

Winning! Using Improv games with teams - Takeaway worksheet for Agile Games New England  
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**5 Word Stories:**

Using exactly 5 words, tell me something you learned this conference

- Provide space
- Why/When do this? **Stimulates Creativity, Brevity in Meetings (see what we did there?)**, can be used to focus a team while waiting for another team member to arrive, and allows others to get a taste of what else people are working on

**Name Game:**

Name & Gesture Game (this stops working as groups get above 15 people)

- I don't know about you, but I have a really hard time learning people's names. It's a lot easier if you're remembering something more distinctive than just a word. What's a motion that really embodies your essence? Or just something you think is fun to do?
- Each person says their name and makes a gesture. Go around the circle twice more, and then start skipping around. Say someone's name and make their gesture to pass it to them, and they will accept it by repeating you.
- Improv: **Raise the Energy, Create Focus**
- Permission to Participate

**Finish The Word Game (Electric Company):**

[https://wiki.improvresourcecenter.com/index.php?title=Ba\\_Da\\_Da](https://wiki.improvresourcecenter.com/index.php?title=Ba_Da_Da)

- Mechanics -- Starting from 1 Person and moving to their Left, we're going to have 1 start a word, and 2 finish it.
- The group keeps a beat, and repeats the compound word.
- 1: X, 2: Y, Group: X-Y (*ba-da-da*)
- Now, let's play, going 2x around the circle (or just 1x depends on size)
- Emphasize staying on beat over being clever: winning is when the game looks rehearsed to an outsider
- Create a **Safe, Fun Space** to let your ideas out

**Story Game:**

[http://improvcyclopedia.org/games/Word\\_at\\_a\\_Time\\_Story.html](http://improvcyclopedia.org/games/Word_at_a_Time_Story.html)

- We are going to tell a story one word at a time.
- Each player provides one word of a sentence.
- This is more difficult than it sounds.

**Clover:**

[https://wiki.improvresourcecenter.com/index.php?title=Pattern\\_Game](https://wiki.improvresourcecenter.com/index.php?title=Pattern_Game)

- This type of game is great for getting unstuck,
- New Idea Generation, Features, A Day In the Life (Story Maps)

## Alien Tiger Cow / the inspiration for the Rock Paper Scissors Exercise:

[http://improvcyclopedia.org/games/Alien\\_Tiger\\_Cow.html](http://improvcyclopedia.org/games/Alien_Tiger_Cow.html)

- This game can be played with Rock/Paper/Scissors instead.
- The objective is to problem solve and establish **Group Mind**.
- How quickly can everyone get to the same symbol?
- How do you know whether to hold your symbol or change it?

## Listening (I Know Scenes):

This is a bit more serious, but a good way to get true feedback and listening in a group and get unstuck is to do some 2 person scenework. This is a pretty basic six-line scene that forces **Listening**. You're going to have a fictional heart-to-heart conversation with your partner.

**<a/offer>** I <fill in the blank with an emotion> you  
**<b>** I know

**<a>** I <same emotion> you because <fill in with a fantasy reason>  
**<b>** I know

**<a>** I <same emotion> you because <fill in with a different made up reason>  
**<b>** I <same emotion> because <fill in with their own reason>

### Why is this great

- Listen to receive
- **Listen** without just thinking about what you'll say next
- Slows down
- Getting on the same page when you listen. How are you affected by the emotion in the offer?

## Improv Concepts:

- **The first choice is the right choice**
- **Trust that your teammates will support you**
- **“Yes, And” in play and in work**
- **Freedom to make an offer, Power to interpret an offer, Responsibility to support an offer**
- **Warm-ups and games should:**
  - **Set the energy level**
  - **Create group mind (but not groupthink!)**
  - **Focus attention; encourage mindfulness**

## Tuckman Stages:

**Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing, Adjourning**

- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tuckman's\\_stages\\_of\\_group\\_development](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tuckman's_stages_of_group_development)
- <http://www.businessballs.com/tuckmanformingstormingnormingperforming.htm>