
welcoming ambassadors

TOOLKIT

Welcoming Ambassadors are a trained group of individuals who are committed to welcoming new people and helping them connect. Ambassadors attend a short training and then facilitate conversation and connection with other newcomers, the host or partner organizations, and other attendees at the events.

Want to train a group of Welcoming Ambassadors? Check out this step-by-step process:

1. Finding your Ambassadors

- Discover the great outreach organizations that already exist in your community.
- Research and find contacts for groups/organizations that cater to outgoing people. You could do a wider search by posting an ad in the local paper or on the radio. Social media (Facebook and Twitter) are great ways to spread the word. See a sample "Call for Ambassadors" [here](#).

2. Connect with Outreach Organizations

- Send an email and set up a time to chat with the organizations you identify and ask them to connect you with folks that they would describe as "excited about their community", "love meeting new people" "love making people feel welcomed and comfortable" and / or "have been told they are easy to talk to."

3. Hold an Ambassador Training Session

- Once you have a list of possible Ambassadors, set a time to meet and hold informal training session. Host this at an easily accessible location and make sure to hold a few options for meeting to accommodate different schedules.

4. Ambassador Training Agenda – see a sample agenda [here](#) and ideas below

- At the informal training session brainstorm:
 1. Moments when they have felt extremely welcomed
 2. Conversation starters they've used
 3. Ways they made new friends
 4. Places where they were encouraged to meet new people
 5. The best way to feel welcomed
 6. Physical and verbal ways to appear the most friendly
- Compile suggestions into a list to help plan welcoming events
- Build a kit that Ambassadors can bring to welcoming events (see below)
- Roll play interacting with new people
- Create a group page on social media so Ambassadors can share skills and develop a bond
- Create a Sign-up sheet for Ambassadors to sign-up for Nicebreaker events

5. Building the Ambassador Kit (a welcoming package Ambassadors bring to events)

- Create a way for Ambassadors to visually stand out in a crowd
 1. This is easily done with special t-shirts / name tags
- Include in the kit:
 1. Name tags for others – see example [here](#)
 2. “Business cards” or “how we met cards” for those who want to exchange their information with new friends – see example [here](#) and [here](#)
 3. Pens/sharpies/markers
 4. List of conversation starters/engaging questions for name tag questions – see example [here](#)
 5. Sign up sheet to be an ambassador – see example [here](#)
 6. Feedback form – see example [here](#)

6. How to be “Welcoming” at events

- Set-up an area for people to be welcomed – this might be a registration table or an area/table set aside just for newcomers
- Smile at everyone who enters and engage in easy conversation starters (Where are they from originally? What brought them to your city? Their favorite discovery since their move? What are they trying hard to find [good

- coffee shop? biking trails? paint supply store?])?)
- Encourage conversations between multiple new people over shared interests.
 - Promote future meetings/outing between other new people and the Ambassadors by having a list of upcoming Nicebreakers and Welcome Hat events present

7. Spread the Welcoming attitude:

- Encourage others at the events to talk to strangers by setting up small tables with conversational themes and promote their use
- Encourage Ambassadors to continue being Welcoming Ambassadors in their everyday life - once Ambassadors are used to welcoming newcomers at events, they'll be more likely to use their skills while out on their own.
- Grow the Ambassador pool! Each quarter send out requests for new Ambassadors and create teacher-trainers of veteran Ambassadors

8. Don't Be A Stranger

- Find ways to connect your Ambassadors to each other – host quarterly Happy Hours where Ambassadors can come together and share successes and challenges
- Conduct ongoing evaluation of the program and make adjustments to keep your Ambassadors happy
- Show up at events so it's not always just your Ambassadors present
- Stay in touch with regular email communication and gentle reminders to sign-up for events and keep the welcoming attitude going – perhaps even give prompts for Ambassadors to share any success stories from past events to keep the momentum going

