Facilitators Skills Sneak

Set up:

Write down the audience roles on slips of paper and have something to draw them out of. You can pick and choose which audience roles to include based on your team dynamic. They're described in step 4.

If you have a large group, make sure there's some room for small groups to spread out so that they're not talking over each other.

HOW IT WORKS:

1. We'll take some time to go over the different roles that a facilitator can take on. A facilitator is never only one of these, but will need to use multiple roles for any event they lead:
    - **The Conflict Master:** When someone says something that you and/or the group doesn't agree with or a comment that's completely off topic, (even though it could be a perfectly normal comment), peacefully acknowledge their opinion and move the conversation back to the topic at hand.
    - **Grateful Thanker:** Thank the person for sharing and using their voice and express how much you appreciate them contributing.
    - **The Synthesizer:** Paraphrase, restate, lift-up, or synthesize an idea that was previously stated.
    - **Good Body Language:** Pay attention to the speaker and demonstrate active listening through how you sit and are involved in the discussion.
    - **The Involver:** Ask open-ended questions and bring ideas to the group and check-in to see if everyone is on the same page.
2. Facilitators should demonstrate the activity in small groups, then take volunteers for who wants to practice facilitation!
3. Choose a facilitator for that round.
4. Everyone else will have a role to play too! Go over the following audience roles, and write them down on slips of paper to draw out of a bucket or hat, or anything you have on hand.
    - **Devil's Advocate:** Argues against everyone just for the sake of arguing
    - **Conversation Monopolizer:** Talks about anything and everything, takes up more than their share of time to speak. Often times is very loud and will speak over others
    - **Disengager:** Not interested or engaged in the conversation going on. Maybe the disengager is wandering around the room, doing a completely different activity, or refusing to add to the conversation.
    - **The Besties:** These 2 people are your classic best friends, always talking to one another, giggling about EVERYTHING, always doing/thinking the same thing as their bestie, exclusive towards others etc. (Note that you will need to make sure that both people who play these roles know who each other are.)
    - **Peaceful Participant:** Anyone who is not one of the roles above is a peaceful participant. These people are engaging in a civil conversation.

5. That facilitator will choose a prompt from this list and will pose it to the group.
    - What was the last funny video you saw?
    - What do you do to get rid of stress?
    - What is something you are obsessed with?
    - What three words best describe you?
    - What would be your perfect weekend?
    - What are you going to do this weekend?
    - What's the most useful thing you own?
    - What's your favorite way to waste time?
    - What is something popular now that annoys you?
    - Are you very active, or do you prefer to just relax in your free time?
    - Who is your oldest friend? Where did you meet them?
    - If you had intro music, what song would it be? Why?
    - If you opened a business, what kind of business would it be?
    - Where is the most beautiful place you have been?
    - What's your favorite season? Why?
    - What do you bring with you everywhere you go?
    - Where is the worst place you have been stuck for a long time?
    - If you had to change your name, what would your new name be?
    - What smell brings back great memories?
    - What weird or useless talent do you have?
6. The group will then discuss the prompt like normal. It's the facilitator's job to work in the roles/strategies listed under step 1.
    - The goal is for the facilitator to use all the skills and carry a successful short conversation.
    - The goal for the audience is to fulfill their role to give the facilitator practice, but not to overdo it and disregard the facilitator's efforts to reel them into the conversation.
7. Rotate around facilitators in small groups until everyone has had the opportunity to practice facilitating.