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Cam is extremely easy to relate to, regardless of who you are in the audience. He has an ability to become ‘one of them’ to each of the generations. This is important because the information he delivers has the potential to make someone defensive, yet his stage presence is such that it doesn’t matter what generation he is talking to or about, he makes people feel understood.

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ABOUT THE CLIENT

Based in Nashville, Tennessee, Ingram Industries consists of diversified businesses in marine transportation, book distribution, print-on-demand solution, and digital storage, management and distribution services. The company’s businesses are organized in two operating units: Ingram Marine Group and Ingram Content Group.

BUSINESS NEED

To maintain its strong position in two dynamic industries, Ingram Industries must make continuous adjustments. But while change in business may be quite common, change in the employee base is not a regular discussion point. Recently, however, the leadership team recognized a significant shift in the employee demographics at its corporate headquarters. Seeking a way to help a variety of generations work together toward a common goal, they decided to make generational management a key topic at a corporate retreat. Cam Marston was asked to deliver his “Four Generations in the Workplace” presentation at the event, following the recommendations of Ingram Barge peers who had engaged Cam on multiple occasions to share generational insights with the subsidiary’s marine teams.

INSIGHT AND IMPACT

Cam addressed an audience of nearly 100 Ingram professionals, ranging from Millennials to Baby Boomers, providing them with information about themselves and their colleagues that was designed to help open discussions and revise expectations. To make the conversation even more personal to Ingram Industries, Cam used anecdotes from his time on the river with Ingram Barge to further demonstrate the stories of each generation. Thanks to Cam’s straightforward message and ability to connect with the audience, everyone was engaged from the start, nodding in agreement and asking questions – mostly wondering if shifting parenting styles are the source of most generational discord. A common discussion point, to be sure! The leadership team reports that the conversation continues well after the corporate retreat. With a greater understanding of why peers, managers and direct reports may behave the way they do based on differing generations, individuals are better equipped to address the needs of the changing workforce. As stated by the head of human resources, “everyone took something positive away; everyone got something out of it they can use day to day.”