The curse of knowledge

**Curse of Knowledge**
The curse of knowledge is a cognitive bias that occurs when an individual, communicating with other individuals, unknowingly assumes that the others have the background to understand. For example, in a classroom setting, teachers have difficulty teaching novices because they cannot put themselves in the position of the student. A brilliant professor might no longer remember the difficulties that a young student encounters when learning a new subject. This curse of knowledge also explains the danger: ‘the curse-of-knowledge effect is close kin to hindsight bias, or what is often called the ‘knew-it-all-along-effect’, in which we view events after the fact as having been more predictable than they were before they occurred.’ This is one reason that political or advertising claims that are not factual (e.g. grammar schools) but are repeated gain traction with the public, particularly if they have emotional resonance. “The curse of knowledge is a cognitive bias that hampers communication. By understanding the science of memory, you can overcome the curse to create persuasive email marketing.” Anyone who wants to lift the curse of knowledge must first appreciate what a devilish curse it is. Like a drunk who is too impaired to realize that he is too impaired to drive, we do not notice the curse because the curse prevents us from noticing it. Once you acknowledge the devilishness of the curse, consider these 5 ways to make your communication meaningful and memorable to reverse its effects: 1. Remind people why you exist. Since the act of retrieving information helps strengthen memories, provide nudges and cues to reinforce who you are and why you’re around.