

# Key To Establishing Relationships: Rapport

Rapport building is so easy and yet, can be such an elusive and daunting task for most people. When our hearts are in the right place, everything falls in place very nicely. Most frontline team members are trained to use rapport building to win customers trust so that the sale becomes easier to acquire. Leaders are told to establish rapport or trust with their charges so that they are able to motivate employees to deliver over and above standard performance.

What's unfortunate here is that rapport building to establish trust or credibility is reduced to a mere management tool, a sales technique or sometimes, a hypocritical gesture to accomplish some hidden motives – win a sale or to drive an employee to over-achieve.

If only we can practice rapport building for its “original” and “authentic” reason – build genuine relationships with those around us; establish bridges to human connections; and to build trust. When trust and credibility are authentically established, the sale will come naturally since most customers buy more easily from people they trust. And employees will stretch themselves for leaders whom they trust ... sometimes even before they are asked!

How do we build rapport?

- Be genuinely interested in people – people can tell if you are really interested in them the same way we would know if someone is pretending!
- Set aside your ulterior motives – whilst organizational goals or personal sales targets are important, people don't like to be used. The same way we don't like to be used by others
- Ask more questions about the person, not just about his or her needs
- If an opportunity arises when the other person shares something 'personal', put aside your work or business agenda and focus on the conversation. This is an invaluable opportunity to connect at a personal level
- Ensure your actions are aligned with your words, thoughts and feelings – people will know if you are faking it!

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