



ebook ISBN: 978-9625977-3-2  
228 pages  
Release Date: 2009  
Retail Price \$39.00

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## If You Can't Place a Name to a Face...

by Keith F. Luscher  
Author, *Prospect & Flourish*

We have all been there. We are attending a social event or in some other public place, and all of the sudden, we hear our name called out.

We turn around and see the person calling our attention. The face appears familiar, but we just can't place a name. "Hey you!" we reply with a slightly exaggerated enthusiasm. "How is it going? It's been a while!" we exclaim, hoping that that our ignorance will not show through.

But in that moment, it does. They know it. And you know it. You have forgotten them.

For many of us, it's an all too familiar experience—most of us have forgotten someone else's name before, or have been in situations where other people have forgotten ours. Sometimes we can be gracious and anticipate that, and simply reintroduce ourselves when presented with a surprise encounter. That's thoughtful and empathetic. People appreciate that. I know I have many times.

And of course there are techniques you can use to remember the names of people you meet, such as repeating it back and using it in light conversation. Writing the name down in your PDA or a notepad (if not receiving a business card) with some phonetic hook that ties to the person's appearance is another trick.

However, for this topic, I am going to offer up one single, simple suggestion. It's not the ultimate solution to this problem, nor might it be the best. But if you maintain an address book in Microsoft Outlook (or a CRM system that synchronizes with it), and you and your contact use LinkedIn and/or Facebook, this is one simple step that I sometimes wonder if people should use as much as they should:

When you connect with someone new, and enter their contact information into your address book, attach their photo too. How tough is that? When the photo becomes part of the entry, it synchronizes to your smartphone as well, whether you use a Blackberry, a Palm phone or Windows Mobile device.

The steps are very simple.

1. Enter your new contact's data into Outlook
2. Go to your contact's LinkedIn or Facebook profile page. On their profile photo, right-click and choose "Save picture as..."
3. In your My Pictures directory, create a sub-directory called "Contacts"
4. Re-name the image file for the contact you are recording, and save it.
5. (Outlook) In the contact entry dialog box, double click on the photo box in the top right column, and assign the photo accordingly.

That's it! You're done. Now, as you routinely go through your address book, be it on your computer or hand-held device, you will see that person's photo with others and be better prepared to match the name to the face!

On using photos: don't have a photo of yourself online? Get it up there. If not a portrait photo then a simple cropped headshot from a snapshot will suffice. If you want others to attach your name to your face, then you must help them attach your face to your name. It's that simple.