

# Rapport Building 10 Techniques (Common grounds)

**Main sources:**

1. John Reid Organisation
2. FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin - Mastering Rapport and Having Productive Conversations by Robin K. Dreeke - October 2012

# Reasons for Rapport Building

- To get the conversation/interview going. “Break the ice” Establishing common grounds
- Return to rapport building point when the interview stalls
- Return to rapport building points when concluding the interview – part on a positive footing
- Do not commence with the interview before rapport has been established.
- Important interviewees would warrant more attention/time to rapport building

# Rapport building subjects

- Rapport building issues must preferably be neutral issues – removed from the particular investigative issue
- Issues on which the interviewees preferences are known must be identified – preferably during the pre-interview investigation

# 1. Interaction with the interviewee

- During the first interview full attention must be paid to the interviewee – and his/her reactions, interpersonal communications skills and “mood” must be assessed.
- Starting the rapport building will be attuned to the receptiveness of the interviewee

## 2. Body language (non-verbal communication)

Be sincere and receptive.

Be prepared to listen – active listening skills supported by appropriate body language.

Apply mirroring and matching skills on a physical level.

Non-threatening – body language and voice

### 3. Voice control

Control your voice – speak slowly, deliberately and softer than normal.

Force the interviewee to listen

Avoid a forceful approach – this will harm the interviewer's credibility

### 3. Sympathetic approach

Have a sympathetic approach and assistance theme

Initially ensure that the basic needs of the interviewee is taken care of. This will support rapport building

“Appeal” for help – it will appeal to the interviewee’s ego – “they may know more than you.”

## 4. Suspend your ego

Probably the most difficult - but the most effective when achieved.

Build / boost the interviewee – this will enhance rapport building

## 5. Demonstrate appreciation

Human beings crave feeling connected and accepted.

Appreciation feeds this need and the interviewer must offer it.

Be the great validator and have instant, valuable rapport.

## 6. Use effective questions

Show genuine interest by asking non-threatening exploratory questions – the “how, when, and why” questions.

“These questions serves as the safest, most effective way. People will tell you what they are willing to talk about.”

## 7. Quid pro quo (Give-and-take)

Make the interviewee feel comfortable by sharing a little about yourself.

Be prepared to share about yourself, even on a personal level. This makes it easier for the interviewee to share on an equal basis.

Do not overplay your hand.

## 8. Give and take

By giving an intangible or material gift the concept of reciprocity (mutual benefit) will be enhanced - seek conversation and rapport in return.  
Be subtle and discreet

## 9. Active listening skills

Apply your active listening skills – listen with more or less your “total self”

Listen on a factual and emotional level. Make use of body language to demonstrate your attentiveness

Do not interrupt – let the interviewee lead

# 10. Benefit the interviewee

Approach the interviewee in a way that he/she will feel that they will benefit in this process

Ensure that this message is conveyed professionally.

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