Icebreaker Activity: A Hand Shake, Introduction and Conversation

Instructions for Faculty: This icebreaker activity is designed to start a class meeting time and set the tone for the Personal Connection lesson.

Before Class Starts: The list below should be printed out and cut into strips. Each student should receive one [1] strip which contains

- a conversation starter question

To Start Class: Have students watch this video, it’s less than 2 minutes, on how to correctly shake hands.

Video URL  http://youtu.be/gK3I_NcXzWc

After the Video: Explain to students they will be doing a brief activity to use their hand shaking and introduction skills. Offer a brief demonstration of the steps below with one of the students.

ICEBREAKER STEPS

- Ask students to begin to casually walk about the room. When everyone is up and moving:
- Ask them to STOP and make eye contact with the nearest person
- Once they have identified a person, have the two students offer a hand shake to each other as instructed in the video
- As they are shaking hands, have them introduce themselves, stating their first and last name.
- Of the two students, have the person with the shortest hair ask his or her conversation starter question first.

Some questions may require longer answers than others and some questions may lead to other questions. Let students know each conversation should last no more than 2 minutes.

Once the 2 questions have been asked and discussed, students should return to their seats of a few follow up discussion questions.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What characteristics (physically or in the verbal content) did you notice about the other person that you liked and made you feel comfortable and open to conversation?

What is one element of your handshake, introduction or conversation style you would like to improve?
CONVERSATION STARTERS

[These examples can be found at http://www.mindtools.com/CommSkll/FirstImpressions.htm]

In your opinion what are the Seven Wonders of the World?

Which historical sporting event would you like to witness and why?

Which is more important intelligence or common sense and why?

Where would you choose to live if you had to leave this country and why?

What's your favorite family tradition and why?

Would you rather live for a week in the past or the future, and why?

What family or school rule would you most like to change and why?

What's your most prized possession? Why?

Is it more charitable, to spend your money or time? Why?

Would you rather be in big trouble with your partner, boss or mother? Why?

If one of your friends needed to move in for a year who would you like it to be? Why?

What habit would you like to break? Why?

Would you rather meet your great grandchildren or great grandparents? Why?

What was your favorite movie when you were young? Why?

In a movie about your family who would play the different members? Why?
What tradition would you most want to pass on to your children? Why?

What five foods do you wish were banished from the earth? Why?

If you could shop for free at one store, which one would you choose? Why?

What personal trait has gotten you in the most trouble? Why?

If you could change places with anyone, who would you choose? Why?

What's the most difficult thing about getting older? Why?

Which of your mother's silly instructions do you still obey? Why?

If you're in denial about one thing, what is it?

What's your best characteristic? Why?

What do you say that sounds just like your mother or father? Will you say it to your own kids?

If you had multiple personalities, what would they be? Why?