WORKSHOPSKILL · PARTICIPANT KIT

Two Truths and a Lie — Participant Workbook

The guide in print, a frame to write after every debrief question, and session notes pages.

Folder: `two-truths` · Category: icebreakers · 8–20 people · 15 min · offline + online · no props · assessment-type

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15	8–20	In person + online
MINUTES	PEOPLE	SETTING

Two Truths and a Lie — Facilitator Run Sheet

The classic getting-to-know-you game, rebuilt with two guardrails that make it safe for professional rooms: every statement must be a **public fact** (work-relevant, checkable), and the group votes **eyes closed** — no public guessing that embarrasses anyone.

Objectives

By the end of the activity, participants will have:

1. Learned **three checkable facts** about every colleague in the room.
2. Watched their own first impressions get **beaten by at least one lie**.
3. Practiced the boundary rule: **personal life stays out unless offered**.

Setup

Space: a circle of chairs, or one shared video call. Nothing else.

Materials for the game: none. The folder adds printable measure materials — an answer sheet, a workbook and a slide deck — none of which the circle itself needs. The boundary rule and the eyes-closed script live in this run sheet.

Grouping rule: the whole group together. Over 12 people, split into two circles and alternate rounds.

The boundary rule — say it out loud: "All three statements are public facts about your work life: projects, skills, first jobs, countries worked in. Nothing about health, family or finances unless you offer it."

Minute-by-minute script

Time	Phase	Facilitator does	Participants do
0–2	Frame + boundary rule	State the rule above. "The goal is not to fool people — it's to learn three facts about everyone."	Listen
2–4	You go first	Model it: your two truths and one lie, all work-facts	Guess you, calibrate
4–12	Rounds	Each speaker: 3 statements, then "eyes closed — raise hands for A, B or C"	Speak, vote, reveal, one line of story
12–14	The surprise tally	"Whose lie fooled the most people? Whose truth did nobody believe?"	Laugh, point
14–15	Bridge	"Remember one fact per person — you'll need it in the debrief."	Transition

For a 15-minute energizer, stop here and run the light debrief from `two-truths-debrief.md` (5 minutes). For a deeper session, chain directly into another folder.

Known failure modes & rescues

1. **Someone's lie is too good.** A senior manager claims they "never worked in sales" — the room cannot recover. Rescue: after the reveal, ask them for the one-line true story behind a truth. The story matters more than the score.
2. **A statement crosses the privacy line.** Rescue: cut in before the vote — "public facts only — want to swap that one?" Give an easy exit, no lecture.
3. **Big group, dead time.** Waiting 40 seconds per person bores the room. Rescue: split into two circles at 12+ people, or switch to "table rounds" of 4 with a one-minute timer.

Variations

- **Two truths about the project, one lie:** for teams that already know each other — statements must be about the current project's history. The debrief writes itself.
- **Online:** statements in chat, vote with emoji reactions (A/B/C), reveal on mic. Add a 20-second timer per speaker.
- **Reverse round:** after everyone has gone, each person must recall one fact they learned about someone else. Recall, not score, is the goal.

Props in this folder

- `two-truths-guide.md` — this run sheet
- `two-truths-debrief.md` — 6 debrief questions, 3 failure modes
- `two-truths-run-sheet.pdf` — the print edition: guide + debrief bound as one A4
- `two-truths-assessment.json` — the 4-row pre/post measure as plain JSON
- `two-truths-paper-form.pdf` — the A4 answer sheet: first block before the circle, second after the debrief
- `two-truths-workbook.pdf` — participant workbook: the rules in plain words, the measure, debrief notes
- `two-truths-slide-deck.pdf` — the slide deck for teaching or projecting
- `two-truths-slide-deck.html` — the same deck for any browser, speaker notes on N
- `two-truths-license.md` — what you may do with all of this, in plain language
- `two-truths-activity-poster.pdf` — The whole activity on one wall (A3): meta, run of show, debrief questions, watch-outs.
- `two-truths-start-here.md` — one page, thirty seconds, then print and go
- `SKILL.md` — machine-readable manifest for AI agents
- `two-truths-run-sheet.pdf` — the print edition: this run sheet + the debrief sheet, bound as one A4 PDF

Agent version

Every file in this folder has a stable public URL — an AI agent can fetch the guide, the debrief and the answer sheet with three curl commands (see `SKILL.md`). The game itself needs nothing but a circle of chairs and the boundary rule.

Two Truths and a Lie — Debrief Sheet

> 6 questions, 3 failure modes, one rule: recall beats cleverness.
>
> Use with `two-truths-guide.md`. Light debrief runs 5 min — or use it to chain into a deeper folder.

How to run this debrief

- Keep it light — this is an icebreaker, not a tribunal. Five minutes, standing if possible.
- The goal is recall, not scores. Nobody won; everybody learned.

The 6 questions

1. The fact that stuck.

"Name one fact you learned about someone today — their name, then the fact."

→ Recall test. If the room can do this, the icebreaker worked.

2. The lie that fooled you.

"Which lie fooled you, and what made it believable?"

→ Points at how stereotypes fill information gaps. Keep it playful.

3. The truth nobody believed.

"Whose *truth* did the room refuse to believe? What does that say about our first impressions?"

→ The strongest single question in this debrief. Handle it with humor, not analysis.

4. The one you wanted to ask.

"Which statement made you want to ask a follow-up question? Ask it now."

→ Converts facts into conversations. This is where an icebreaker becomes a relationship.

5. The line we held.

"We kept every statement to public work facts. Was that boundary comfortable? Would you have shared more or less without it?"

→ Meta question — it makes the safety rule visible so it can be reused in future sessions.

6. The person behind the badge.

"Did anyone's three statements change how you'll work with them this week? One sentence."

→ Transfer question. Even "I'll ask Dana about her time in Japan instead of assuming" counts.

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3 known failure modes of the debrief itself

1. **The debrief turns into scoring.** People start ranking who fooled whom.
   Rescue: cut it early — “scoreboard’s closed. Question 1: name a fact, not a winner.”
2. **One person becomes the exhibit.** The room keeps circling one surprising revelation.
   Rescue: move to question 4 and redirect the curiosity to someone else’s statement.
3. **Silence on question 6.** Nobody connects the game to actual work.
   Rescue: answer it yourself first — model one concrete sentence about how you’ll treat someone differently this week.

This folder carries a one-minute pre/post measure — `two-truths-assessment.json`, printed on the answer sheet or built live: four rows, filled before the circle and after this debrief, reported room-level only. The recall delta is the scoreboard that matters — nobody is graded.

The fact that stuck.

Name one fact you learned about someone today — their name, then the fact.

The lie that fooled you.

Which lie fooled you, and what made it believable?

The truth nobody believed.

Whose *truth* did the room refuse to believe? What does that say about our first impressions?

The one you wanted to ask.

Which statement made you want to ask a follow-up question? Ask it now.

The line we held.

We kept every statement to public work facts. Was that boundary comfortable? Would you have shared more or less without it?

The person behind the badge.

Did anyone's three statements change how you'll work with them this week? One sentence.

Session notes