

BCS 114 – Generational Icebreaker Activity

This exercise is designed to encourage discussion about generational differences and commonalities. The exercise can be conducted with the whole group or with a larger group divided into several smaller groups.

Instructor – Use this document to guide discussion.

Ask each participant: What's your middle name and why did your parents give it to you? Have participants form pairs, small teams, or one large circle to discuss their answers.

Then, lead a guided discussion beginning with observations and continue with the questions provided - as time allows. A lot of the questions may be asked as a "poll" or just take a few answers for each question – to get a feel for the group.

Observations:

- Were there any similar names of the participants shared by different age groups?
- Were there any similar reasons given by the participants from different age groups?
- Were there any names more associated with one of the four generations than another?

Continue with the following questions (as time allows):

- Growing up at home, what were some of your favorite TV or radio programs?
- As a teenager, what was your favorite musician or band and why?
- What is one lesson your parents taught you that still sticks in your mind?
- What was your favorite game you remember playing as a child?
- What kind of car do you drive (or would like to drive) and why?
- What is your favorite guilty pleasure?
- What would you like to be famous for?
- What song makes you want to get up and dance?
- What is a movie you have seen in the last year that you really enjoyed?
- Who are two famous people you really admire?
- What is an historic event that had a great impact on you?
- How would you describe that impact?

This activity can be used as an icebreaker for a meeting or for a session dedicated to understanding generational differences. The questions will stimulate discussions about ways in which the generations are similar and provide insight into why there may be differences.