

# BUILDING RAPPORT

## ----- A CHEAT SHEET -----



If you attend a business, marketing, or networking seminar **you will likely be bombarded** with laundry lists of tricks, tips, and techniques for improving your craft. Some will recommend mnemonics for better name recall, while others will instruct you in the Jedi-like methods of Neuro Linguistic programming to mirror the affect of your victims/clients. Adding these tools to your arsenal makes great sense but often times misses **the key unifying feature common to all of these approaches**: Rapport.

## RAPPORT IS EVERYTHING

Whether as an investigator working with witnesses, victims, families of victims, outside agencies or suspects, or as a business owner or coach looking to attract and retain new clients, mastering the art of building rapport is perhaps **the most critical skill for success**.

We all use rapport more than we realize — in our daily interactions with friends, family, teams, and business contacts. But let's face it, **not everyone is a natural born rapport builder**. The good news is that it's a skill that can be learned.



In this cheat sheet we'll define rapport, look at it from an interrogator's perspective (arguably one of the most challenging situations imaginable: a cop talking to and trying to elicit a confession from a suspect), apply it to a gym and coaching setting, and look at 4 Rapport Building Tips that you can implement immediately.

## SO, WHAT IS RAPPORT?

Rapport is a **heightened ability to communicate**; it can also be defined as quality in on-going relationships based upon a sufficient degree of communication, trust and understanding to permit exploration and co-operation to proceed.

If we think about instances in which relationships or business dealings have ended up in troubled waters, it can likely be traced back to a lack of rapport.





# AN INTERROGATOR'S PERSPECTIVE

While teaching interrogators how to build rapport with suspects (those most likely not to trust us) in a compressed time frame, we encourage them to do so in a number of different ways that enable them to be successful. Most suspects **anticipate speaking to an investigator only about the crime being investigated**—rarely do they anticipate the investigator will ask them personal questions about “them,” their history, their family and their background.

What is of even greater surprise to them is when investigators establish areas of commonality between themselves and the suspect. These commonalities begin to help establish that bond, relationship or heightened ability to communicate that allows for greater cooperation, as



## IT IS HUMAN NATURE TO WANT TO IDENTIFY WITH OTHERS AND TO BELONG.

It is not uncommon at the end of the interrogative process for **the suspect to actually thank the investigator**, even though the investigator has ultimately obtained the most damning piece of evidence to his future incarceration: a confession. The suspects thank the investigators because they are treated with dignity and respect, and the two have developed a rapport.



My proposition to you is that if this methodology works in the highly stressful setting of a criminal investigation, **it will likely be a powerful tool to help you reach clients** who may be hamstrung by emotional or cognitive blocks for which they may not even be aware. As a coach it is not uncommon that you will spend more time with your clients than virtually any other person in their lives. This is an **amazing opportunity to help your people make progress** they (and you) may have never thought possible.

## IN THE GYM

How does this apply to the business world or the world of coaching? Much like investigations, **time in the business world is precious**; after all, “time is money.” As a coach, gym owner, business owner or other professional, the more effectively you can build, maintain, and at times—when necessary—regain rapport, the more efficiently you will achieve your desired goal — both helping that client achieve their goals and build a thriving business. **Rapport removes communication obstacles** so that serious, meaningful and sometimes difficult communication can take place. This is the currency we really trade upon in business; it is a basis in trust and understanding of one another.





# 4 THINGS YOU CAN DO RIGHT AWAY TO BUILD RAPPORT QUICKLY

*These strategies work with new clients or prospects, existing clients, co-workers, and employers.*

1

## DRAW THEM OUT

Ask questions and take the time to know your prospective client. Ask them questions about who they are, their family, their experiences, etc. People love to talk about themselves and their accomplishments.

2

## HIGHLIGHT COMMON GROUND

Point out areas of commonality between you and the person with whom you're trying to build rapport. At the end of the day we all have some level of commonality and common ground. If you have trouble finding some, look harder by revisiting suggestion #1. You would be surprised at how many times suspects and interrogators find a connection that reinforces that we're all subject to similar experiences in life.

3

## PAY ATTENTION TO BODY LANGUAGE

If you are curious whether your attempts to build rapport are working, take a second to read the body language of the person with whom you are building rapport. If you're not seeing the biofeedback you desire, try mirroring the subject's behavior: if their arms are crossed, cross yours; if their legs are crossed, cross yours, etc. People find comfort in commonality and this is a good place to start.

4

## TAKE YOUR TIME

Don't be in a rush to "get down to business." While it may seem counter-intuitive, the time you spend on the front end getting to know your prospective clients and building rapport will pay large dividends later down the road. Most people appreciate the effort one takes to be so personable and there is often a greater degree of trust instilled by the time you communicate with that person again.

REMEMBER

**PEOPLE ARE LOYAL TO BRANDS, COMPANIES, BOSSES AND COACHES WHEN THEY FEEL THAT THEY AS AN INDIVIDUAL ARE JUST THAT: THEIR OWN SEPARATE PERSON WHO YOU KNOW AND CARE ABOUT. RAPPORT IS WHAT ESTABLISHES THIS CONNECTION.**



Jason Woodard is a veteran Marine Sergeant who served with 1st Battalion 5th Marines from 1994 to 1998. He is a decorated 19-year law enforcement veteran who has served as a Field Training Officer, Firearms Instructor, Range Master, SWAT Operator, SWAT Sniper Section Leader, and Lead Defensive Tactics Instructor. The focus of Jason's career has been as an investigator and instructor; while conducting major crimes/homicide investigations he worked multiple high profile and death penalty cases and developed a reputation for investigative tenacity and interrogative skill. Jason is also a lead instructor for the Interviews & Interrogations Institute and is still an active-duty Law Enforcement Officer.

For questions or comments, please contact me at: [thehumancaliber@gmail.com](mailto:thehumancaliber@gmail.com)