

How to Connect in Business in 90 Seconds or Less

Capture the Imagination and you Capture the Heart

Presented by Mark Warren
Texas Association of Counties
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The material in the program is based primarily on the book and DVD program ***How to Connect in Business, in 90 Seconds or Less*** by Nicholas Boothman, 2002 and 2003. It's another program produced by my Media Partners, Inc. from Seattle. This is the same company that produced the ***Give 'em the Pickle*** series. Please read or explore more about this and other M.P. programs by clicking on www.media-partners.com

It's easy to think about human connections in personal terms. Think about people you've immediately connected with who have become friends. Are these connections based on personality? Shared values? Common interests? Maybe, but not necessarily. Do connections just happen? According to Boothman, we all have the capacity to connect with each other on a human level. Does that mean you can choose your future spouse from a crowd and create a connection that will result in marriage? Of course not. But, we ***all*** have the capacity to create an immediate human connection that results in *trust and rapport*, which in business, can help you maximize every opportunity for success.

Life, any way you look at it, is about relationship and behavior.

As Nicholas Boothman's mentor taught him:

- Imagination triggers emotion,
- Emotion triggers attitude, and
- Attitude drives behavior.

How do trust and rapport help to enhance relationship?

Trust is sacred when it comes to building relationship. In fact, nothing real and lasting can be built without trust. The on-line dictionary defines trust with these examples: *reliance, position of obligation, hope for the future, care and responsibility.*

Rapport is one of those words we don't think about when thinking about how to build relationship. Rapport is "*a friendly relationship or emotional bond between people based on mutual liking, trust and a sense that they understand and share each other's concerns.*" Imagine how good a relationship can be when trust and rapport are in place and working.

There are three really useful attitudes that successful leaders have in common: *enthusiasm, curiosity and humility.* In the right combination, these three attitudes create an irresistible presence.

Create an irresistible presence

- **Be enthusiastic**
 - Enthusiasm is hypnotic, magnetic, unstoppable. You can't buy it – you can only reveal it. It infects others with excitement, energy and vitality.

Be enthusiastic

Enthusiasm is hypnotic, magnetic, unstoppable. You can't buy it – you can only reveal it. It infects others with excitement, energy and vitality. The word enthusiasm comes from the Greek, meaning "God flowing through". In my experience over the past 33 years, people have occasionally asked what is the most important personal trait or characteristic of being a good presenter. If it's to be narrowed to only one, I'd say "enthusiasm" – definitely. I believe that enthusiasm opens the gate for passion and intensity, and those three characteristics help anyone be a better presenter.

Create More irresistibility

o Stay curious

- o Always be open to your own natural-born curiosity.
- o One who is hungry to learn more about the world around them is evolving, moving forward, growing and making connections.

Finally

o Embrace humility

- o Successful people have healthy egos.
- o When that ego is wrapped in and tempered by humility, it's a handsome package.
- o However, an ego untempered with humility is arrogant and ugly. Example: *The Big Bang Theory*
 - o "Sheldon, we think we can help you with your stage fright".
 - o "Oh, I doubt that. I haven't figured out a way, and I'm much smarter than you."
 - o "Yes, but you're not smarter than all of us put together."
 - o "Oh, I'm sorry – that *is* what I meant."

Embrace humility

Most successful people have large egos and a flair for self-promotion, yet manage to contain them and display a public persona rooted in modesty and service to others. When a large ego is generously wrapped in humility, it's a handsome package. An ego that's not tempered with humility is arrogant and ugly. Humility defined is "the quality of being modest or respectful."

Think of any great leader you admire and you will find these three attitudes at the center of their success. *Enthusiasm, curiosity and humility* can be consciously chosen behaviors. They can infuse you with unmistakable signals of vigor and openness.

The dialog quote about is a great exchange between Sheldon and the rest of the cast as the group tries to offer help for Sheldon's stage fright. It's from Season 3, episode 18, "The Pants Alternative".

Before customer buys anything;

- They have to buy you.
 - Whether a client, customer, guest or co-worker, they have to know that *they're talking to the right person*.
 - Then, transacting business tends to follow naturally.
 - A *genuine human connection* is more important than job, service or product knowledge.
 - Remember, a connection is made in the first 90 seconds.
- Note: once people like you, they look for opportunities to say 'yes'. Then, however -
- You must be *competent, confident and credible*.

