

Rapport building is an essential communication skill that can impact the outcome of any conversation. The end result of any communication is always better when the interaction takes place smoothly than when it is strained.

For call center employees, [building rapport with customers](#) effectively translates into higher sales and increased customer satisfaction ratings. Establishing a good rapport means creating a comfortable state where conversation can flow freely and easily. But it can be challenging for agents to establish a connection and build rapport with customers over the phone. This makes it imperative for call center agents to be skilled in the art of rapport building.

Outlined below are 6 proven steps to build rapport with customers over phone:

### **Open the Conversation with a 'Warm Up'**

A cardinal rule of rapport building is to reach out to your customers in a friendly manner. The easiest method to do so is to start the conversation with a 'warm up'. A simple question like 'how are you today?' or 'how is your day so far?' can break the ice. Most customers will tend to reply in a friendly manner. Make a positive or relevant response to their reply, which will help to create a relaxed state. Once you set the tone of the interaction with the initial warm up scenario, you can proceed to take the call forward by asking 'how can I help you today?' or something to that effect.

they are saying and are interested in helping them out.

### **Be Adaptable in your Approach**

There is no 'one size fits all' approach as far as dealing with callers is concerned. That is why you must adapt a flexible approach when interacting with callers. An efficient agent is one who is quick to grasp the caller's mood and tone and approach accordingly. If the caller is angry or frustrated or upset, a simple apology at the appropriate moment can help to defuse the tension and calm down the caller or break down the barriers and create space to establish rapport.

### **Show Empathy with the Caller**

Connecting with your caller at an emotional level helps you to establish a quick rapport. To accomplish this feat you need to place yourself in the caller's shoes. Let the caller know that you are sincerely interested in helping him or her out. Show empathy by using phrases like 'I see what you mean' or 'I can understand how this has impacted you'. Be genuine in your communication. This will help you

### **Listen with Keen Attention**

Active listening is an integral part of establishing rapport. Concentrate on what the caller is trying to communicate to you. Let the caller know that you are listening intently by responding with gentle 'hms' or 'ahs' even as they speak. Allow the

caller to finish what they are saying before you provide a summary of your comprehension of the issue. This will reassure the caller that you care about what to gain your caller's trust before you lead them towards accepting your solution to the issue.

### **Share the Caller's Priority**

Every caller has a list of priorities. Recognizing the priorities of your caller and addressing them in the correct order will help you to build rapport with your caller. It will pass a direct message to the caller that you know what they want and you are making efforts to address those needs. This will convince them that you are interested in resolving the issue and helping them out of the situation.

### **Maintain a Positive Attitude**

A positive attitude creates a great scope to establish rapport with a caller. Always be in a positive frame of mind while taking a call and focus on being solution-oriented. Treat the caller with courteousness and convey that the issue will be resolved at the earliest. When you finally offer the solution, ask for the caller's agreement regarding the solution. By guiding the caller towards the solution you will be able to build credibility as well as rapport.

Building rapport with callers is an art that can be mastered with practice. By following the above-mentioned steps, you can sail through your journey of establishing rapport with your customers over the phone