



BUILDING YOUR TEAM

A MEETING ICEBREAKER GUIDE

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

ROCK, PAPER, SCISSORS TOURNAMENT

An Icebreaker Game for Adults

A ninety-second twist on a game everyone already knows that turns an exhausted room into a cheering crowd.

Building Your Team
buildingyourteam.com

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Find a Partner and Play Rock, Paper, Scissors

Picture a sales conference where the room is exhausted after back-to-back sessions. The facilitator says one line — “Find a partner and play Rock, Paper, Scissors!” — and within ninety seconds the room is cheering.

Most meetings open with slides and polite introductions that ask strangers to connect before they're ready to. This tournament works because it demands nothing but a game everyone already knows, and a simple twist keeps the whole room engaged all the way to the final round. This paper walks a facilitator through why typical icebreakers fall flat, the twist that makes this one different, and exactly how to run it.

15–20+

people needed to run the tournament

~90 sec

to energize the whole room

Best of 3

format for the final round

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Why Typical Icebreakers Fall Flat



Most meetings begin with slides and introductions — polite but uninspiring.

The problem isn't a lack of desire to connect. It's that typical icebreakers demand too much, too soon, from strangers, which creates discomfort instead of energy.

The Superfan Twist



Group Rock, Paper, Scissors adds fun to big group activities.

The solution is simplicity. This variant works because everyone already knows the basic game — there's nothing new to learn. The twist is what makes it spread: losers become fans of the winner, so as the tournament progresses, everyone stays engaged, energy builds, and cheering sections grow with every round.

Run the Tournament



This works best with a group of at least 15 to 20 people, some open floor space, and loud voices.

1 Remind players of the basic rules

Walk through the standard “1, 2, 3, Shoot” format so everyone starts on the same page.

2 Explain the “superfan” twist

Demonstrate energetically: when you lose, you become the winner's fan and cheer them on for the rest of the tournament.

3 Pair off and play

Pair off all participants and call the matches simultaneously.

4 Winners advance, fans merge

Winners find new opponents; each opponent's fans follow and merge into one growing cheering section.

5 Continue to the finals

Keep running rounds until only two finalists remain, with the rest of the room now cheering for one side or the other.

6 Play the final round

Decide the championship with a best two-of-three format.

FACILITATOR TIPS

Play upbeat background music to keep the energy high, and let people participate at their own comfort level. It's ideal for groups of 15 or more.

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ABOUT



Building Your Team is a division of The Leaders Institute®, the company that pioneered the Build-A-Bike® charity team-building activity in 2005. Building Your Team publishes practical, field-tested team-building activities and facilitation guides for corporate meeting planners, HR leaders, and event professionals.

Want us to facilitate this activity for your group?

Talk with our team about running the Rock, Paper, Scissors Tournament, or another team-building activity, at your next meeting.

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