

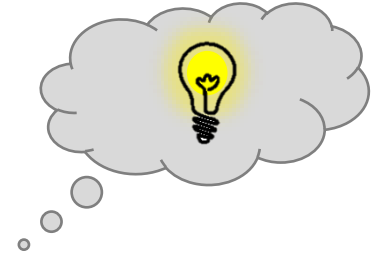
# Warm Up Activities

While warm up activities can also have an “ice breaker” impact, their primary goal is to get peoples’ heads into the room and on the topic at hand. It is all about readiness to be a strong contributor.

This is a great tool for any meeting, but especially for any meetings where you need people doing their best thinking and/or absorbing a great deal of information.

## BEST PRACTICES:

- ✓ Keep it simple
- ✓ Make it something that everyone can feel confident contributing to
- ✓ Keep it short and fast-paced



## Examples:

**Word Associations:** have the group generate a word list or word “cloud” associated with the topic. Another variation is to bring in a word “cloud” or list and ask each participant to select a word that stand out or intrigues them about the topic, and why.

Word Cloud Resource: [www.wordle.net](http://www.wordle.net) (requires Java)

**Picture Associations:** bring in a variety of pictures, such as stock photos or magazine pages, and have participants select one that they think relates to the topic and why, or have smalls group create a collage that represents the topic and share with the large group.

**Know /Want to Know:** in small groups, ask participants to make a T-chart listing everything they already know about your topic on the left and what they want to know on the right. This can also help you set priorities for sharing information.

**Burning Question:** have each participant offer one question they have the topics being covered.

**Problem Solvers:** group participants in small teams to work on some problem together. This is not to solve a problem on the agenda, but to get them into the collaborative mind frame.

**Brainstorming:** ask participants to brainstorm about a low-risk issue at the outset of a meeting. As a mental shift during a meeting, introduce a lateral thinking brainstorming technique, such as generating ideas that do the opposite of what we are really pursuing, e.g. ideas for having the worst customer service.

**Fears, Hopes, Expectations:** manager(s) and individual team members break into separate groups. Ask the groups to create a chart of their top fears, hopes and expectations for the meeting or the topic. Have a spokesperson from each group share the results with the other group.