

Say my name, say my name (correctly!)

Even Beyonce may need help sometimes when it comes to saying someone's name correctly.

A person's name is an extension of who they are. When we mispronounce our colleagues names, we may be unintentionally communicating a lack of respect and contributing to an unsafe work environment.

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Sources :

[If You Don't Know How to Say Someone's Name, Just Ask Uzo Aduba Never Thought About Changing Her Nigerian Name Say My Name | Why Pronouncing Names Correctly is Important "The Importance of Pronouncing My Name"](#)
[What's In a Name? Kind of a Lot.](#)
[Importance_of_Names_Guide](#)
[Why Name Pronunciation Is So Much More Important Than You Think](#)
[Why getting a name right matters - BBC Worklife](#)

Name Pronunciation and Spelling
One of the first steps to inclusion

Hello my name is

Say my name.
A person's name is an extension of who they are and is rooted in that person's language, culture, and identity. Pronouncing a person's name correctly affirms that person and may add to their self-worth. Incorrectly pronouncing a person's name almost always does the opposite.
- Dr. David Holbrook (Executive Director with TeachIT Genderworks)

Learning to pronounce and spell a colleague's name correctly is not just a common courtesy. It's an important effort in creating an inclusive workplace, one that emphasizes psychological safety and belonging.
Mispronouncing or misspelling someone's name can affect their social-emotional wellbeing and by extension, harm someone's ability to work productively and comfortably.
The learning and pronunciation of unfamiliar names is a skill and practice that needs to be valued, honed, and exercised.

Navigating the Conversation: Easy and Respectful Things to Say

- Sorry, I know we've met before, but can you remind me how to pronounce your name correctly?
- Your name is one I've never heard before, can you repeat it for me so I can make sure I know how to pronounce it?
- I've heard your name pronounced a few different ways by various colleagues. I was hoping you would be able to clarify it for me today.
- Can I double check, is your name pronounced this way _____ or this way _____?
- You know what? I think I've been messing up your name for a while, I really want to put effort into making sure I'm pronouncing it properly. Can you teach me?

Quick Tips

Simply Ask
It may seem embarrassingly obvious, but simply asking the person is the best place to begin. Make sure to start meeting with the question to normalize having the conversation.

Copy & Paste
Relying on your own spelling ability might lead to more mistakes. Check the signpost block and copy it over to your work to ensure spelling is correct.

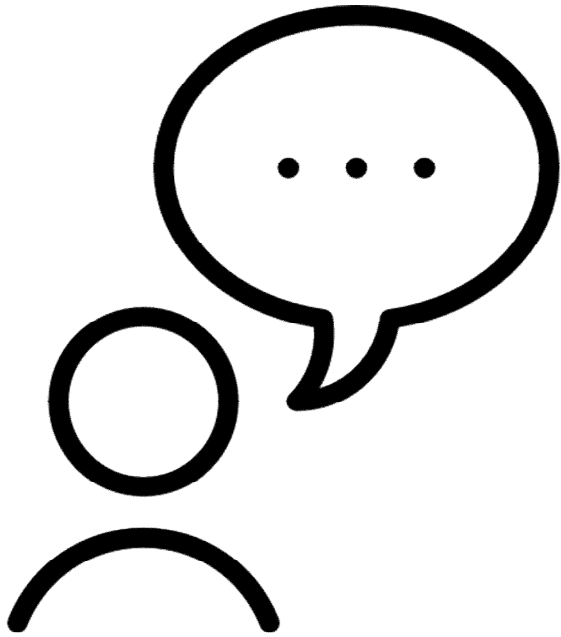
Be an Ally
If you hear someone else mispronouncing a colleague's name when they're not around, step in and correct them gently. "I think it's pronounced..."

Take Responsibility
Once the person has explained the pronunciation, it's up to you to practice. Spell it phonetically in a way that works for you and take time to repeat it to yourself until you become comfortable.

Be Ready to Be Corrected
Give the person permission and encouragement to correct you if you get it wrong. It doesn't feel good to correct someone by hounding yourself and wading your ego aside, you are providing a safe space for someone to come forward and help you get it right.

Friendly Reminder:
Even relatively "familiar" names such as Tara, Genevieve, and Robert have more than one pronunciation. This can often depend on where a person comes from and what their first language might be. It's not just names like Shigella, Juana, and Michalee that we need to pay attention to. So no matter what, always make sure to ask!

"If they can learn to say Tchakovsky and Michelangelo and Dostoyevsky, they can learn to say Uzoakaka."
- Uzo Aduba (Access)



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- Uzo Aduba (Actress)

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Title: Name Pronunciation and Spelling (one of the first steps to inclusion)

Prepared By: Camila Das Gupta, Atlantic Diversity Leaders Network , PSPC, 2021

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