

Unique and Shared

Unique and Shared is a get-to-know-you game as well as a team-building activity.

The game helps people see that they have more in common with their peers than they might initially realise, while highlighting their own individual strengths that they can contribute to the group. It also helps individual and community members become more aware of the resources they have within their own community which can be utilised to support change.

An indoor setting is preferable. Participants will split into groups of about five people, so this activity works fine with medium, large, and even some extra large groups. Each group of five needs paper and a pen. This activity is for all ages.

Instructions for Unique and Shared

Ask participants to form groups of five people with the people around them. Pass out sheets of paper and writing utensil. The first half of the activity is the Shared part. Instruct a note-taker for each group to create a list of as many traits or qualities that members of the group have in common. Avoid writing things that are immediately obvious (e.g. don't write down something like "everyone has hair" or "we are all wearing clothes"). The goal is for everyone to dig deeper than the superficial. Allow about five or six minutes and then have a spokesperson from each subgroup read their list. If there are too many groups, ask for a few volunteers to read their list.

The second half is the Unique part. Keep the same groups or, optionally, you can ask everyone to rearrange themselves into new groups. On a second sheet of paper have them record Unique traits and qualities; that is, items that only apply to one person in the group. Instruct the group to find at least two unique qualities and strengths per person. Again, strive for qualities and strengths beyond the superficial and past the obvious things anyone can readily see. Allow another five or six minutes. When time is up, share the unique qualities in one of the following ways: (1) each person can share one of their unique qualities themselves; (2) have each person read the qualities of the person to their right; or (3) have a spokesperson read a quality one at a time, and have the others guess who it was.

Unique and Shared is a valuable team-building activity because it promotes unity as it gets people to realize that they have more common ground with their peers than they first might realize. As people become aware of their own unique characteristics, they can also help people feel empowered to offer the group something unique.