

EIGHT WAYS TO REMEMBER JOKES

Part of the Humor Hint Series

by

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Using humor well is a sign of creativity and intelligence. The higher up in an organization you are, the more important it is to be able to put a client at ease or a situation in perspective with a well placed joke, one-liner or humorous observation. Yet, how many times have you heard someone lament, "I can never remember jokes!?" How many times have you said it yourself? The following hints will help you look—and sound—like a star!

1. Memorize the punch line.

Jokes are difficult to remember because the punch line doesn't follow in a natural sequence. That's what makes the joke funny. That's also what makes it hard to remember. For example: *The bases are loaded and I could use a drink myself!* or *Time flies like the wind. Fruit flies like a banana!* If you memorize the punch line you can work back into the joke set-up much easier than trying to do it the other way around.

2. Localize the joke.

Set your joke some place you know: the corner gas station, your summer cabin, the parking lot at work. Picture the joke's characters there, for example, pumping gas at the adjacent pump, while they engage in the antics of the joke.

3. Personalize the joke.

Make someone you know the star of the joke. Create a fictitious brother-in-law or uncle, to whom you can credit a joke or series of jokes. I tell stories about my Uncle Frank who used to work in the Pacific Northwest as a "human cannonball" until they fired him! Two weeks later they hired him back. Seems they couldn't find a man of the same caliber!

4. Write your jokes down.

People rarely remember jokes. The real pros keep a humor file, a card catalog or fill up blank books with all the clever one-liners, jokes and anecdotes they find. You can do the same thing. Keep 3x5 cards handy to write down the funny bumper sticker or clever quip when you first encounter it.

5. Use props for your jokes.

Often a prop will stimulate your brain to remember a funny story. And if it's a good prop like a rubber chicken, it can carry you through even if you forget the original joke.

6. Repeat your jokes.

Repeating a joke is the best way not only to remember it, but to perfect the details and timing. Professional comedians will tell a joke 20-50 times before putting it in their act.

NOTE: It helps if you repeat it to different people!

7. Make the joke seem natural to you.

You'll remember a joke easily if you tell it in words that are comfortable for you. The more natural it seems coming from you, the better it will go over.

8. Tell jokes about funny things that really happened to you.

Feel free to embellish! The plus is that if the event really happened, you'll remember the punch line!

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Dr. Patt Schwab speaks internationally on the topics of managing change and using humor to enhance the workplace environment. She would enjoy hearing your ideas for remembering jokes. Write her at: 9401- 45th Ave. NE • Seattle, WA 98115

Remember Jokes