

# Pondering Point

How often do we meet new people only to forget their names minutes after the introduction? This misstep stands in our way of actively listening to others. It can leave us feeling embarrassed, uncomfortable and distracted. When we use someone's name in conversation, we are sending the message that they themselves, and what they bring to the conversation, are valuable and important. To not remember a person's name can leave the opposite impression. Having to take the time to try and recall someone's name takes our focus away from the conversation itself as we self consciously attempt to show the person the respect he/she deserves.

Knowing how good it feels to have our own names called out in recognition reminds us that there is a uniqueness and importance in every person's name and allows us to come across professional and personal. Attempting to say a foreign sounding name, even if we fail to say it correctly and are corrected shows respect to the other person.

**While this can be a tricky skill to develop, it is an important one as it makes both us and our audience feel good.**

## What's her NAME, again?



**Imagine...** always remembering the name of the person who you are talking to in every situation.

### — From Pondering to Practice —

#### **Activity**

No one ever dreams of becoming a "what's-her-face?" So why do we do it? Our memories are not designed to learn names through verbal cues or by simply hearing them. Our memory works most effectively through images, action and emotion. Find a quick rhyme for someone's name or some clever way to remember it by associating it with something unique about the person.

**Try This:** The next time you are in a social situation, follow this simple four-step process brought to you by the Leaders Institute (<http://www.leadersinstitute.com/>). Think of the acronym LMER (yep, like the glue) to get names to "stick" in your mind!

1. **Look and Listen** – all about eye contact and making that connection with the person
2. **Mind Picture** – create a picture of association that creates one image
3. **Exaggerate** – make the image personal and perhaps funny, it will be easier to remember
4. **Repeat** – say quietly to yourself a few times and find a way to work it into the conversation so that it is respectful

**"A person's name is to him or her the sweetest and most important sound in any language."**

-Dale Carnegie

#### **Self Reflection Activity**

- *What's unique about a name?*  
It is not just a label, it is an identity.
- *What does your name mean?*  
It is more than a name – it is who you are.
- *How do you feel if your name is spelled incorrectly or mispronounced?*  
Maybe you can get a glimpse of how others might feel when this is done to them.

**Take time to celebrate the uniqueness that your name brings you!**