

REMEMBERING NAMES

“A good name is more desirable than great riches; to be esteemed is better than silver or gold.”

Proverbs 22:1

According to Dale Carnegie, “a person’s name is the sweetest, most important sound in any language.”

Remembering Names

Remembering names is the first step in building a relationship and a simple way to show people that we think highly of them and that they are important to us. Remembering names can also help us create an atmosphere of warmth and friendliness. Do you remember a name after hearing it only one time? When we forget the name of a person we usually do one of two things (both of which are poor options). First, because we are too embarrassed to admit we cannot remember another person’s name, we pretend to know their name (and pray we do not get caught!). Second, we ignore the person and talk with someone we know.

Why We Forget

One reason we forget is that we really never hear the person’s name. Another reason we forget is that we often are thinking about other things while we are being introduced.

How We Can Remember

Remembering names can be as easy as 1 ... 2 ... 3 ...

1. Use your EARS

- Give the person your undivided attention.
- Ask the person to repeat his/her name if you did not hear it clearly.
- If necessary, ask the person to spell his/her name.

2. Use Your MOUTH

Use the person’s name several times through the process of introduction, conversation, and termination. Instead of “Hi” or “Hello, nice to meet you,” say, “Hi, Don,” or “Hello, Mary, nice to meet you.” Use the person’s name in conversation and when parting: “See you again, Don.”

3. Use Your EYES

Find a link between a person’s name and his/her face or features. The acrostic N.A.M.E. can help you remember four categories of association...

- **N = Notable.** Does the individual have the same name as a famous person or someone you know? (Example: Mr. Carter, Mrs. Reagan, Mr. Bush)
- **A = Appearance.** Can you associate the person’s name with his/her appearance? (Example: A “hairy” person named Harry or Mr. White with “white” hair or a tall person named Mrs. Long.)
- **M = Meaning.** Does the person’s name have a particular meaning that can assist you in remembering? (Example: Mr. King or Ms. Fisher or Forrest)
- **E = Employment.** Does the person’s name imply some kind of employment? (Example: Taylor, Smith, Baker, Plummer, Butcher, Mason)