

Communication that Clicks and Connects: 5 Ways to Power Up Productive and Profitable Connections

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It's a captivating power of influence that creates compelling connections. Good communication skills open the pathway for this magnetic quality to flow and work its magic. This charmed energy produces positive, productive and profitable business relationships built upon people-pleasing communication.



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Charisma's magnetic power results from choices to connect with people in positive, caring ways. These choices build your personal power, expand your sphere of influence with dramatic impact. Charisma energizes a positive atmosphere of receptivity and an endless current of connections for both professional and personal success.

While some are natural-born schmoozers with a gift of finely-honed communication skills, others can cultivate the same critical qualities for similar impact.

1. Rev up rapport

Want to increase support from contributors? Work with staff members and executive Boards in harmony? Reach agreement on issues? Rapport is the ability that fosters agreement, harmony and accord.

Building rapport engages the interest of others by tried-and-true "*people magnetizers*." These magnetically attract people—their enthusiasm, friendship, and support. Qualities that rank high: being a good listener, friendly, sensitive to others' needs, supportive, energetic, enthusiastic, authentic and inspiring.

Rapport is cultivating an atmosphere of connection by building likeability and trust. This nets plenty of benefits: people want to work with you, help find solutions to challenges, give you their time and attention, introduce you to others for expanding your network and provide support to your organization's goals. These are all rich rewards from an investment of time, energy and attention. Good rapport acts like a magnet for good things to flow.

2. Get to the heart of what people need

Good communication is all about connecting to the needs of others. When people's needs and expectations are met, cooperation is enhanced. This creates an atmosphere where:

- Problems are solved faster
- Conflict is reduced
- Morale is good
- Issues and concerns are freely discussed
- Productivity is enhanced

“Feeling understood supports a fundamental universal desire to be fully heard, to explain our needs, air our grievances and share why something is important to us.”

- Creativity is cultivated

These are the “goodies” that naturally flow from good connections, built on a solid, mutually supportive system. However, when people’s needs or expectations are not being honored, such as needing or expecting appreciation, acknowledgment, respect or trust, then resentment and resistance can erode working relationships. Any perceived imbalance often activates anger and the “goodies” are at risk. For building productive connections, get to the heart of what people need and give it wholeheartedly.

3. Lighten up

Imagine a high-performance atmosphere where things are filtered through a lens of laughter, where people enjoy being part of the team spirit. Humor instantly lightens up the workplace and makes it more fun to be part of the team.

Since we live in an imperfect world, mistakes happen to us all. Nobody likes to make them, but we’ve all experienced the sting when one is made. An accepting and solutions-oriented attitude creates a more productive atmosphere.

This point was driven home during the production of our **Charisma Cards™**, coauthored with Arnold Sanow. During the final proofing, we noted a spacing problem on the card reading, “We can never, ever get it right 100% of the time! Rather ironic! It continues stating, “When we accept this fact of life, we can experience true freedom that comes from being more real and less afraid of taking risks or being ourselves.” Fortunately, we discovered this bit of irony in time. It gave us both an opportunity to find humor and to “practice what we preach.”

Living in an imperfect world, mistakes come with the territory. Having a sense of humor when they do, keep us sane as well as those with whom we interact. Humor is human glue because it bonds people together. It’s powerful connecting energy. It shifts our perspectives from a serious, stressful state to one that recognizes the imperfections of life, including life at work.

Another one of our **Charisma Cards™** reads, “*I find humor in imperfect situations.*” Poking fun at ourselves or our predicaments makes us more approachable. Using humor reinforces a positive and solution-oriented approach and offers a refreshing breath of lightness to stressful situations.

4. Avoid weapons of disconnection.

Your charismatic qualities are powered by your ability to connect with others. Words are palpable, powerful points of connection. Any offensive ones might jeopardize feelings of self-respect and instantly wipe out connection.

To pump up your people power, eliminate certain words and phrases from your vocabulary or they can crush your charisma. What we say, how we say it or even what’s not said contributes powerfully to connecting or distancing ourselves from others. The words we choose and how they’re conveyed contain massive power that builds, strengthens or destroys relationships. What pours forth from our mouths can create peace and positive outcomes, enhancing our ability to connect or incite and alienate.

Any communication that reflects a lack of respect for others is verbal garbage and causes rotten connections. These include:

- Blaming and accusations
- Name-calling and put-downs
- Sarcastic remarks
- Profanity
- Anything that makes someone else feel inferior, stupid, (I told you so!)
- Ultimatums, threats or demands, i.e. "You better or else . . ." cause resistance, resentment and reactivity.
- Over generalizations, i.e. "You never . ." or "You always . . ."

When verbal garbage gets dumped, it causes a cesspool of negative reactions by the receiver whether they're friends, customers or clients. These can crush friendships, trust and business opportunities. While it might be tempting to unleash a few "zappers," now and then, refrain from that desire. Verbal blows can cause massive damage to relationships and crush your chances of charismatic connections.

In the ideal world, mutual respect and understanding flow freely, given to and received from everyone you interact with during the day. From colleagues and customers, ticket agents to cashiers, customer service representatives to waitstaff. In the real world, you're guaranteed interactions with an ongoing cast of characters on the stage of life who inevitably see situations differently and act from those perspectives.

Seeking first to understand others, clearly highlights your priorities in putting others' needs and concerns as your #1 priority. It demonstrates your willingness to keep their needs at the forefront, to validate the meaning and value they represent and find ways to satisfy them. This honors their perspectives or positions, demonstrates your sincere concern, maintains openness, strengthens connections and reinforces their perception of you or your business in a positive light.

If you want others to understand and respect your perspectives and positions, it is valuable that you understand and respect theirs as well. Feeling understood supports a fundamental universal desire to be fully heard, to explain our needs, air our grievances and share why something is important to us.

Additionally, when you seek to understand, you're typically treated with the same courtesy in return. When people feel heard and understood, they're usually more willing to consider mutually satisfying solutions or to reach a compromise. It's good business to get the perspectives of associates, customers, clients and adversaries. They're less likely to retaliate or initiate a lawsuit.

When not seeing eye-to-eye, that's exactly when focusing on understanding is critical. Extending understanding and respect is challenging when your own "buttons" are triggered. In these cases, keep focused on your intention to understand. Give as much support as you are able. Stay focused. Give your full attention. Listen without interrupting. Allow each to express concerns and feelings. Often all someone wants or needs is to state his/her case.

Always communicate on a human to human level rather than one from a position of authority. Efforts to understand enhance the relationship and cultivate an atmosphere for good attitudes and productivity.

If you seek to understand, you may see the situation from a new perspective and the door of understanding opens to a wider view. Build strong bridges of connection by undergirding it with understanding.

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