

SURFACE TO SOUL

Live Well | Lead Well | Coach Well

Use Name Tags to Build Community

REASONS FOR HAVING EVERYONE WEAR NAME TAGS

- **It's guest-oriented.** People want to be known. We want to give people space to control their experience with our church but we want to meet them when they are ready to connect. The first step to getting connected is by allowing a member of your hospitality team to make up a name tag.
- **It's helpful for your leaders.** Let's be honest ... you can remember maybe 200 people's names when you see their faces but you can probably remember stuff about 500 people when given their face and name. Name tags help teams remember a little bit more about others by just giving them a little bit of information about your guests.
- **Few people know everybody in the church.** Even in the smallest churches, it's sometimes difficult to remember everybody's name. In growing churches, this task becomes even more difficult. Most people want to know everybody's name at church, but few of us are gifted with that kind of memory. Pastors and program staff find name tags an effective tool, that allows them to minister to people more effectively.
- **Name tags invite conversation.** Knowing another person's name breaks down one barrier to conversations that church folks ought to feel comfortable having with each other. It's easier to talk with others when you are on a first-name basis.
- **Name tags save embarrassment.** We've probably all called someone by the wrong name, only to realize it later (or perhaps even within the same conversation). Wearing name tags eliminate those awkward moments.
- **Name tags are an inexpensive way to promote outward focus.** The church that says, "We don't need name tags since we already know everyone anyway" is probably saying more than they care to admit. On the other hand, using name tags is one way to say, "We expect God to send us guests, and we want to be ready for them."

TIPS FOR USING NAME TAGS EFFECTIVELY

- **Use name tags as often as you can.** Provide medium-point Sharpie-type markers. Use name tags at regular group gatherings. Consider wearing them even if the group goes out for a fellowship or service activity. If you make a personal visit to the door of a prospective member, for sure wear a name tag.
- **Add something in addition to names.** Keep the name tag experience fresh by creating a new point of connection each time. Invite people to share a favorite book, movie, snack, vacation spot, café, beverage, etc. Have people write their first name large in all caps and their last name smaller underneath. Leave room for the "getting to know you" items on a third line.
- **Wear it on the right side.** That's where it is most visible for people, particularly if they are shaking hands. This is counterintuitive—for most right-handers anyway. We put it on the left side. It's better on the right side.
- **Wear name tags at all church functions.** Nothing makes a newcomer feel more comfortable than a group where all the new friends are wearing name tags. If you have multiple points of entry, have an area at each entrance where people can pick up and return their name tag.
- **Don't use the pre-printed "hello my name is" or "Visitor" name tags.** Use the opportunity to help brand your church. Customize your name tags by adding your church logo, core values, or a tagline.



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