

*Stand, Stretch and Speak: Using Topic-Related Energizers.*

## **Stand, Stretch and Speak: Using Topic-Related Energizers.**

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You've probably heard Dave Meier's lyrical rationale for involving participants' bodies (and not just minds) in their own learning:

***When the body don't move  
The brain don't groove.***

Dave is the director for the Center for Accelerated Learning in Wisconsin. He makes a case for movement as a key part of the learning experience. But what do you do when you have a ton of information to cover and don't feel you can take breaks every 45 minutes or so?

Easy. You build into your lecture time a few quick, topic-related energizers that allow learners to move while keeping their minds focused on the material you have covered so far. Each of these energizers takes only about a

minute to do and each activates both the mind and the body.

Here are five topic-related energizers to try. As you become comfortable sprinkling these into your training, make up your own or invite participants to lead the group in their own short, topic-related energizers.



**Micro and Macro Stretches:** This activity is from the grab-and-go book *Preventing Death by Lecture*. Explain to the learners that a micro stretch means

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stretching small muscles like fingers, toes, mouth, eyes, etc. A macro stretch is one that involves large muscles like arms, legs, torsos, etc.

Then invite learners to stand and form pairs or triads. One person in the triad leads a micro or macro stretch. The others in the small group copy the stretch. As the leader stretches, he tells his partners the most important fact (or facts) he has learned so far. Each person in the pair/triad takes a turn begin the leader. When partners/triads have completed their stretches, they sit back down.

**Reach for the Sky:** Learners can do this while seated or standing. They all stretch their arms over their heads ("reach for the sky"), and look up at the ceiling. Direct them to imagine a word or phrase on the ceiling that best captures the main concept of the training topic. Then they lower their arms and either write down their word/phrase or tell the person next to them what their word/phrase was.

**The Pencil Drop:** With a smile, tell participants to drop a pen, pencil, or other object on the floor. Once they have done this, direct them to exhale loudly and forcefully while bending over to pick up the object. Then instruct

them to inhale deeply while straightening up. When done, have participants take about 30 seconds to think about how they might use what they have learned so far. If time permits, invite them to discuss this with someone seated near them.

**Turn and Talk:** If learners are seated in rows (as in theatre-style seating), direct them to stand and turn around in a circle. Then they partner with someone they spotted while turning around (it can't be with the person standing next to them) and they share an opinion or question they have about the training topic. Remind them to make sure no one around them is left out.

**The Mini-Walkabout:** A five or ten-minute activity from the jma-packed, new book *The Ten-Minute Trainer*, this activity can also be scaled down to about one minute. If participants are seated at tables, instruct them to stand and form walking partners (triads are okay too) with the person next to them. Then together, they walk around their table. While walking, they can: talk about what they've learned, ask each other questions about the training content, describe how they would put the information to use, or share a story or case study related to the topic. When they get back to their own chairs, they give

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their "Walkabout Partners" a high-five and sit down again.



Author and traveling teacher Sharon Bowman helps educators and business people “teach it quick and make it stick,” - fine-tuning their information-delivery skills and turning their passive listeners into active learners.

Over 60,000 copies of Sharon’s 7 popular teaching, training, and motivation books are now in print.

For more information about Sharon Bowman and her books and training, log onto [www.Bowperson.com](http://www.Bowperson.com), or email her at [SBowperson@aol.com](mailto:SBowperson@aol.com).

**Final Thoughts:** When you include some movement into a content-heavy training, you ensure that your learners will remain awake and alert. In addition, your learners will be forever grateful to you because you have honored their body's physical need for movement while learning.

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Sharon's popular new book, *The Ten-Minute Trainer! 150 Ways to Teach it Quick and Make It Stick*, is now available on [www.trainerswarehouse.com](http://www.trainerswarehouse.com), and on [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com), as well as in selected Barnes and Noble bookstores. You can contact [www.Bowperson.com](http://www.Bowperson.com) for more information about *The Ten-Minute Trainer*. For quantity orders, contact the publisher John Wiley & Sons, or call Bowperson Publishing and Training, Inc. at 775-749-5247.

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