

The Art of Name-Calling

"A person's name is, to them, the sweetest and most important sound in any language." If for no other reason, that's why we need to remember their name. It's the primary indicator that we are interested in them personally. It does us no good to say to them, "I'm really bad at remembering names." They don't want any excuses. What they realize when we say that is we are so completely focused on ourselves that we can't be bothered to remember. It's just plain good manners.

So how do you remember it? When you first hear it, repeat it back to them. Use it at the start of every sentence for the first half-dozen things you say to them. "Bob, how long have you lived here?" "That's great, Bob. And what do you do for a living?" "What do you like most about doing that, Bob?" Get their last name in there too.

If it's a name that can have multiple spellings, or it is a difficult or unusual name, say "Gee, that's a great name! How do you spell that?" Don't use that as a way to get them to repeat their name just because you weren't listening the first time. I guarantee their name will be Smith or Jones. Repeat it back to them. See it written out in your head. You could even write it down on a slip of paper so you can actually see it, and then *throw it away right in front of them*. If you don't throw it away, they think you just made them a project or you're after something from them.

Finally, you need to associate it with something unusual that helps you bring it back to your mind when you need to remember it. Make it something that reminds you of this person in particular. Maybe they like race cars. Imagine a race car with their name written down the side, or maybe that's the name of the racetrack in your mind. Maybe it's the title of a song. When Keith told me his wife's name was Michelle, I sang the first line of the Beatle's song. He must have thought I was strange, but I haven't forgotten it since. His last name is Haynes. I changed the spelling of the brand name in my mind, visualizing it on the waistband of a pair of briefs. I said to myself, "He feels good all under." Silly? Maybe. But it works. Try it. I learned the technique at a Dale Carnegie course... \$1495 for that little tidbit. You just got it for free!