“May I introduce. . .”

Many people think that introducing themselves or introducing others is so complicated that they tend to avoid doing it altogether. While that might have been the case years, today the process is much simpler. It all boils down to **speaking to the person you wish to honor first**. For example, you’d like to introduce your college roommate to your grandmother. Turn to granny and say, “Grandmother, I’d like you to meet my roommate, Susie Foster.” Then turn to Susie and say, “Susie, this is my grandmother, Mrs. Duran.”

Here’s a handy chart of who might come first:

Social Situations	Speak to this person FIRST… …and this person SECOND
Your grandparents, parents, or anyone older than you	
Your contemporary (or younger)	
Your friend	
Another family member	
An adult	

A child

A woman

A man

Someone with a title: Senator, Mayor, Judge, Colonel, nobility, Bishop, Reverend, Professor, Doctor; a

Your contemporary (or younger)

Your guest of honor

Others attending the event

Business Situations

A client

Anyone in your company, including your CEO

Your boss, or a higher-up

A person of lower rank in the company

Tips for Making a Great Introduction

- **Look at the person** you are speaking to first, then turn to the other person as you complete the introduction.
- **Speak clearly.** Mumbling defeats the purpose of the introduction.
- **Use courteous language.** “I’d like to introduce…,” “May I introduce…,” “I’d like you to meet…” are all good options. “May I present…” is the formal version.

- **Use preferred names and titles.**
- In more formal situations, or when there’s an obvious age difference, it’s best to use courtesy titles and last names: “Mrs. Samson, I’d like you to meet Mr. Jacobs.” This lets Mrs. Sampson invite Mr. Jacobs to use her first name, or not.
- Even in informal situations or with contemporaries, it’s helpful to use first and last names: “Judy, this is Sam Jacobs. Sam, this is Judy Samson.” You can use a nickname if you know the person prefers it.

- **Teach children to use adults’ titles,** unless an adult specifically requests using his or her first name: “Mrs. Samson, this is my nephew, Benji Rose. Benji, this is Mrs. Samson.”

- **It’s fine to skip last names when introducing your spouse and children,** unless they have a different last name than yours.

- **Introduce other family members by their full names,** unless they request otherwise. It’s also a good idea to mention the family relationship: “Uncle Arthur, may I introduce Mark

Weston. Mark, this is my great-uncle, Arthur Pearson.”

- **When introducing someone to a small group,** it’s practical to name the group members first, primarily to get their attention: “Sara, Kathy, Dan, I’d like to introduce Curtis Tyler. Curtis, I’d like you to meet Sara Rocher, Kathy Henley, and Dan Quinn.”

- **Start a conversation.** Try to find some topic the two people have in common: “Sam, I think you and Jake share a passion for Italian wine. Jake might enjoy hearing about your wine tour in northern Italy.”