

build quick rapport.

Whether in a networking situation, job interview or everyday conversation with someone, building rapport is essential to developing a strong relationship.

One way to build rapport is through positive body language:

- First and most importantly ... smile! You can even tilt your head to the side slightly or lower your chin. All of which makes you non-threatening and puts the other person at ease.
- Your body angle says something too. Standing toe-to-toe can feel intimidating or like an intense conversation. When just meeting someone, slightly angle your body away from the other person.
- How you shake hands is important too. An accommodating handshake matches the strength of the other person and uses a slight palm up angle.
- Make eye contact always! This makes the other person feel as though they are connecting with you on a personal level quickly.
- Speaking slowly gives you more credibility and gives the other person a chance to process what you are saying.

Next, practice mirroring other's behavior. This can work well in networking meetings and interviews – and any time you are in a conversation that is important to you. Don't go overboard with this technique, and definitely practice ahead of time to get it right.

- Lean forward if the other person is leaning forward, and maybe cross your legs if they are doing so.
- You can also mirror the vocal tone and energy level of the person. Again, don't go overboard with this strategy. You need to be subtle for it to be successful.

Suspend your own ego for the sake of a good conversation.

- It's human nature to want to share your own stories related to a topic, but when you practice good ego-suspension, it gives the other person the feeling that you are interested in their story more than telling your own. This is probably one of the most difficult techniques, but one that can reap many rewards.
- But if the person is introverted and has a hard time talking about themselves, sharing something about yourself can put them at ease and help them feel comfortable sharing their own story.

Finally, back to basics, one of the most effective rapport builders is to simply listen and take in what the other person has to say.

- In a networking situation, this can show the other person that you are truly interested in what they have to say. You are also more likely to remember more of what is being said, which can be an advantage after the meeting.
- In an interview, listening intently will help you be sure to answer the question being asked, and it allows you to garner more information that could come in handy throughout the rest of the interview process.

Building rapport is an important part of developing strong relationships in all aspects of your life and career. Use these techniques to help you come across as an interested, engaged professional during conversations and enjoy the benefits of that positive impression throughout all your relationships.