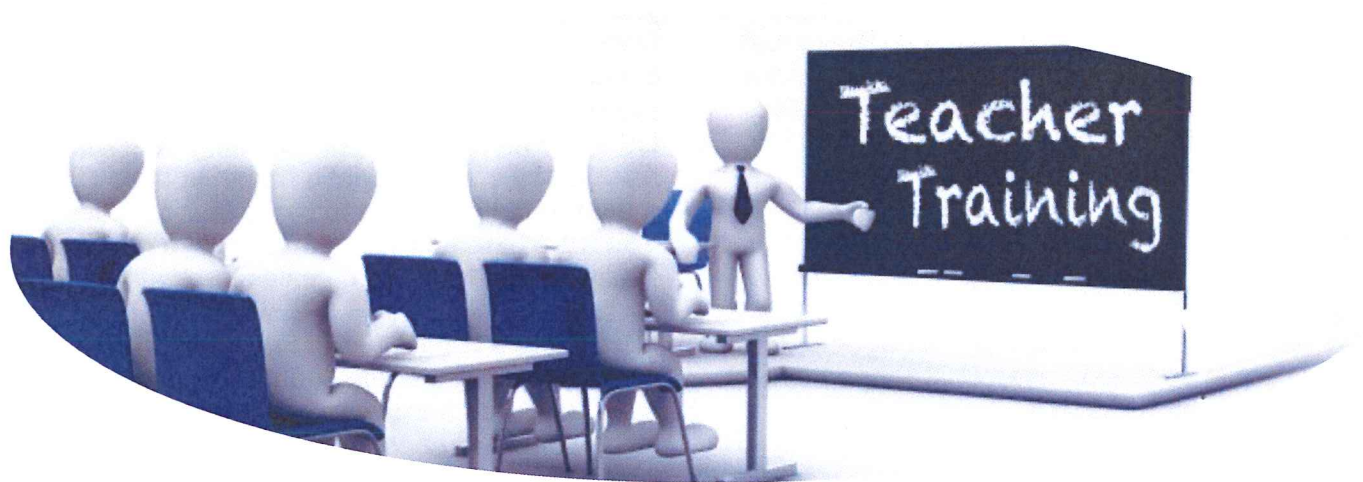




Innovative Business Solutions...

Staff Professional Development Services

Rapport Building and
Motivational Interviewing



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Rapport Building

Establishing Credibility

We define the Student-Teacher relationship as:

- the extent to which Students accept or "buy into" the goals the Teacher has spelled out to the class
- the Student's ability to work toward these goals
- the Teacher's ability to care genuinely for students and to nurture their learning
- the Student and Teacher "connecting" emotionally and the Students' motivation to participate actively in their education

In order for any trust to occur between a speaker and his audience, there must be credibility established between them. This is especially critical when dealing with youth in underserved communities. In order for them to absorb and trust any Teacher, they must believe that you understand their "language" and view them as competent individuals. They must trust that you can identify with them, where they are. Your ability to articulate that connection is how this trust is established.

Building Rapport

Building rapport with students can be a remarkably effective way to improve classroom management. But there is some confusion over what rapport is and how one goes about building it.

Rapport is the connection you make with your students based on their positive feelings for you. When they like you and trust you, and when you in turn like and believe in them, you'll form a bond that makes classroom management a lot easier.

But rapport isn't something you can force upon your students. Teachers who try to engage individual students directly... "Hey, what's your favorite video game?" ...often find the interaction brief and awkward and the results less than influential.

To build genuine rapport, you have to draw students to you. You have to use your personality, your

humor, and your charisma to get students to want to be around you and take an interest in who you are.

The idea of using your everyday personality to draw students in and build rapport makes sense to most, but many struggle with how to put it into practice.

What exactly does it look like?

We all have our own unique talents, traits, sense of humor, perspectives, upbringing and experiences. With that said, there is no "one size fits all" approach to rapport building. But there are some things you can do that we've found to be quite effective:

Smile until they smile.

- This tends to work even when you've never met the students before. You can use it anytime you're passing out materials, checking student work, taking attendance, or anytime you have occasion to make eye contact with individual students.
- Let's say for example you're taking attendance. As you say each student's name, you would take a moment to look up and smile at the student. You would then continue making eye contact and smiling until the student smiles back at you. And that's it.
- What it does is allow you to make an instant positive and personal connection with each student. It communicates a thousand wonderful things in just a couple of seconds. And when you're finished, each student will see you in a different light.

Tell a story about “You”

Nothing is more effective than the art of telling your story. Done a certain way, it can put your students in the palm of your hand. It does, however, take some practice.

Telling your story places you in an environment they're unfamiliar picturing you in, but one in which they can closely identify with. You become, then, not so different than them—making connections easier.

We've found that stories about one's own perseverance, triumphs and challenges are most effective. But there are some important points to consider when crafting your story:

1. Is your story relevant to your audience?
2. Does it incite personal reflection from the students?
3. Can you clearly tie your story to an underlying issue that students are facing?
4. Does your story tap into the emotions of the students?
5. Are you careful not to presume that you know exactly what the student is dealing with?

There is no doubt that your students will love it and love you because of it. If you become a good storyteller, it will completely change your teaching and will dramatically affect the influence you have with your students.

Rapport Building Activity

This activity is designed simply to get you to think about how you might use your own personal accounts to help navigate students through some typical challenges that students from low income communities face.

