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**5 Tips for Building Trust and Rapport**

**By John Boe**

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Have you ever had a sale that didn't close and you weren't sure why? Chances are you lost the sale because you didn't establish sufficient trust and rapport with your prospect. Once you have developed trust and rapport you've actually got the hard part behind you and you're probably going to make a sale! For you see, it really doesn't matter how knowledgeable you are about your product or how skilled you might be at closing, unless you have earned your prospects confidence, you are not going to make the sale - period. The bottom line here is that people want to do business with salespeople that they relate to and that they feel understand their needs. Obviously, the challenge and importance of developing trust and rapport will escalate in direct relationship to the price of your product or service.

1.Be mindful of your body language gestures and remember to keep them positive! Unfold your arms, uncross your legs, show your palms and remember to smile. Develop awareness and sensitivity to your prospect's body language. An effective listener notices all aspects of communication and is aware of voice tone, facial expression, repetitive movements, and muscle tension. Watch for inconsistencies between your prospect's spoken word and their nonverbal communication. Rely on the nonverbal as a much more accurate indicator of intent. By understanding your prospect's body language you will minimize perceived sales pressure and know when it is appropriate to close the sale.

2.Create harmony! "Matching and Mirroring" your prospect's body language gestures will psychologically cause them to identify with you. The power behind this principle is firmly grounded in the precept that people trust people that they believe are similar to them. Matching and mirroring is an unconscious mimicry by which one person tells another that he is in agreement with their ideas and attitudes. Likewise, studies have shown that when people disagree they subconsciously mismatch their body language gestures. You want to be careful not to be too obvious when you are consciously matching someone because it will be perceived as manipulative if you don't do it naturally. An effective way to begin matching is to subtly nod your head in agreement when your prospect nods their head.

3.Remember to make eye contact and listen with genuine interest. You are certain to create an unfavorable impression if you give your prospect the idea that you are not fully present in the conversation. Unfortunately, we are often busy game-planning our response instead of truly listening to

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what is being said. I suggest that you occasionally repeat verbatim what your prospect says - especially their key words or phrases. Restating in your own words serves to clarify communication, but you deepen rapport when you use their words.

4. During your needs analysis interview, I recommend that you ask open-ended, clarifying questions with who, where, what, when and how. Open-ended questions will require your prospect to give in-depth responses. Become an active listener. While it is important to educate your prospect about your product or service, as a general rule you should listen more than you talk. Keep your attention focused on your prospect and avoid the temptation to interrupt and dominate the conversation. The quickest way to destroy trust and rapport is to interrupt another person while they are speaking. If you do interrupt, minimize the damage by apologizing and ask them to please continue.

5. Dress and act professionally. While it may seem unfair, we are judged on our appearance. Research indicates that people form a lasting impression of us within the first five minutes. Be personable but not overly familiar. If appropriate, occasionally call your prospect by their first name. The sweetest sound to the human ear is the sound of our own name.

John Boe, based in Monterey, CA, helps companies recruit, train and motivate top quality people. To view his online Video Demo or to have John Boe speak at your next event, visit [www.johnboe.com](http://www.johnboe.com) or call (831) 375-3668

### **Instant Rapport: The Key to Sales Success**

**By Della Menechella**

Did you ever meet someone with whom you just clicked? Someone who was so much like you that you practically knew what he was thinking? How comfortable did you feel with that person? Did you trust him? Chances are that you have very high rapport with that person.

Rapport means harmony between people. When people share rapport, they speak the same language. When people don't have rapport, it is as if one person is speaking Greek and the other person is speaking Chinese. There is no common understanding.

### **RAPPORT AND SELLING**

Sales research has shown that over 90% of the sales process is based on having a good rapport with the prospect. You may have the best coverage for your client and you may represent the most reputable firm(s), however, if you don't have rapport, your prospect will find a reason to buy from another agent.

We usually develop rapport easily with people who are like us. It is very difficult to understand or feel comfortable with people who are not like us. We perceive them as strange. We judge others based on how we see the world.

## 5 Tips for Building Trust and Rapport

Before we can try to talk about how we can satisfy our prospect's needs, we have to get him prepared to listen to us. We do this by getting him to trust us -- by developing rapport.

### BUILDING RAPPORT

How do we develop rapport? Most independent insurance professionals realize that rapport is an important part of the sales process, so they try to develop rapport with their prospects before trying to "sell them." They try to establish a common bond by engaging in small talk. Unfortunately, only 7% of the words we use to communicate get through to others. However, 38% of our tonality and 55% of our physiology or body language are communicated very effectively.

One of the most powerful ways we can develop rapport is through physiology. There is a technique called mirroring which allows us to develop rapport very quickly. What you do is mirror the other person's physiology or body movements. If the person leans back in the chair, you lean back. If the person crosses her legs, you cross your legs. If the individual sits forward, you sit forward. Your goal is to get your prospect to feel comfortable with you being there so she will be open to what you have to say.

Mirroring is very subtle. Wait several seconds before shifting your body to match your prospect. Mirroring is a continuous and fluid process so as your prospect moves around, you continue to change your body movements to remain in rapport. One word of caution -- don't mimic. If your prospect scratches her nose, don't follow or she may realize what you are doing and get very insulted.

### PRACTICE MAKES SALES

The technique of mirroring takes practice to learn effectively. Try it on your family and friends so it becomes a natural skill for you to use. When you become proficient at using this technique, your prospect will not realize what you are doing. He will only feel extremely comfortable with you because you are so much like him.

Remember, 90% of the sales process is rapport. Use the technique of instant rapport and watch your closing ratio soar!

Della Menechella is a speaker, author, and trainer who inspires people to achieve greater success from the inside out. She is a contributing author to *Thriving in the Midst of Change* and the author of the videotape *The Twelve Commandments of Goal Setting*. She can be reached at

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How To Create Instant Rapport with Anyone

Four Common Rapport Building Mistakes and How to Fix Them

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