

## ABOUT US

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 TOM TOM ENGLISH



## VOCABULARY

### Innocent =

Pure, guileless,  
without bad intention

### Ubiquity =

Present everywhere  
(noun form).  
Adjective form is  
“ubiquitous”.

### Antagonistic =

Showing or feeling  
active opposition or  
hostility towards  
something or someone.

## Read the article overleaf and discuss these questions:

1. Do you think employees should have the right to refuse to display their real names? Why? Why not?
2. Have you ever worked in a service industry job where you were required to display your real name? How did you feel about it?
3. Have you ever complained about a service industry worker? What happened?
4. Has a customer ever complained about you? What happened?
5. Do you think that the number of “claimers” is going up? If so, why?
6. Are you worried about keeping your personal data secure? Does this include your name?

## VOCABULARY

### Compile =

To produce something  
(usually a list, book,  
database or computer  
programme) by  
assembling information  
from other sources

### Forge =

To create something  
strong, enduring or  
successful. Literal  
meaning is to join metal  
together using heat.

### Assembly-line =

System of work where  
each worker does one  
separate task to make a  
finished product.

In a family restaurant somewhere in Japan:

“I see your name is Nakagusuku. I have an uncle with the same name. Is there any chance you’re from Ginowan, in Okinawa? We may be distantly related.”

“Er, sorry, but it’s read Nakajo and I come from Tohoku.”

“Ah, naruhodo (I see)...”

Could this seemingly **innocent** exchange possibly be a problem? J-Cast News reported on a recent controversy over the practice of having people who work in the service industry such as cashiers, store clerks, restaurant waiters and so on, who wear name badges that indicate either their surnames or their full names.

With the **ubiquity** of social networks, concerns have increased that such persons may be identified on Twitter or Facebook, for example, by “claimers” (people who persistently voice real or imagined dissatisfaction in an **antagonistic** manner) or even by stalkers. The controversy first surfaced Aug 2 in the “Hatsugen Komachi” department on Yomiuri Online, under the heading, “I’d like to stop wearing a name badge at my sales job.”

“Wearing a name badge with either one’s surname or full name at such jobs in convenience stores, supermarkets, drugstores, restaurants, karaoke salons, etc, may be linked to stalking or having personal data exposed on the Internet,” the first poster wrote. “Of course, in order for a customer to complain about poor service or a bad attitude, there must be some way to identify that person, so how about making them wear a number, or a made-up name?” Over the next week 125 people gave their responses. The first posters were generally in agreement about preferring their name not be used. One wrote: “I’ve worked in the

service industry. And while the ‘customer is god,’ he or she can also become a stalker. It can be a really scary, unpleasant feeling. Before [X] could find out where I lived, I quit the part-time job. At the next place I work, I don’t want to wear an name badge.”

“I’ve experienced being stalked,” posted another. “We’re living in times when various information can be found by a name search. If a person knows where you work, he can find out almost anything. I really wish they’d stop requiring us to show our names.”

“At service-related jobs, I can understand that it’s necessary to identify a worker, but I think a nickname or number is enough,” wrote a third. “These are dangerous times and I don’t want to display my real name.”

Consulting firm NEC Nexsolutions posted these remarks: “There is no problem with the **compiling** of a name list of sales staff, based on the individuals accepting or agreeing to its necessity, and making this list available to the staff of a sales outlet or posting it on the office bulletin board.” They added that without an individual’s consent, he or she cannot be obliged to wear a name badge bearing his full name.

In the past, J-Cast noted, the purpose of wearing a name badge was to indicate the business’s responsibility toward the customer, by enabling the customer to remember a name and by so doing **forging** a more personal relationship. These days, however, more jobs take on the style of assembly-line work, and relationships with customers tend to be superficial at best.

Unfortunately, cases of claimers or stalkers have increased. One’s name, in principle, must be regarded as a type of “personal data.”