Typical Issues and Challenges

- Low Self-Concept / Self-Esteem
- Hopelessness
- Abandonment
- Abuse (Physical, Emotional, Sexual, Mental)
- Basic Needs Unmet
- Broken Family Structure
- False Sense of Loyalty to Family
- Poverty

Questions to Consider Preparing For

1. Have you ever felt that all hope was lost in your situation? What was the situation and how did you overcome it?
2. Have you ever put yourself at risk in an attempt to "protect" a family member or friend? What was the situation(s), and how did it work out for you? How did it work out for your friend or family member? Was it worth it?
3. Have you ever felt that your situation was hopeless? What were the circumstances surrounding your situation? How did you make it through?
4. Have you ever had your basic needs go unmet? What were you willing to do in order to have those needs met? Ultimately, what did you do to have those needs met?
5. Have you ever been abused by a family member or friend? Who abused you, and how did it affect you? What did you do to make the abuse stop? How has that experience affected you going forward?

Motivational Interviewing

Overview of Motivational Interviewing

Motivational interviewing is non-judgmental, non-confrontational method that can be used to make students aware of the potential problems caused by, consequences experienced, and risks faced as a result of their behaviors.

The main goals of motivational interviewing are to:

- Respectfully engage the student
- Build rapport such that the student is willing to share meaningful dialog with you
- Help student to become motivated to make positive changes

To be successful at motivational interviewing, you will need to practice four basic interaction skills:

- The ability to ask open ended questions
- The ability to provide affirmations
- The capacity to listen critically and provide reflective feedback
- The ability to periodically provide summary statements to the student

Process of Interviewing a Student

Step 1: Build Rapport

1. Find an opportunity to informally introduce yourself to the student that you want to help. You don't want the first time that you speak to the student to be the same time that you attempt to help them.
 - a. This is a part of building rapport, and establishing a comfort zone with the student.

Step 2: Obtain Permission from Student

1. You must ask the student for permission to engage in meaningful conversation.
 - a. This demonstrates that you have respect for the student. Also, the student is more likely to discuss changing behaviors when asked, than when being lectured to or being told to change, especially by a peer.
 - b. Examples of how you can ask for permission:
 - i. "Do you mind if we talk about [insert behavior]?"
 - ii. "Can we talk a bit about your [insert behavior]?"

Step 3: Seek to Understand Student's Behavior

1. Ask "open-ended" questions.
 - a. Open-ended questions encourage the student to do most of the talking, while you listen and respond with a reflection or summary statement. It allows for a richer, deeper conversation that flows and builds empathy with the student. Essentially, open-ended questions allow the student to tell their story.
 - b. Examples of open-ended questions:
 - i. "Tell me what you like about your [insert risky/problem behavior]."
 - ii. "What makes you think it might be time for a change?"
 - iii. "What happens when you behave that way?"
 - iv. "How were you able to not [insert behavior] for [insert time frame]?"
 - v. "Tell me more about when this first began."
 - vi. "What's different for you this time?"
 - vii. "What was that like for you?"

Step 4: Initiate "Change Talk"

1. Ask "open-ended" questions that center around reasons to change behavior
 - a. Change Talk is a strategy that helps the student find reasons for changing, by having them give voice to the need or reasons for changing. You are looking to help the student to identify reasons for change that are personally important for them.
 - b. Examples of questions to evoke Change Talk:
 - i. "What would you like to see different about your current situation?"
 - ii. "What will happen if you don't change?"
 - iii. "What would be the good things about changing your [insert risky/problem behavior]?"
 - iv. "Why do you think others are concerned about your [insert risky/problem behavior]?"
 - v. "If you were to decide to change, what would you have to do to make this happen?"

Step 5: Engage in Critical/Reflective Listening

1. Throughout your time interacting with the student, show that you are listening, and that you value what they are saying.
 - a. Critical/Reflective listening involves listening carefully to clients and then making a reasonable guess about what they are saying; in other words, it is like forming a hypothesis. It allows you to paraphrase the student's comments back to you:
 - i. (e.g., "It sounds like you feel that your teacher is disrespecting you.")
 - ii. (e.g., "It sounds like you don't want to quit smoking at this time.")
 - b. Another goal in using critical/reflective listening is to get the students to state the arguments for change (i.e., have them give voice to the change process), rather than you trying to persuade or lecture them that they need to change.
 - i. Critical/Reflective listening, can be used to address discrepancies between clients' words and actions (e.g., saying that they want to stop getting into fights, but continuing to do so) in a manner that is nonconfrontational.
 - iv. "By the way you handled that situation, you showed a lot of [insert what best describes the student's behavior—strength, courage, determination]."
 - v. "With all the obstacles you have right now, it's [insert what best describes the student's behavior—impressive, amazing] that you've been able to refrain from engaging in [insert risky/problem behavior]."
 - vi. "In spite of what happened last week, the fact that you've [insert what student has done] reflects that you're concerned about changing your [insert risky/problem behavior]."
2. Provide continuous feedback to the student throughout your interaction with them.
 - a. Your feedback should not be limited to just simple responses to what the student says. You should seek to understand the student's challenges, and provide them with additional information that will help them to be successful in their quest to change their behaviors.
 - b. Some examples of continuous feedback:
 - i. If the student is looking to stop smoking cigarettes or weed, provide some literature on the effects of smoking. In addition to that, if you know of some helpful resources, provide that information to the student as well.

Step 6: Provide Feedback and Affirmations

1. As you continue to help the student to recognize the changes that they need to make, be sure to provide affirmations as appropriate.
 - a. Affirmations are statements made by you in response to what the student has said, and is used to recognize their strengths, successes, and efforts to change. Affirmative responses or supportive statements verify and acknowledge the student's behavior changes and attempts to change.
 - b. Some examples of affirmative statements:
 - i. "Your commitment really shows by [insert a reflection about what the student is doing]."
 - ii. "You showed a lot of [insert what best describes the student's behavior—strength, courage, determination] by doing that."
 - iii. "It's clear that you're really trying to change your [insert risky/problem