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FIVE COOL IDEAS FOR REMEMBERING NAMES



By Michael Angelo Caruso

I once earned a speaking engagement by impressing Roxanne Gibbs, editor of The Nation" a prominent Barbados newspaper. When I visited her company to deliver the presentation, Roxanne introduced me to a large group of her employees. She told them that I remembered her name a half-hour after meeting her and 30 other people in a buffet line. Here are 5 Cool Ideas for remembering names.

- 1. Mnemonic triggers don't always work. A mnemonic memory device is way to trick your brain. You might, for example, establish a memory trigger that reminds you of a woman you met. Her name is Pat and you remember her name because she wore a purple sweater. The alliteration may be just the trigger you need to recall Pat's name at some future time and place. Your brain may get confused if, however, the next time you meet Pat she is wearing brown. Try to remember a person by who they are, rather than what they wear.
- 2. Use "cluster imprinting" to learn names. The goal of cluster imprinting is to imprint your brain with the person's name eight to ten times within three minutes of meeting them. This is easy to do and can be transparent to the other person if you practice. Here's how to get started. During introductions, listen to the person say their name and then say, "Catherine, it's nice to meet you." You've now heard her name twice
- 3. Repetition is a form of practice. After being introduced, you might say "Catherine, is

that Catherine with a 'C' or Katherine with a 'K'?" The person could answer "'Catherine' with a 'C'." Now you've heard the name six times and visualized it at least once. If someone approaches you and Catherine, offer to introduce the new person. "Catherine, do you know David? David, this is Catherine." At this point, you've been imprinted with Catherine's name eight times.

- 4. Closing remarks are a chance to practice. When it's time to excuse yourself, you might say, "It's been nice meeting you, Catherine," which makes the ninth time your brain has been imprinted with her name. You are not likely to forget "Catherine."
- 5. Interval training can help achieve total recall. Try to recall the name at several intervals during the next 24 hours, stretching the time span with each attempt. Another form of interval training is to review the name before and after each meeting.

Michael Angelo Caruso can be reached at 248.224.9667; email: michael@michelangelocaruso.com.

