

**Let's Have Tim Cover Apple and Jeff Analyze Amazon -- Overheard**

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Self-improvement guru Dale Carnegie grasped years ago that "a person's name is to that person the sweetest, most important sound in any language." An accounting professor has shown that the phenomenon can be profitable for Wall Street analysts too.

Omri Even-Tov of the University of California Berkeley's Haas School of Business looked at over a quarter-century of earnings forecasts and found that analysts make more accurate predictions about a company's earnings when they share the first name as its chief executive officer.

In the new paper, written with co-authors Kanyuan Huang and Brett Trueman from the University of California Los Angeles's Anderson School, Mr. Even-Tov shows that the effect seems to hold not only for any Tom, Dick or Harry but for any Sundar, Elon or Hubert. In fact, sharing a less common name makes the effect stronger. When there is a change in the occupant of the corner office then analysts' forecasts become less accurate.

The professor's theory as to why this holds lines up with Mr. Carnegie's unscientific assertion: People may feel more warmly disposed to their namesake and therefore share a little bit more useful information with them. Investment-bank research departments weigh all sorts of qualifications when deciding who gets a plum assignment covering a megacap stock such as Apple or Amazon. Perhaps being named Tim or Jeff should be among them.

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