## Icebreaker: Nicknames

**Overview**

This icebreaker is focused on helping attendees get to know one another on a personal level. Often people are willing to share more of their experiences, in greater detail, when they are comfortable with whom they are conversing.

The idea of establishing a connection before discussing content is a common refrain in the knowledge management community.

**Time**

This icebreaker is meant to be short; consider devoting about one-and-a-half minutes per each attendee (e.g. 15 attendees = 20 minutes) results.

**Instructions**

In this icebreaker, we ask attendees to share a nickname their friends or family used for them when they were younger and the reason for the nickname.

If someone does not have a nickname or feel comfortable sharing it, they can choose to share the meaning of a family name or an unusual avatar name (e.g., their screen name from AOL chat rooms, or a funny Twitter handle).

**Wrap up**

* Emphasize that everyone told great stories
* Some were funny (list a few examples), some were serious (list a few examples)
* What is important is that we recognize that we have a lot in common; we were all once younger and have lived rich lives since then.
* We hope that these stories spark some conversations during the breaks and help you get to know one another
* These childhood nicknames might also be a good way to help you remember each other in the future
* A large part of KM is building, strengthening, and expanding networks—making connections now will help you share content later