6 Habits of Truly Memorable People

In order to succeed, almost everyone--whether business owner or employee--must be memorable.

While you don't have to be The Most Interesting Man in the World, being known is one of the main goals of marketing, advertising, and personal branding.

Out of sight is out of mind, and out of mind is out of business.

But if your only goal is to be known for professional reasons, you're missing out. People who are memorable for the right reasons also live richer, fuller, and more satisfying lives. Win-win!

So forget the flashy business cards and personal value propositions and idiosyncratic clothing choices.

Here's how to be more memorable--and have a lot more fun.

1. Don't see. Do.

Can you speak intelligently about how clothing provides a window into the inner lives of Mad Men characters? Do you find yourself arguing about the degree of depth lost in the Game of Thrones TV series as compared with the books?

Anyone can share opinions about movies or TV or even (I'll grudgingly admit) books. That's why opinions are quickly forgotten. What you say isn't interesting; what you do is interesting.

Spend your life doing instead of watching. Cool things will happen. Cool things are a lot more interesting and a lot more memorable.

That's especially true when you...

2. Do something unusual.

Draw a circle and put all your "stuff" in it. Your circle will look a lot like everyone else's: Everyone works, everyone has a family, everyone has homes and cars and clothes…

We like to think we're unique, but roughly speaking, we're all the same, and similar isn't memorable.

So occasionally do something different. Backpack to the next town just to see how many people stop to offer you a ride. (Don't take them up on it, though. Unless you appear to be in distress, the people who want to give you a ride are the last people you want to ride with.) Try to hike to the top of a nearby mountain no one climbs. (Trust me: Take water.) Compete with your daughter to see who can swim the most laps in three hours. (If you live in my house, you'll lose. Badly.)

Or work from a coffee shop one day just to see what you learn about other people and about yourself.

Whatever you do, the less productive and sensible it is, the better. Your goal isn't to accomplish something worthwhile; the goal is to collect experiences.

Experiences, especially unusual experiences, make your life a lot richer and way more interesting. You can even...

3. Embark on a worthless mission.

You're incredibly focused, consistently on point, and relentlessly efficient.

You're also really, really boring.

Remember when you were young and followed stupid ideas to their illogical conclusions? Road trips, failing the cinnamon challenge, trying to eat six saltine crackers in one minute without water--you dined out on those stories for years.

Going on "missions," however pointless and inconvenient, was fun. In fact, the more pointless, the more fun you had, because missions are about the ride, not the destination.

So do something, just once, that adults no longer do. Drive eight hours to see a band. Buy your seafood at the dock. Or do something no one else thinks of doing. Ride along with a policeman on a Friday night (it's the king of all eye-opening experiences).

Pick something it doesn't make sense to do a certain way and do it that way. You'll remember it forever--and so will other people.

4. Embrace a cause.

People care about--and remember--people who care. When you stand for something, you stand apart.

But...

5. Let other people spread the word.

People who brag are not remembered for what they've done; they're remembered for the fact they brag.

Do good things and other people will find out. The less you say, the more people remember.

6. Get over yourself.

Most of the time, your professional life is like a hamster wheel of résumé or C.V. padding: You avoid all possibility of failure while maximizing the odds of success in order to ensure your achievement graph climbs up and up and up.

Inevitably, that approach starts to extend to your personal life, too.

So you run, but you won't enter a race because you don't want to finish at the back of the pack. You sing, but you won't share a mic in a friend's band because you're no Adele. You'll sponsor the employee softball team, but you won't play because you're not very good.

Personally and professionally, you feel compelled to maintain your all-knowing, all-achieving, all-conquering image.

And you're not a person. You're a résumé.

Stop trying to seem perfect. Accept your faults. Make mistakes. Hang yourself out there. Try and fail.

Then be gracious when you fail.

When you do, people will definitely remember you, because people who are willing to fail are rare, and because people who display grace and humility, especially in the face of defeat, are incredibly rare.