



How to Remember Names: 4 Tips for Jogging Your Memory

You know the awkwardness that ensues when someone forgets your name. There's foot shuffling, lack of eye contact and, finally, the letdown that you just aren't that memorable. Don't do this to other people!

Remembering names is important. As Dale Carnegie said, "If you remember my name, you pay me a subtle compliment; you indicate that I have made an impression on you. Remember my name and you add to my feeling of importance." But how can you remember names with accuracy? Whether you're [starting a new position](#), attending a [networking](#) event or just meeting someone for the first time, here are four tips:

1. Brenda, Brenda, Brenda ...

Repetition is by far the best trick when you're remembering names. Think back to learning your multiplication tables in elementary school. Repeating information helps it set up permanent residence in the depths of your brain. Repeat names in your mind as you're speaking and work them into the conversation, too. Bonus: People typically like the sound of their names, so you'll make them feel good about themselves. Warning: Overdoing it can make you seem disingenuous.

2. Mnemonics

Another trick is observing something about the person or the person's name that you can associate together in your mind. These often sound silly, but they work. Example: To remember Richard Farmer, try to think of him in overalls and a pitchfork. (I said they were sometimes silly.) Additionally, choose something about the person's facial characteristics and try to associate them with his or her name.

3. Spell check

Ask people how they [spell](#) their names. This trick might not work for someone named Bob, but in many other situations, it could further the conversation. If you encounter unique spellings, for example, it may lead to personal anecdotes that make remembering names even easier.

If you are a visual learner, this is an especially helpful method for you to remember names. You'll likely picture the spelling in your mind. Additionally, people with less common name spellings will appreciate you asking. Caveat: It's okay to clarify pronunciation, but refrain from making comments — especially about ethnicity — that could make the person uncomfortable or be construed negatively (e.g., "Now, that's an odd name.").

4. Ask questions

Asking a question not only employs the repetition trick but also gives you more information to associate with the person. A question as simple as, "When did you start working at the firm, Brian?" could lead to a wealth of information about Brian's role in the organization and maybe even an interesting backstory that will make remembering names easier. Make a name for yourself by remembering the names of others. The fact that you consider every person memorable will create a favorable impression among new connections, colleagues and employers.

(This article originally appeared on the [OfficeTeam Take Note blog](#).)

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