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# BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

## 6 Minute English

### Building rapport with others



This is not a word-for-word transcript

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**Neil**

Hello. This is 6 Minute English from BBC Learning English. I'm Neil.

**Georgina**

And I'm Georgina.

**Neil**

Georgina and I have got to know each other very well after working together for so long.

**Georgina**

I know what sandwiches Neil has for lunch... Egg and tomato right, Neil?

**Neil**

Right! And I know it really annoys Georgina when people don't wash up their cups in the staff kitchen.

**Georgina**

So unhygienic!

**Neil**

But just as important as getting to know someone, socially or at work, is **getting on with** people. **To get on with someone** is a useful phrasal verb, meaning to like someone and enjoy a friendly relationship with them.

**Georgina**

Which is really important if you work with them every day!

**Neil**

And there's another word to describe the good understanding and communication between two friends: rapport.

### Georgina

Yes, how to build rapport and get on with people has been the subject of many self-help books over the years, and is the topic of this programme.

### Neil

Well, you and I must have great rapport, Georgina, because that leads perfectly onto my quiz question. In 1936, American writer Dale Carnegie wrote a famous self-help book on building rapport. It sold over 30 million copies, making it one of the best-selling books of all time – but what is it called? Is it:

- a) How to get rich quick?,
- b) How to stop worrying and make friends?, or
- c) How to win friends and influence people?

### Georgina

I think I know this, Neil. I'm going to say, c) How to win friends and influence people.

### Neil

OK, Georgina, we'll find out if that's the right answer at the end of the programme.

### Georgina

When it comes to getting on with people, psychologist Emily Alison has a few ideas. She's built a career working with the police as they build rapport with criminal suspects.

### Neil

Emily is the author a new book, '*Rapport: the four ways to read people*' and, as she told BBC Radio 4 programme All In The Mind it isn't easy to get along with everyone:

### Emily Alison

I often describe rapport-building in a relationship as like walking a tightrope because you really do need to maintain that balance of being **objective**, treating people with compassion but that doesn't mean I'm sympathetic, I'm collusive – it's that balance between judgement and avoidance.

### Georgina

Emily describes rapport building as like **walking a tightrope**, an idiom to describe being in a difficult situation which requires carefully considering what to do.

### Neil

Building rapport with "terrorists" or violent criminals isn't easy. Emily doesn't sympathise with what they have done, but she tries to remain **objective** – to base her judgement on the facts, not personal feelings.

### Georgina

In her book, Emily identifies four main communication styles which she names after animals. The best at building rapport is the friendly and cooperative monkey.

### Neil

Then there's a pair of opposites: the bossy lion, who wants to take charge and control things, and the more passive mouse.

### Georgina

Here's Emily talking to BBC Radio 4's, All In The Mind, about the fourth animal, the T-Rex. Try to listen out for the communication style of this personality:

### Emily Alison

You've got the T-Rex which is conflict – so this is argument, whether you're approaching it from a positive position where you can be direct, **frank** about your message or you approach that in a negative way by being ... attacking, judgemental, argumentative, **sarcastic**, and that actually **breeds** the same behaviour back. So anyone who has teenagers will 100% recognise that... if you meet **sarcasm** with sarcasm, it's only going to go one way.

### Neil

All four communication styles have good and bad points. On the positive side, T-Rex type people are **frank** – they express themselves in an open, honest way.

### Georgina

But T-Rex types can also be **sarcastic** - say the opposite of what they really mean, in order to hurt someone's feelings or criticise them in a funny way.

### Neil

Yes, sarcasm is a strange thing - like saying, "Oh, I really like your haircut", when in fact you don't!

### Georgina

Yes. There's an English saying that sarcasm is the lowest form of humour, but I think British people can be quite sarcastic at times.

**Neil**

Well, I can't imagine you'd make many friends being rude to people. Maybe they should read Dale Carnegie's self-help book.

**Georgina**

Ah yes, your quiz question, Neil. Was my answer right?

**Neil**

In my quiz question, I asked Georgina for the title of Dale Carnegie's best-selling self-help book about building rapport. What did you say?

**Georgina**

I said the book is called, c) How to win friends and influence people.

**Neil**

Which is... the correct answer! And I guess you've read it, Georgina, because you have lots of friends.

**Georgina**

I hope you're not being sarcastic, Neil!

**Neil**

Absolutely not! I'm not a sarcastic T-Rex type, more of a friendly monkey!

**Georgina**

OK, well, let's stay friends and recap the vocabulary from this programme, starting with **rapport** - a good feeling between two people based on understanding and communication.

**Neil**

If you **get on with someone**, you like and enjoy a friendly relationship with them.

**Georgina**

**Walking a tightrope** means to be in a difficult situation which requires careful consideration of what to do.

**Neil**

To be **objective** is to base your actions on facts rather than personal feelings.

**Georgina**

When building rapport with someone, it's good to be **frank** - to express yourself in an open, honest way.

**Neil**

But not **sarcastic** – to say the opposite of what you really mean, in order to hurt someone's feelings or criticise them in a humorous way.

**Georgina**

Well, Neil, if we run over six minutes we'll break our rapport with the 6 Minute English producer, so that's all for this programme! Join us again soon for more trending topics and useful vocabulary...

**Neil**

...and remember to download the BBC Learning English app and stay friends by following us on social media. Bye for now!

**Georgina**

Bye!

## **VOCABULARY**

**rapport**

a relationship between two people based on good understanding and communication

**to get on with (someone)**

to like someone and enjoy a friendly relationship with them

**walk a tightrope**

be in a difficult situation which requires carefully considering what to do

**objective**

based on the facts not personal feelings or emotions

**frank**

express yourself in an open, honest and sincere way

**sarcastic**

say the opposite of what you really mean, in order to hurt someone's feelings or criticise them in a humorous way