

How to build instant rapport with hostesses and guests by answering 3 simple questions

By Party Plan Portal

Have you ever wondered why is it that some people seem find it easy to get on with strangers and yet some people take time to build a connection with people?

How many of us are in this business yet still struggle with conducting events with strangers?

Would you love to feel more confident about presenting your products to strangers you have never met before?

The Party Plan industry is a RELATIONSHIP business, and being able to get on with complete strangers instantly is a skill that is vital to our success. Unfortunately, too often the misconception that we are 'shy' is the thing that will either slow us down from achieving our goals or even stop us in our tracks.

The good news is that the 'skill' of making instant connection with people is something we can learn in a few easy steps.

The term 'Rapport Building' is not new to you. Rapport Building has been the new buzz phrase in sales training for quite some time now but today we want to take rapport building to another level and discuss why it is that rapport is so important, not only in sales but also in a relationship industry such as ours.

The simplest definition of 'Rapport' is merely 'a feeling or sense of trust and responsiveness between two or more people'. Take a look around you the next time you are out and observe how people are interacting. Two lovers will often be walking together in complete sync, timing their steps perfectly and almost walking as if they are one being. Two close friends will unconsciously pick up their drinks at the same time and will often be sitting in similar poses, with crossed legs or sitting leaning towards each other. This is effortless rapport.

When we build rapport with people in business, of course we are not expected to act like lovers or best friends, but few sales are made when there is a lack of rapport. The most successful sales people are those who build relationships with their customers, even if it is in as short space of time in a retail store.

Although we will touch on basic rapport building techniques, this is much more than body language taught in sales training these days. This is about how the unconscious mind works and recognises other people.

The key lies in 3 simple questions that we all ask on an unconscious level when we talk to a person for the very first time:

- a) Is she like me?
- b) Do they understand me?
- c) Are they genuine?

If you are able to answer these unconscious questions for your new hostess or 'audience' in the first few moments of chatting to someone you are well on your way to developing rapport with them.

Let's look at each one in more detail and how you can answer that question for the person you are talking to in order to develop rapport:

Q1: Is she like me?

It is said that we all like people like us and we all want to be like the people whom we like. The two go hand in hand. That being so, how can we be like people we don't even know? This is a great time for techniques like Matching and Mirroring which are classic rapport building techniques

- Matching and Mirroring Body Language – Body angle, legs crossed or uncrossed, leaning forward in our chair or leaning away.
- Matching Verbal Language, for example the 4 styles of learning (Visual, Auditory, Kinaesthetic and Auditory Digital) where you match the language you hear and 'speak someone's language back to them.
- The third way to match people is to match them with common experiences. These things come out in small talk and general conversations and the skilful rapport builder is able to discover common experiences quickly through going on to the next unconscious question people ask themselves:

Q2. Does she understand me?

Here we go into a deeper level of rapport, a level further than that of the standard Sales training. There are 3 ways to build rapport when considering this unconscious question.

1. Common Experiences: It is human nature to want to belong. People want to belong and they want to count as something. When we connect with people the urge of the unconscious mind to be understood is very strong. This is why people swap stories about where they have come from and what they have done with their lives.
2. Make your conversation about THEM. Too many sales people and also Party Plan Consultants are all too eager to get their products in front of their hostesses and guests with no consideration for their audience and what they may need. Involve the people at the event; ask them questions, find out what it is they want, what makes them tick.
AND THEN LISTEN TO THEM:
3. Active Listening: It may surprise you but few people have ever experienced what it is like to be properly LISTENED to. To be actively listened to allows a person to feel that the listener is on their side and understands them. Active listening is an acquired skill which takes a little bit of practise but is a wonderful gift to give your 'audience'. Listen to their words without letting your opinion of them cloud your mind. Listen deeply and considerately. Watch their faces when they are talking and only consider your answer when they stop speaking. If you are listening this way to your hostess and their guests they will KNOW that there is someone in the room who truly cares about them and what they want.

Only then will they unconsciously begin to know the answer to their third unconscious question:

Q3. Is she Genuine?

When I first learned about the unconscious questions we ask, the wonderfully engaging trainer at the time used the phrase, "Is she fair dinkum?" which is a fantastic Australian phrase meaning "Is she for real?" For

the interests of a wider global readership I will stick to the more conservative “Is she genuine?” question although I am very fond of “Is she fair dinkum?”!!

We have already established and agreed that Party Plan is a relationship building business. And as such we have to invest in our relationships with the people we meet and connect with. We have to be genuine in every way if we are to run a sustainable business that will stand the test of time and will keep attracting the right people to it. The simplest way to answer this vital unconscious question is to **BE Authentic at all times!!!**

- Be open and honest with your hostesses and their guests.
- Be who you say you are.
- Under promise and over deliver on products.
- Follow through on any promises you make, whether it’s a delivery promise or a follow up promise.
- Walk your talk every day so that when people see you again they know that you mean what you say
- Love your products and sell them ethically
- Continue to nurture relationships with your hostesses and consultants by sending them a thank you card after the event, by giving them a call a few months later to see how they are, by being genuinely interested in them and their families.
- Show you care about THEM and what they get out of your relationship, more than what you get out of it

It’s time to move on from the basic rapport building skills we are taught in Sales Training 101. It is time to make your connections about the people you are talking to, not about you. It is time to consider what it is that your customers want from you rather than what you want from them.

It is said that 95% of success is down to how we get on with people. If that is so, wouldn’t it be a good idea to take the time to consider the needs of your future hostesses, customers and team members before you consider what you will get out of the connection? Build rapport to build lasting relationships and you will be rewarded 100 fold in your own success.

To your future,

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