



HOW TO BUILD RAPPORT IN EMAILS

Two Rules of Thumb

Building rapport and keeping it can be tricky in email and texts because both are missing non-verbals and body language, which makes up 93% of communication. You see, the brain uses body language to determine if you're safe, your mood, and context. I'm sure you can see how miscommunication can be common when missing such a large part of it!

For this reason, I suggest two rules of thumb.

- ◆ If at all possible call when it's a touchy subject or has potential conflict involved.
- ◆ Don't email when angry.

Your clients are looking for two things in emails from you—trust and relevance. Don't waste their time. Email is a love/hate relationship. You want to make sure they *love* your emails!

With that in place, here are techniques to build rapport:

1. **Match your customer's writing style.** This is similar to mirroring in body language for rapport. It's something we do naturally in conversation but, again, there's no body language in email and text. So you can match their writing style. Informal. Formal. Detailed. Not detailed. Short paragraphs. Long paragraphs.
2. **Use positive language.** Here are 25 top positive words for customer service:

Definitely	Excellent	Interesting
Absolutely	Enjoy	Brilliant
Certainly	Splendid	Exciting
Exactly	Essential	Terrific
Completely	Generous	Fascinating
Quickly	Recommend	Expert
Fantastic	Friendly	Favorite
Great	Impress	Ideal
Marvelous		

3. **Check spelling and grammar.** Believe it or not, some people view misspelling and grammar mistakes as a sign of your character and can communicate a lack of care and attention to

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—DOUGLAS RUSHKOFF

detail. In other words, if you don't care enough to check spelling and grammar, how will you care about their needs?

4. **Be personal!** Use emotion, empathy, and some appropriate personal details. One of my favorite rapport building tools is the law of humor—appropriate and relevant humor not some off-the-wall weirdo humor. Also, don't use scripted responses or sound too businesslike. Engage. If your customer lets you know they'll be on vacation next week and then you resume correspondence, ask how their vacation was or express that you hope it was wonderful for them. And use emojis. I know it can seem childish, but they do trigger happiness and fun in the brain.
5. **Mirror greeting and signature.** One of my favorite signatures is "Kind regards." I love that one. It expresses warmth and my regard for them as my client. Use a picture in your signature. Remember, the more people see your face, the more they like you.
6. **Keep commitments.** If you say you'll respond by a date and time, do it. If you can't and need more time or get caught in a meeting, shoot a quick message and let them know. Don't leave people hanging. Again, it communicates carelessness and lack of concern.
7. **Acknowledge positive things they've done** like, "Thank you for taking time out of your valuable day to meet with me." Or "Thanks for calling today. It was kind of you to clarify this with me personally." Or "I'm so happy to hear this good news from you. You've worked really hard on this and I appreciate it!"
8. **Don't waste their time.** Don't send frivolous emails. If you know something is complicated, call instead. Nothing is worse than 500 emails and texts that constantly interrupt workflow over something that could be discussed and dealt with in 5 minutes on the phone.
9. **Use video.** I highly recommend 30-60 second videos with valuable info from you like tips, upcoming events, etc. Put the manuscript below the video for those who prefer to read.
10. **And, finally, SMILE AS YOU TYPE.** Seriously. It's hard to be mad, irritated, or sound too impersonal smiling. When you smile, you're releasing endorphins, a happy hormone, and that comes out in your email.

"A SMILE IS A CURVE THAT SETS
EVERYTHING STRAIGHT."
—PHYLLIS DILLER