

Chapter 6

PHILIP H. MANDEL



“Rapport . . . Who Needs It?”

Abstract:

Using the proven techniques of NLP (Neuro-Linguistic Programming) sprinkled generously with the author’s life experiences, you will learn how to establish rapport quickly and respectfully. You will be able to enhance communication both verbally and non-verbally, make a positive, lasting first impression, improve confidence, and increase sales. This is ideal for professionals or anyone else who regularly deals with people on a business level.

Introduction:

Rapport . . . Who Needs It?

*rap port (r-pôr, -pr, r-) n.

Relationship, especially one of mutual trust or emotional affinity.

*Source: *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language*, Fourth Ed., Copyright © 2000 by Houghton Mifflin Company.

Ponder this: Why do many newly promoted managers and executives fail?

According to a survey of 826 human resource managers nationwide by Atlanta-based Manchester Consulting., a career management and management consulting firm, “They do not successfully build partnerships and team work with their subordinates and peers. The failure of newly promoted managers and executives to build a strong team and, at the same time, reach out to their colleagues and peers, is by far the biggest reason why 40 percent of them fail within the first eighteen months in their new posts.”

Wow! Read that last sentence again. *Forty percent* fail within eighteen months! I don’t know about you, but I think that’s a huge percentage, especially when you consider the costs—both tangible and intangible—involved in placing someone new in a management or executive position. *Forty percent—that’s 4 out of every 10!*

And why did they fail? To put it simply: failure to create and maintain *rapport* with their subordinates and peers. Not lack of knowledge, expertise, or drive—lack of *rapport!*



Why should something as fundamental as *rapport*—basically, the ability to get along with other people—be so elusive to so many? Why should something so rudimentary be such a stumbling block? Weren’t we taught to “play nice” when we were kids?

Why Can't We All Just Play Nice and Get Along?

Perhaps we were taught to play nice when play was all there was. Then we entered junior high school and learned about competition and grades. Next, high school—more competition, more pressure to get good grades—not to mention added pressure to get “the girl” or “the guy.” Then college and graduate school for some, and so on. We were trained to be self-centered, to press forward, excel, and succeed as individuals with little concern for our classmates.

If we were pulling A's and someone else was struggling to get a C in a particular class, there was no real incentive to help her or him. Our parents, our teachers and our transcripts only cared about our own grades, not how much we helped our peers.

In fact, one might argue that helping others could be detrimental to our success. If we were smart enough to be in the top 10 percent of our class, why help someone else who might turn on like a light, shoot past us, and bounce us out of that elite group? Besides, where would we find the time with all our class work, homework, and athletic endeavors?

After “playing nice” took a back seat to getting good grades and winning football games for so long, it's no wonder that so many newly anointed leaders are lacking in human interaction skills.

Fortunately, rapport skills can be learned—or relearned. We can rediscover what it takes to get along with other people whether subordinates, peers, superiors, customers, or relatives (yes, even relatives!). The goal, however, needs to be clearly defined first:

- *What specifically do we want—and why do we want it?*

Purpose of this Chapter:

First, let me tell you what rapport is *not*: rapport is not manipulation, nor should it be used as a means for manipulation. If your goal in reading this chapter is to figure out how to get what you want at the expense of others, please skip the rest of this chapter now.

