and creativity/innovation. We are happy to travel to your location. Get the free Learning Catalog listing the most popular workshops online at climerconsulting.com.

Custom Training and Individual Coaching

Amy Climer provides one-on-one coaching and custom trainings to help trainers design more experiential and hands-on workshops. Engaging participants increases learning and will leave them wanting more. Call Amy at (608) 358-0840 to talk about options.

Free Newsletter

Join the Climer Consulting mailing list and receive a monthly newsletter as well as occasional announcements about workshops and upcoming events. The newsletter includes facilitation tips and articles about leadership, creativity, and teambuilding. To join visit climerconsulting.com.

Climer Cards History

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Buy Climer Cards

Need a new deck of Climer Cards? Looking for a perfect gift? Order online at climercards.com.

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