

How To Build Powerful Rapport in Conversations

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Five internal shifts that set the stage for more connection, rapport and influence.

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INTRODUCTION

Where we come from, inside ourselves, shapes the climate of every encounter.

We are in conversations all day long. Conversations are the heart of our relationships, our ability to lead, build strong bonds, and influence. Whether it's a sales meeting, a conversation with a client, a colleague, a friend, or a family member, the quality of rapport & connection sets the tone and becomes the foundation of the exchange.

Rapport determines how people think and feel around us. The higher the stakes, the more important the outcome is - the more critical rapport becomes.

Often, when we have important conversations, we show up with a full mind. We've prepared what we want to say, or we show up braced and cautious, or in times of conflict, we show up guarded and tense. We want to get it right.

What if this is a misunderstanding and the real source of a successful conversation is the connection, rapport, and feelings of goodwill? What if influence isn't coming from what we say but from our presence?

The feeling in the interaction amplifies or derails rapport, and that feeling is a reflection of our current internal climate. Said another way, where we come from, inside ourselves, shapes the climate of our conversations.

When we lean on and trust the words in a conversation, we miss where our ability to influence and our ability to have an impact actually resides. Our awareness of our internal state and willingness to adjust in the moment gives us the greatest leverage for powerful connections and outcomes.

1

People respond to the feeling we bring



The feeling we bring to a conversation has more influence on our ability to build strong rapport than what we say.

We've all experienced this for ourselves. When someone's words are not congruent with their feelings or tone, we notice it. In fact, we give more credence to the feeling than the words in those instances. When someone is distracted, rushed, forceful, rigged, or agitated, we feel it. When someone is warm, present, open, and interested, we feel it.

When rapport is good, there is a feeling of goodwill and warmth. When rapport is bad, there is often tension, lack of presence, or guardedness in people.

The key to meaningful conversations is our ability to identify the climate and adjust our inner state. Raising our awareness of the feeling we bring helps us influence the direction and outcome of our encounters.

2

Dropping persona builds trusts and credibility

The last thing we want in a conversation is "image" meeting "image" or "persona" meeting "persona." Yet, if we're honest, it happens more often than we might realize. Our desire to come across as professional, intelligent, competent, and credible can lead us to believe a little "extra" is needed. We think we have to demonstrate why we are a good bet or to prove ourselves.

This is a misunderstanding. Trust and credibility does not come from what we say or how much experience we have. Trust and credibility are a natural outcome of our ability to show up present and real. When we show up as a persona or image, it's less impactful.

When we show up as ourselves and aim to connect, people feel us. As they feel us, they trust us.



3

Listening with a free mind creates room for fresh perspective and more depth

When we show up to a conversation in a busy or sped-up internal state, it impedes our listening. We come with way more on our minds than we may realize. We often don't see it because it's a norm, but if we get conscious of the level of internal noise, we can support ourselves in slowing down internally. In a freer mind, we are naturally better listeners. We hear beyond the words and get to the heart of the matter. We are more agile and able to respond with more creativity and fresh thinking.

If you've found yourself impatient, restless, and quick to interrupt or dominate a conversation, this is your clue that your mind is busy. These things hurt rapport and impede our ability to hear, to bring fresh thinking, or to problem-solve. When we listen with less on our minds, we access new levels of creativity, connection, and rapport. We are more efficient and productive and create a space for new thought and a meeting of the minds.

4

Our presence & full attention foster connection & understanding

When we allow our minds to clear and get present, we naturally connect to others more powerfully. In this space, we have natural empathy, compassion, and understanding for others. We do not have to manufacture it. Letting go of the grip of our minds and giving another our full attention allows for intimacy and depth. From this space, we see and understand each other.

In a free and present mind, we can respond in the moment. We draw forth the best in ourselves and each other. We get helpful information when we need it. With a less distracted mind, we get to the heart of the matter. Communication gets simple. We are more efficient and effective and experience more goodwill for one another. Even challenging situations are easier to resolve.

5

Feelings of goodwill and nuetrality dissolve tension and open minds

Our ability to have productive, higher-quality connections, and strong rapport, is enhanced via a more neutral mind–via a feeling of goodwill. Feelings of goodwill set the stage for new ground and understanding.

When we enter into conversations with a feeling of goodwill for the other person, we are able to move forward with more grace and insight. When we understand this, we become less tolerant of feeling ill will, justified or not. In other words, we no longer want a good reason to stay in a bad feeling.

Breakdowns in communication happen. When we find our bearings, get neutral, and aim in the direction of goodwill, we can address tough conversations with more wisdom.



In closing, to say it simply...

The Feeling of the Conversation Shapes the Outcome of the Conversation

In the words of Maya Angelou, "People won't remember what you said, but they'll remember how you made them feel."

At the heart of all we do is our ability to have good rapport with others. Rapport is fundamental to influence, determines how people think and feel around us, and sets the tone for conversations.

With that in mind, when it matters most, getting a feel for the feeling you are bringing to the conversations and how it's affecting the climate of the discussion is the quickest and most profound way to create a healthier, more creative, and desired outcome.



Thank You

> I look forward to hearing how these internal shifts are creating more rapport and connection in your business and life.

MORE ABOUT BARB...

Barbara Patterson is the owner of a global coaching and consulting company helping entrepreneurs & leaders from around the world access more clarity and creativity, have greater impact, and experience higher levels of fulfillment in work and life. She is the Founder of Innerverse Academy, a global platform and community designed to point people to the source of human potential.

Barb has lived and worked in Europe and the US and has over 30 years of experience helping individuals and organizations understand and leverage the relationship between our inner world and our work in the world.

When we see and understand this relationship, we move beyond conditioning, beyond limiting ideas and access more clarity, creativity, and authenticity. We let go of old models of "hustle and push" and instead tap into more states of ease and flow.

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