Imagine if you were a high-fashion photographer. Your job success depends on catching your subjects at their absolute best, knowing they are being photographed.

Boothman says, "Anyone who takes pictures for a living knows that you won't get a great picture when you tell someone 'smile'; you might get something, but it won't be real.

To get a real smile, you have to create a real connection between them and you.

Choose an attractive attitude

- Attitude drives behavior – put yourself in the mood. Project professional face.
- The best way for a professional to "put themselves in the mood" to choose an attractive attitude is by projecting professional face. While attitude will find it's face, *the right kind of attitude* will help you find that correct and sincere face more easily.
- Think: **face, body, words**.
 - Bored or welcoming?
 - Cranky or enthusiastic?
 - Impatient or curious?
 - Angry or resourceful?

Send the right signals

- Look them in the eye and smile.
 - What color are their eyes?
- Point your heart towards them.
 - Take an intelligent, not a foolish, risk.
 - Examples: trust, commitment, participation, understanding, empathy, warmth.
- Synchronize with their body language and pace of speech.
 - Subtle, posturing your body, matching stances and rate of speech.
 - Consider: posture, body and speech when hanging out with friends.

Get them talking...

- Start the conversation with open questions, not closed questions.
 - Examples of open: *who, what, where, when why and how?*
 - Ask them a question about them.
 - Examples of closed: *Are you? Have you? Do you?* Yields yes or no answers.
 - Unless you're questioning a witness or interviewing a suspect, avoid closed questions
- Continue the conversation with a short statement, followed by an open question.
 - "This is my first time in this restaurant. What's the thing to order here?"

Keep them talking

- Give them feedback – verbally and non-verbally.
 - Remember: face, body, words.
- Let's practice. Be sincere and curious – practice active listening: "tell me more."
- Does "tell me more" make it harder or easier to keep the conversation going?

Keeping someone talking comes down to active listening. When you actively listen, you're giving the speaker your full attention. At this level, people refrain from evaluating the speaker's words, and place themselves in the other's position (empathy) – attempting to see things from the other's point of view. Some characteristics at this level include:

- Taking in main ideas
- Acknowledging and responding
- Not letting oneself be distracted
- Paying attention to the speaker's entire communication, including body language
- Being attentive to the words spoken, but empathetic to the speaker's thought and feelings, and then communicating that (active empathy)
- Suspending one's own thoughts and feelings to give attention solely to listening.
- Active listening requires that one listens not only for content of what's being spoken, but also for the intent, feelings and non-verbal message as well. It's been said that great listening is *wanting to hear*.

As Henry David Thoreau once said, "it takes two to speak truth – one to speak and the other to hear". While it is good to hold a conversation, one should let go of it once in a while. Good conversation should be like a tennis match, with each player gracefully sending the ball back across the net. Instead, most conversations are like a golf game, with each player stroking their own ball and waiting impatiently for the other to finish. (Leslie E. This, *The Fine Art of Listening*, 1980)

Summary: Before we go...

It's been said that the most interesting person in the world is the person that makes you feel like you're the most interesting person in the world. These people make the hard times bearable and the good times even sweeter.

Take intelligent risks and don't be afraid of failure.

✚ “I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work.” ~Thomas Edison

The only time we fail is the very last time we try.

Mark Warren is the Training Specialist and Consultant with the Texas Association of Counties in his hometown of Austin, Texas. He assists the Association with the vision, development and delivery of training. Just since 2009, Mark has traveled more than 70,000 miles, training more than 22,500 internal and external customers of Texas county government. His presentations convey a message of inspiration, motivation and new direction and revolve around leadership, interpersonal communication and relationship skills, workplace diversity and professionalism, bridging the generations and customer service excellence.

In addition to his teaching, training and traveling duties, Mark works with the TAC Leadership Program and has served as the coordinator of its Leadership training since 2002 and County Best Practices since 2009.

After graduating from St. Edward's University in 1977, Mark spent 23 years with the Texas Department of Public Safety, retiring in 2000 as the Assistant Commander of the Training Academy in Austin. For more information about Mark and TAC, please visit www.county.org and click Member Services, Education and Training then Special Presentations.

