

Name Game Helpful to Remember

BILL Swisher, president of the Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce, is a businessman, not a politician.

Yet, he has a habit sometimes used by politicians that might very well be adopted by other businessmen. When he approaches a person whom he might or might not know, he extends a friendly right hand and says: "Hello! I'm Bill Swisher."

Often the other person responds by giving his own name, which undoubtedly is a help to someone like Swisher, who meets hundreds of people casually and sees them infrequently.

A common human fault is a lapse of memory that fails to bring forward a name, date, fact or other information when needed.

As one fellow observed: "There are just three things I have trouble remembering. One is people's names. The second is people's faces. And I forget what the third thing is."

Even when the name might be well fixed in the mind, it may not always immediately be connected with the person present.

Recently, this writer encountered a friend whom he had not seen in more than 40 years. Both of us had changed somewhat.

The other man knew our identity in advance, but when we met, he said, "I'll bet you don't know who I am. Do you?"

This was an equal guessing game. It was better to admit failure of memory than to make a wrong guess even if such a question isn't asked, it may be posed by encounters of people whom we should recognize but who are out of usual surroundings, offering no clues.

A small boy and his mother attended a convention with the boy's father. After a bit, the boy asked, "Mother, why are those men going around smelling of one another?"

The mother replied, "They're not smelling of each other. They're just trying to read each other's convention badges!"

Charles Thompson of Ada told us this story, which he insists occurred to two friends who are neighbors. They are not related but they have the same last name, which is neither unusual nor difficult.

One day these gentlemen were walking down the street and something came up about another man with whom both were well acquainted. Neither could recall the third man's name right then.

"Don't worry," said Joe: "I'll think of it eventually."

"Well, you call me as soon as you remember it," said Tom. "Call me any time of day or night. This is aggravating not to be able to remember the name of somebody I know as well as I do him."

A few days later the two friends with the same name met again.

"Did you ever remember the name of that fellow we were talking about the other day?" asked Tom.

"Yes, I remembered his name that same night," Joe replied.

"Well, why didn't you call me?" Tom scolded. "You promised to call me as soon as you remembered his name!"

"Yeah, I was going to," Joe explained. "but by the time I had recalled his name I couldn't remember your name!"

It might happen to anybody!