



Building Rapport

The most important single ingredient in the formula of success is knowing how to get along with people.

—Theodore Roosevelt

The same set of communication skills in body language and vocal quality that is integral when presenting material or facilitating a training session is just as important, if not more so, when communicating socially (often before, during and after your presentation or meeting). Effective social communication is an excellent way to build or strengthen the relationship between you and your audience or listeners. Keep in mind that these relationships, like all other types of relationships, need to be established, developed and maintained.



Why is it important to continue to engage your participants before and after the session and even during breaks?

Connect Early

Remember, the moment your audience walks through the door, they are making judgments and perceptions about you based on what you say and how you say it. That's why it is essential that you arrive early for your engagement so that you can greet your audience and introduce yourself as they arrive. Smile, shake their hands and learn their names.

Traits that make a person more likeable to others:

1. Empathy
2. Sincerity
3. Trustworthiness
4. Curiosity
5. Active Listening



According to experts, _____ judgments are made about a person within the first 7 seconds of them meeting someone.

Checklist for building rapport

Below are areas to remember when meeting participants prior to your training or presentation:

1. **Proper greeting.** Stop what you are doing and approach the participants when they first arrive. Smile and introduce yourself. Shake hands while maintaining good eye contact. In many circumstances, a proper greeting is your calling card and your first impression with each participant in your training.
2. **Learn and use their names.** People generally like to hear their name spoken, so learn everyone's name early and use it. By sprinkling it in your conversation at various points, it will help draw them in. Also, by repeating their name, it will help you remember it.
3. **Icebreaker.** An effective icebreaker eases the transition from the initial greeting or introduction into a conversation. Look for 'safe' or non-threatening topics to get things started, such as shared experiences, where you each live or grew up, how you traveled to the training location, etc. Avoid talking too much about yourself and avoid asking overly personal questions about the other person early on.
4. **Mirror body language and eye contact.** Try to mirror back the speaking pace and body language you are observing from the participant. Remember to maintain eye contact with the person, especially when they are speaking or answering a question. Give them your full focus and attention to show you are engaged and interested.
5. **Find common ground.** Use personal or shared experiences to connect with your participants. Stories, anecdotes or examples from your life can help you engage your listeners and assist them in retaining information. Asking open-ended questions of participants and listening to their answers will help reveal information about their attitudes and feelings.
6. **Show empathy.** Demonstrate to the other person (both verbally and nonverbally) that you hear them and understand their feelings or concerns. Be genuine and non-judgmental when participants have a different or opposing point of view or opinion.



7. **Acknowledge resistance.** Be conscious of the verbal and nonverbal cues coming from your audience. Monitor their behavior and interest level to gauge interest and adjust your intention accordingly. If they suddenly seem skeptical, switch gears to reassure them. If their focus seems to wander and you seem to be losing them, use a pattern interrupt to re-engage or simply take a break to refresh and re-energize.
8. **Listen actively.** Over the course of your training or workshop, you will learn a lot about your participants by simply being present and listening. You will glean information from your participants that will help you further tailor your training, making the learning experience richer and more valuable for all involved.
9. **Stay positive.** Deliver a training you would want to attend yourself. Enjoy it. Show your personality. If you are comfortable with humor and can include some, do it. Be passionate and excited about the information or knowledge you are sharing and clearly make participants aware of the positive benefits it will provide.
10. **Show concern for their learning.** Try to stay open and approachable throughout your training or workshop by emphasizing the benefits for the participants. Answer questions fully and completely. Stop frequently to ask questions of participants, solicit their feedback and confirm understanding.

Effective icebreaker topics or questions:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____



Ineffective icebreaker topics or questions:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____