

# Small Business Success

June 2015



Community  
Futures Newsask



## Seven Ways to Remember Names

Published in cooperation with [Blue Beetle Books](#)

Welcome to the quick tips issue - four sets of useful techniques that pack one heck of a punch.

Many of us have trouble remembering names and it can be so embarrassing at a business mixer when you know, you know someone but can't place the name. Worse still when they greet you like a long lost friend. Here are several techniques that might just help you save the day when you first meet someone and need to remember their name.

1. Make eye contact - this makes you pay attention to them and not everything else that's going on around you. Then repeat their name by saying something like, "Good to meet you Tim."
2. If you're with someone else, or there is someone close by, introduce them to the person, that way you have had to use their name in a slightly different context, which helps deposit it into the old memory bank.
3. Repetition is your friend but you don't want to sound like an idiot so just repeat their name in your head five times while they are replying to you. Again, pay close attention to them so that you can match face to name. As you move onto other people look back once or twice and repeat their name to yourself.
4. Ask for a business card and visualize their name. Make a note on the card as to where you met them and rewrite their name. The act of writing a name down helps us remember it.
5. Associate the name with something else. This can take a bit of practice, but can work well for some people. For instance a while ago I met a lawyer called Shaun Eden so I thought of him as being bald (shorn) in the Garden of Eden with Eve. It was funny enough of a vision that I've never forgotten his name!
6. The card trick - if you can't remember someone's name just go up to them and say, "Great to see you again, do you have a business card? I am updating my contact book."

One other way, is to be honest and upfront. Slap your hand to your head and say something like, "I'm sorry, I'm having a senior's moment" or "...stupid of me, mind's gone blank, and I've forgotten your name." Inject a little humour and all will be forgiven.

### Index

Seven Ways to Remember Names.....	1
Five Ways to Become More Efficient in Your Home-Based Business .....	2
Five Ways to Tick off Customers .....	3
Cartoon .....	4

## Five Ways to Become More Efficient In Your Home-Based Business

Published in cooperation with [Blue Beetle Books](#)

Working at home is not for everyone, some people manage to make it work and others struggle. A friend of mine tried it and just couldn't focus; he needed the water cooler chat times, people around to bounce ideas off, and less distractions like his dog, the television etc.

Personally I love working at home and am actually more productive at home than working from an office. Here are five quick tips to help you be more efficient.



1. **Waste Less Time** - It's so easy to get distracted when you don't have a boss looking over your shoulder so real down the jobs you have to into manageable chunks and set a timer for an hour, or 90 minutes, depending on your temperament, or the project in hand. Try not to break away from focusing on the task until the timer goes off. Set definite times for a coffee break and lunch and stick to the times. Another way I keep on track is to set a project timer that monitors the amount of time and the cost to the client. This makes me focus on the task at hand, otherwise I'm charging for hours daydreaming and not working. Oh, and if I am not actively using my computer it lets me know and asks whether I wanted to discard the inactive time. That gives me a reality check as those are minutes I can't charge for - they cost me money!
2. **Be More Organized** - Keep your desk tidy, file and papers, throw away anything you don't need immediately. Try to touch each file, or piece of paper, only once! At the end of every day tidy your desk and your office, so when you start the next day you start afresh, motivated, not faced with clutter that will automatically set you off on a disorganized path.
3. **Create a Co-op with other Home Business Owners** - Most of us who have home-based businesses know other people doing similar work operating out of their home. Bring together five or six of these people and form a buying group, that way when you need paper you can buy in bulk at better prices and then split the reams between you. The same go for coffee, folders and a host of other office supplies. Also, you can take turns in doing the trip to Staples, or Office Depot or wherever, thus saving you time. And as we all know - time is money.
4. **Don't isolate yourself** - even if you're good at working alone like me it does us no good to become too isolated. If you do create your 'buying' co-op think about arranging a regular time to meet the group for coffee, either at one of your homes, or at a nearby coffee shop. This will be time well spent as you will be motivated, and be able to discuss any ideas, or challenges you have with the group. Also make use of your local Chamber of Commerce's mixers; this gets you out of the house and can also be a source of new business leads and contacts. Remember at some point too many hours at the computer become counter-productive as the quality of work drops significantly.

**Balance work/life** - I can be a workaholic at times and my wife has trouble dragging me away from my office. I even at time do work on my laptop while watching television. It's an issue with most home based businesses separating home and business, they tend to meld into one. The key to balancing work and home life is to set boundaries. Sure you want the flexibility to work at 3:00am in the morning if required, or if the muse hits you, but you must set times when you simply don't work. A great idea is to ensure your office space is separate, i.e. a unique space that has was and doors that separate it from the rest of the house. Set office hours (a clearly defined work week) and only do 'overtime' when it's vitally important for a project. When you have finished for the day, shut the door - even lock it if you can and don't keep wandering back to check emails. Remember how important your family is!

## Five Ways to Tick Off Customers

Published in cooperation with [Blue Beetle Books](#)

No one really plans to annoy customers, but it happens all the time. Here are five ways you, or members of your staff might be ticking off valued customers.

1. Make a customer standing in front of you wait while you take a phone call from another customer. Golden rule - if someone bothers to trek down to your store, or your office, they come first! Think about it, if you take that call it's like someone butting in line. Let it go to voice mail and call them back as soon as you are done.
2. Complain about how bad your job, or life is in front of, or worse still to your customer. Okay so you're fed up, is spoiling your customer's day going to make you happier or bring you more business? Keep it to yourself and try and make them feel that all is good with you and the world.
3. Make your customers feel that you don't value them. Don't bother to try to remember their name, don't do anything extra for them - heck don't even smile at them, they're just a nuisance anyway aren't they? This is all about customer service, the more valued a customer, or client, feels the more likely they are to come back - and bring friends with them.
4. Be grumpy and rude. When they walk in say, "Yes?" not "Good morning, how are you today Mrs. Jones how can I help you?" I'm always surprised by how many times in a day people in businesses are rude, or dismissive to me. It's like I am a hardship to them. Treat people like people, not like cattle and they'll come back and buy more. There are several businesses in town that I refuse to buy from because of rude staff.



Say I can't, we don't, I'm sorry there's nothing we can do, rather than make it happen. If you can't make it happen help the customer to find another business that does offer what they want. Remember it's not just about this sale but the next ten years of sales. Can-do businesses are more successful period.

## Challenge 4 Communities 2015

**4 Weeks 4 Challenges 4 Winners 4 Prizes**

Community Futures Newsask is hosting our sixth annual "Challenge 4 Communities"

All community groups (service groups, neighbor groups, youth groups, etc.) are invited to submit community projects that compete for prize money. The public will decide the winners with weekly voting on the internet over a four week format beginning October 30, 2015. Rules and an application form are available on our website at [cfsask.ca/newsask](http://cfsask.ca/newsask) (click on Challenge 4 Communities)

Get involved with your community today, submit a project, and compete for prize money!



## Cartoon

Published in cooperation with [Blue Beetle Books](#)



“What if we don’t change at all ...  
and something magical just happens?”



PO Box 357 903-99<sup>th</sup> Avenue West Tisdale, Saskatchewan S0E 1T0  
Phone: 306-873-4449 Fax: 306-873-4645 [admin@newsaskcfdc.ca](mailto:admin@newsaskcfdc.ca) [www.newsaskcfdc.ca](http://www.newsaskcfdc.ca)

Supported by Western Economic Diversification Canada



Western Economic  
Diversification Canada

Diversification de l'économie  
de l'Ouest Canada

Canada

Published in cooperation with [Blue Beetle Books](#)