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What Was Your Name Again?

By Kelley Keehn

Last month, for the first time in a long time, I attended the Small Business Week Chamber Mixer at the Winspear. I'm always impressed with how well run and organized the Chamber events tend to be no matter how often or infrequently you attend one.

Pleasantly surprised to bump into acquaintances I haven't seen in over a decade, I was a bit taken back by how many of these individuals remembered my name, even though theirs was long forgotten. Not to worry, right? After all, ten years of not seeing someone should grant some forgetful forgiveness.

After mingling about, I returned by to my promotional booth with Wayne Taylor. We engaged each individual that dropped by our table, and as I was introduced to each person, within minutes after asking their name, I had forgotten it! I can certainly blame the years of time for depleting precious facts, such as names from my memory, but just a few moments? I can't even blame age, just turning thirty this year. Perhaps it's adult ADD, but if so, what remedy other than drugs exists for my symptoms?

We know in business and in our everyday lives, that there's nothing as sweet as the sound of our own name. The same holds true for those that we remember. Try these simple tips, that yes, I've had to dust off myself, for curing this affliction that so many of us seem to suffer from.

Tip #1: Be in present time. For just a moment, and at the point of introduction, stop your mind chatter long enough to at least say the other person's name three times; in your mind and out loud as well.

Tip #2: Most people are dominantly visual, so if the other person's name seems unusual, ask them to spell or write it out for you. Better yet, ask for their business card and 'see' their name. Try also seeing the person's name on their forehead. This will help implant it into your memory.

Tip #3: Associate the person's name to something ... the sillier the better! If you meet Anna and she looks similar to a banana, use this memory hook to see Anna as a banana in your mind. Just be cautious to drop the 'banana' the next time you bump into Anna.

Try these simple action steps for greater success in remembering the most important thing to others; their name. And try these techniques daily as they take practice and steady implementation for maximum staying power.

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