

What is the fastest way to build rapport and reduce buyer/seller tension?

In Japan it is considered rude to "cut to the chase" and get right down to business. In the US it is tempting to bypass the small talk and go right for the order. We must have an opening statement and a good reason for making the call, however, we must set the stage first. That is where a few easy to answer questions are in line. These questions are sometimes referred to as "who is buried in Grant's tomb" questions. Everybody already knows the answer but it starts things off on a friendly note. This lesson will show you exactly what people like to talk about.

Many people are deeply involved in things other than their business. They usually have something in their office that is like an open invitation to ask about it. Many sales people avoid talking about these things because they think it is too obvious, however, just the opposite is true. People attach a great deal of importance to the things in their life other than their work. They add to their overall self image and talking about them gives them a great deal of satisfaction.

I was recently at a mall in Chicago with some time to kill and I saw an encyclopedia booth set up with a display of their books. I didn't want to sit through a sales pitch, however, I did want to know how much it cost on a CD. I approached the sales person and asked for the price. He responded with a question; "What kind of work do you do?" That was all it took. For the next hour we engaged in a conversation about training and if it wasn't for my wife, who came and bailed me out, I might have been the owner of something I had no intention of buying.

How did he get me so involved in talking for an entire hour? He did it by asking personal questions. Questions that I was delighted to answer.

Never hesitate to ask about their family if there is a picture, their golf score if there is a trophy, their hunting adventures, favorite fishing spots, backpacking experience, etc.

What do people like to talk about? Here's a clue. The psychology department at a leading university recently did a test to determine what people do or think. When 500 women were given a fountain pen and asked to write something, 92 percent wrote their own names first. When shown twelve monthly calendars, 470 out of 500 women looked at their own birth date first. When 500 men were shown a map of the country 447 looked first at the location of their home town.

Here are the results of another study done by two professors of psychology in an effort to find out what the average person talks about. They listened in on 500 casual conversations at restaurants, theatre lobbies, stores, barber shops and other places where people meet. They found that people in New York talk about the same things as people in Ohio or California. In 49 percent of the cases men were talking about business, 14 percent about sports, and 13 percent about other men. With women 22 percent of the conversations were about men, 19 percent about clothes, and 15 percent about other women. In general it was found that men talk about things, while women are more interested in talking about people.