



# Why Is It Important to Build Rapport On The Phone?

Rapport building is an integral part of the communication process. Lack, or absence, of rapport can fundamentally affect the outcome of any conversation.

When you build rapport, the conversation runs smoothly, it is enjoyable and the results are so much better than when the communication is strained and advisors fail to ‘gel’ with the person they are talking to.

Good rapport isn’t about ‘making best friends’ with the caller. It means creating a comfortable ‘state’ where all parties converse freely and comfortably. The extra benefit is that it makes the time spent with the caller more enjoyable for the advisor.

So, it’s important for advisors to know a few simple techniques to help build rapport over the phone.



<https://www.callcentrehelper.com/video/editorial/2020/importance-smiling/importance-smiling.mp4>

To view the video– copy and paste address in your browser.

# How To Build Rapport with Customers on the Phone

## Demonstrate Commonality

The definition of rapport is a feeling of commonality; people like people who are like themselves. So, if you want to build rapport, you need to demonstrate commonality.

By finding common ground, you are creating an environment of “safety” and “belongingness”, which have significance when it comes building rapport.



Listen out for signs of genuine commonality, such as if you hear a dog bark in the background, try to connect through a shared interest in dogs / pets.

## Give Verbal Nods

This demonstrates strong listening skills, another key ingredient in the creation of rapport. These listening skills can be accentuated through good application of verbal nods and the brief repetition of each of the caller’s main points.

Verbal nods are those tiny utterances you make when listening to someone else speaking. “Ah”, “I see”, “right” . These come naturally for most people, but in phone conversations it pays to intensify them.

Due to the lack of visual feedback the speaker could start doubting whether the other side is still listening. “Are you still there?!” To prevent this, the skillful phone rep fills his listening with verbal nods.

**Tip: Throw in the occasional “ah, yes”, to let the other side know you're still there.**

For best results, verbal nods should be complemented by an expression of empathy on your part.

# How To Build Rapport with Customers on the Phone

## Repeat the Problem

By repeating the problem, we show that we are engaged mentally in the process, which demonstrates we have genuine interest in the matter. This could increase trust between advisors and the customer, consequently aiding the rapport building process.



Take, for example, a member called to report the address update they requested was not done. The advisor who repeats the situation *“Your address wasn’t updated? I am sorry, Mrs. Bird ...”*, rather than proceeding immediately and emotionlessly to the resolution, will gain an invaluable affinity with the caller. This simultaneously provides subtle assurance that the complaint is now in good hands.

## Assert Control

It is important to assert control of the situation, to take ownership of the problem, and to convince the member that the matter in question will be put right. If, apologies are called for, the advisor should avoid repeating his or her regret using the same terminology. Instead, an assortment of contrite synonyms should be used, with the word “sorry” being substituted for “I apologize”, “oh dear”, and so on.

To view the video– copy and paste address in your browser

<https://www.thesaurus.com/e/ways-to-say/10-ways-to-say-youre-sorry/>



# How To Build Rapport with Customers on the Phone

## Provide a sense of immediacy

Member frustrations often stems from the amount of effort it takes for an agent to resolve their query, but you can cut this frustration and build rapport by providing a sense of immediacy.

If the member can sense that you are acting to minimize their “wait time” and decrease the amount of effort that they have to exert, it can only add positivity to the call.

So, providing a sense of immediacy, like in the examples below, you can build rapport.

**“We’ll look into this for you right away, Sir/Madam...”**

*Displaying a recognition of the urgency of the matter.*

**“Let’s see what we can do to fix this, Mrs. Black...”**

*The collective “we” suggests partnership, and implores reciprocal cooperation.*

**“I can see where the problem is, Sir/Madam...”**

*Demonstrating the agent’s experience in such matters, and hinting at his or her ability to provide a solution.*



**“What I’m doing for you right now is...”**

*Asserting control and hinting towards spontaneous, possibly discretionary action.*

**“That’s now been done, Mrs. Black...”**

*Providing a pay-off and showing that the caller’s trust had not been placed in vain.*