

# How to build trust and rapport quickly

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In these days when consumers are watching every cent, and every sale counts more than it might have only a few months ago, the difference between making a sale or not can hinge on something that may seem inconsequential, but isn't.



If you're working hard, but aren't consistently generating enough sales and getting referrals, chances are it's a matter of trust. One of the most critically important and yet frequently overlooked aspects of selling is creating a solid foundation of trust and rapport.

Suppose you could incorporate a few simple, yet highly effective ideas into your selling process and substantially increase your bottom line?

Successful salespeople have a knack for making people feel important. They understand the value of building trust and rapport early on in the selling process. For you see, it really doesn't matter how knowledgeable you are about your product line or how many closing techniques you have mastered, unless you earn your prospect's trust and confidence you're not going to make the sale.

Once you have established trust and rapport with your prospect, you actually have the hard part behind you and can anticipate making the sale. While there's no system that will work 100% of the time with every prospect, fortunately there are fundamentals you can use that will help you build trust and rapport quickly.

## Gain the competitive edge

Whether you like it or not, people form impressions about you based on such factors as appearance and attitude. When it comes to building trust and rapport, there is nothing more important than making a favourable first impression.

It's important to remember that in most cases, your prospect's first impression of you will be made over the phone or from a voice message you leave.

Here are some suggestions to help you create a favourable first impression:

1. Show up on time and be well prepared.
2. Maintain a well-groomed appearance and dress appropriately for your market.
3. Be upbeat and personable without becoming overly familiar.

## **Adjust to your prospect's temperament style**

Research indicates people are born into one of four primary temperament styles: aggressive, expressive, passive or analytical.

Each of these four primary temperament styles requires a unique approach and selling strategy. For example, if you're selling to the impatient, aggressive style, they want a short warm up and expect a quick, bottom line presentation. While at the other extreme, the cautious, analytical style requires a longer warm up period and is interested in every detail.

Each of these four behavioural styles can be easily identified by observing their body language patterns. Once you learn how to identify each of the styles, you'll be able to close more sales in less time by adjusting to your prospect's preferred buying style.

## **Understand body language**

Body language is a mixture of movement, posture and tone of voice. Research indicates that in a face-to-face conversation, more than 70% of our communication is nonverbal.

Our body language reveals our deepest feelings and hidden thoughts to total strangers. In addition, nonverbal communication has a much greater impact and reliability than the spoken word. Therefore, if your prospect's words are incongruent with his or her body language gestures, you would be wise to rely on the body language as a more accurate reflection of their true feelings.

Be mindful of your own body language gestures and remember to keep them positive by unfolding your arms, uncrossing your legs and smiling frequently.

Create harmony by "matching and mirroring" your prospect's body language gestures. Matching and mirroring is an unconscious body language mimicry by which one person tells another they are in agreement.

The next time you are at a social event, notice how many people are subconsciously matching one another. Likewise, when people disagree, they subconsciously mismatch their body language gestures.

An effective way to begin matching your prospect is to subtly nod your head in agreement whenever your prospect nods his or her head, or cross your legs when they cross their legs etc.

By understanding the meaning behind your prospect's body language, you will minimise perceived sales pressure and know when it's appropriate to close the sale.

## Use active listening skills

Successful salespeople take notes, listen attentively and avoid the temptation to interrupt, criticise or argue with their prospects. It's a good idea to occasionally repeat your prospect's words verbatim. By occasionally restating your prospect's key words or phrases, you not only clarify communication, but also build rapport.

During the first 15 minutes or so of the appointment, you should listen more than you talk. Keep your attention focused on what your prospect is saying and avoid the temptation to interrupt or dominate the conversation. The quickest way to destroy trust and rapport is to interrupt another person. If you do interrupt, minimise the damage by apologising and inviting them to continue.

## Establish your credentials

It's important for you to establish your credentials as an expert in your industry early on during your initial appointment. Hand out your business card and or company brochure, then mention two or three reasons why you like working in your industry and for your company.

Make sure your marketing materials look professional and are kept up-to-date. If you conduct appointments in your office, I recommend you display your awards and certificates of accomplishment.

## Look for common ground

Before you begin your sales presentation or demonstration, you must first "warm up" your prospect and make them feel comfortable. A great way to establish common ground during the warm up is to discuss the weather, sports or a local news story.

If you're meeting your prospect in his or home or office, look at personal items on display such as pictures or awards. People enjoy talking about their hobbies and accomplishments. For example, if you notice a picture of your prospect holding a big fish in his or her arms, ask them about it and watch them beam with pride.

In today's highly competitive marketplace, your prospects have many options and are looking for a salesperson that they know they can trust to work in their best interest.

Salespeople who fail to put an emphasis on developing trust and rapport actually do a disservice to their customers and in effect, leave the back door open to their competition. In addition to generating new sales, developing strong relationships will keep competitors at arms length and your business on the books!

## ABOUT JOHN BOE

John Boe presents a wide variety of motivational and sales-oriented keynotes and seminar programs for sales meetings and conventions. John is a nationally recognised sales trainer and business motivational speaker with an impeccable track record in the meeting industry. To have John speak at your next event, visit <http://www.johnboe.com> or call 877 725-3750. Free Newsletter available on website.

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