



Activating exercises improve concentration

“Energizers” for use online and in-person help provide some light relief in conferences and lessons and raise concentration levels with a variety of exercises



IQ | GOOD PRACTICE in a nutshell

Addressees for transfer:

Training service providers, companies, lecturers working on qualification/education/training courses and their attendees, disseminators, instructors and advisers

“Energizer” concept

The IQ Competence Centre for Work-Related German Language has devised and compiled activating exercises, concentration games and icebreakers for teaching, conferences, online meetings or other virtual and analogue meetings. The energizer concept is used to introduce or develop topics, or to provide some light relief and energise learners. The exercises break up series of presentations, speakers and online appointments and increase concentration spans. The exercises are available as both postcards and digitally.

Field of work:

Energizers for online and in-person use, IQ Competence Centre for Work-Related German Language

Provider:

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Provision:

More information is available at
<https://www.deutsch-am-arbeitsplatz.de/fachstelle/publikationen-der-fachstelle.html>

Discover how the energizer concept can be used in the accompanying interactive book:
<https://read.bookcreator.com/HFyF2guFa-VZHYB2JFqN9tHBdMKF3/INM75D-FOTR-N32kN3YkLYA>

All previously published IQ Good Practice examples can be found at
www.netzwerk-iq.de

Starting point/challenge

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, teaching has shifted entirely or partially over to the virtual world. However, for those organising sessions, the effects of overloading, tiredness or distraction on the part of participants were clear to see in some cases. Virtual events, however, also require precisely the same level of attention and concentration as in-person events if learning is to be successful. The team at the IQ Competence Centre for Work-Related German Language therefore wanted to create a concept for video conferences with the aim of adding variety and livening up the experience for participants. It also needed to be usable for in-person events. The requirement was that the activating and energising activities needed to come with a brief and succinct explanation and be presented in an attractive design. This requirement to be brief was not easy to implement for more complex instructions. There also needed to be an incentive to use them and the target group needed to be reached simply and as quickly as possible. Searching for the appropriate form of presentation also proved to be a challenge.

Implementing the concept

The entire team at the IQ Competence Centre initially developed the educational content and graphics for 24 exercises. These include games such as “Buchstabensalat” [word scramble] where the teacher presents a random mix of letters. Participants write down all the words they can find in the video chat or on an online pin board. The letters or task can also be chosen to create a link with an advanced training or lesson topic. The exercises devised were then made available from 1 December 2021 via tuerchen.com in the form of a digital advent calendar. Up to 24 December, a door opened each day providing access to a new activity. Preparing it virtually as an advent calendar generated a huge amount of awareness. The link was provided via the IQ competence centre's



Facebook profile, via the website and through various newsletters. The final door of the advent calendar included information about the pack of postcards created up to that point. This can now also be ordered free of charge. Additional explanations, experience with and in-depth insights into using the energizers are provided in an interactive book made using the Book Creator tool. The Book Creator tool gives the option of embedding multimedia examples for the purpose of illustration. The competence centre team plans to devise further exercises.

Conclusion

As media consumption rises, user concentration levels fall. The longer the duration of the input, and the more uniform its delivery, the worse this problem becomes. The energizer concept helps to restore concentration levels. The tool has a huge scope due to the digital and postcard format. Fun, diversion and a chance to reset and relax are guaranteed. The postcards also mean teachers can reach for energizers at any time, whenever they see fit to do so.

“Energizers help to break the ice”

The Book Creator allows the competence centre to show what can be achieved with the individual exercises.

To help explain the energizer format for users, employees at the IQ Competence Centre for Work-Related German Language have transferred the exercises into an interactive book. The Book Creator app is a digital tool which makes creating e-books simple. This meant it was possible to bring experiences of working with the energizers to life. “The energizer Book Creator shows what can be achieved with the individual tasks in terms of activating and motivating participants, adding some light relief to the lesson, or providing an introduction to a topic,” explains Dr. Sarita Batra, responsible for public relations at the IQ Competence Centre for Work-Related German Language. The game “Everybody who...” helps, for example, over 5 to 10 minutes with the “breaking the ice”



phase. All participants cover their camera and the teacher makes various statements such as “everybody who’s already had a coffee today” or “everybody who’s happy we’re finally getting started”. If the statement applies to you, you show yourself. A simple exercise which helps break the ice and pro-

vides a reason to initiate discussion. Short video sequences, illustrations and photos show the range of ways in which energizers can be used for online and in-person teaching. For example, a collage made up of three faces from a video conference can be seen under “Our experiences with the energizer”. The collage was created as part of the “Portrait puzzle” exercise. “This exercise is suitable for small groups or for activation in breakout sessions. Participants position themselves in front of their own camera so that all the screens together produce the collage of a ‘new’ face,” explains Dr. Sarita Batra. Further links to additional online tools illustrate how easily the individual tasks can be expanded and adapted and the wide variety of ways in which this can be done.

Three questions for Dr. Sarita Batra, contact partner for the Energizer concept at the IQ Competence Centre for Work-Related German Language

“Emoji puzzle helps to practice language use”



What is innovative about the energizers?

The exercises themselves are not new. What’s innovative is their compilation and presentation as small “bite-size” chunks in combination with the appealing illustrations. Transferring them into the online world is also new. Exercises such as “chat storm” or “emoji puzzle” help to maintain concentration in lengthy online sessions and at the same time to practise language use.

Are the energizers easily transferable into other contexts?

The exercises can be used or adapted to the relevant context in any grouping where people come together – whether this is online or in person. This means certain exercises can be used for very specific content. For example, in the “Symbols” ex-

ercise participants search for an object and come up with a sentence to fit the topic. Or in the introductory game, “Which photo matches?” the course leader shows photos or postcards on a slide and asks participants to briefly explain which image best matches their work situation or situation at home and why. This game removes the need for a boring round of introductions, livens up the introduction phase, makes a direct connection with the participants, and keeps them focused. This can easily be transferred to different settings and content.

What can the format achieve over the long term?

Teaching will always be with us and spending our working time in online meetings will also be part of our day-to-day in the future. There will always be a need to add variety to this. The online tool and the presentation on the web are really easy to add to and the post cards are inexpensive. These are still something teachers take with them into the classroom to use the exercises if required. This provides a huge scope for a small amount of money!

Publication details

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Network IQ

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