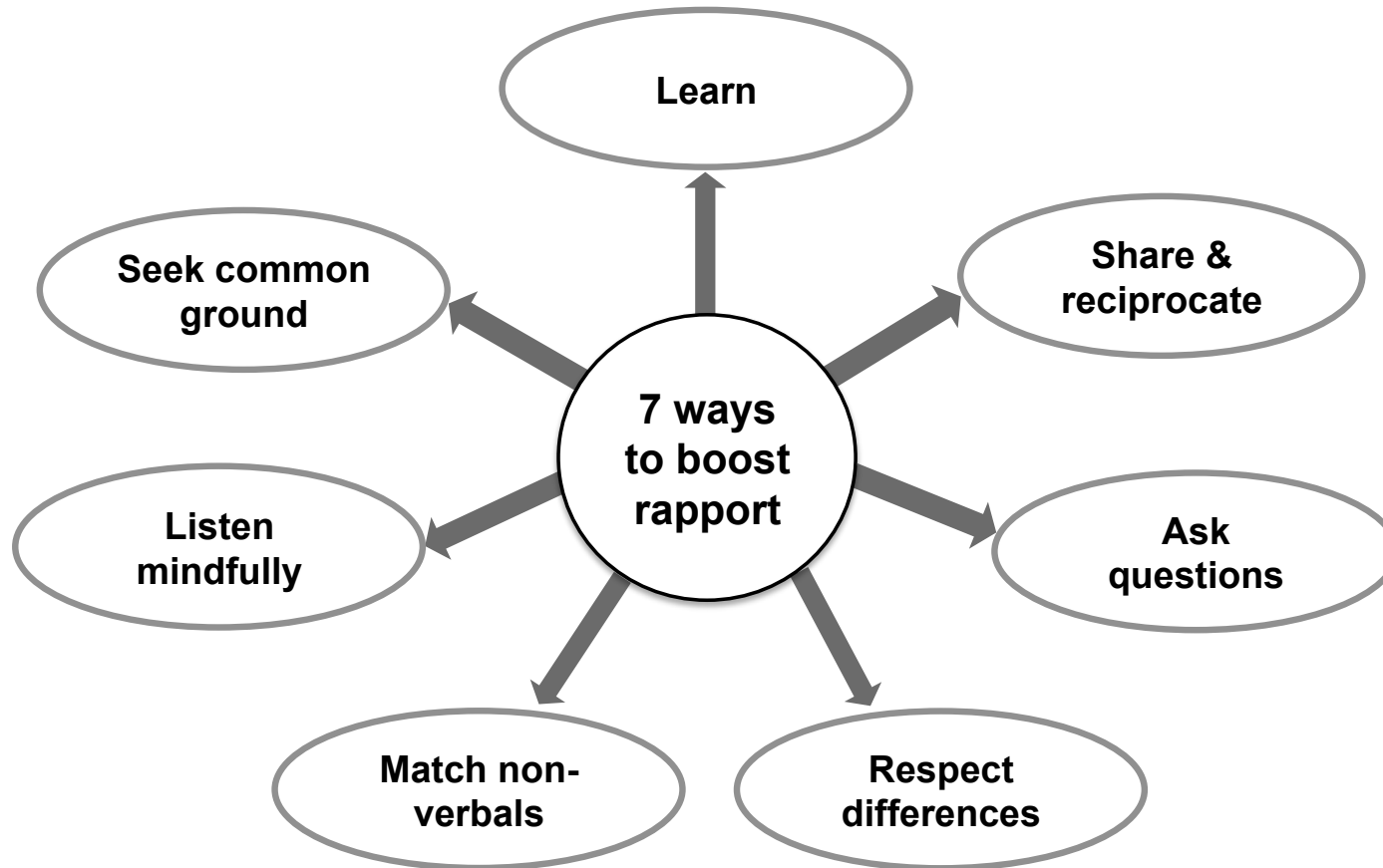




**Coaching for Innovation: Tools and Techniques for Encouraging New Ideas in the Workplace**

By Cristina Bianchi and Maureen Steele  
First published 2014 by Palgrave Macmillan

## The Sun Model: Seven Ways to Boost Rapport





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### Toolbox: Tips from Cristina and Maureen

What can you do to establish and nurture rapport with your counterpart in any exchange? We have identified seven different but equally important actions that you can take, and show them in the Sun Model, as shown above. The list below explains more about how to make this model work for you:

- **Listen** mindfully. When you are paying attention with a heightened state of awareness and you are fully invested and engaged, rapport flows naturally.
- Always ask yourself: “What can I **learn** from the other person?” When you hold the assumption that they have something of value to add, you are more likely to find that something and, consequently, the other person will feel valued.
- **Seek** to find **common ground**. When you pick up on small or big things that you are both interested in, it leads to both parties feeling more at ease in the exchange.
- **Share** something about yourself. Opening up even just a little is a great way to encourage reciprocity and it can lead to both becoming more invested in the relationship.
- **Ask** questions with the intention of finding out a fact about the other person that is interesting. This offers new perspectives on what you know about them and your interest will draw you in.
- Work to **respect differences**. When you accept that agreement is not always possible and keep the focus on the content, things are much less likely to become personal and you can agree to disagree.
- **Match your non-verbal** signals to your intentions. When you want to have a positive impact on shaping the relationship, your non-verbal signals should reflect openness and interest on your part and should convey attention to and acceptance of the other person.

Creating an environment based on trust goes far beyond building rapport. Commonly held values such as conscientiousness and integrity need to drive behaviour; transparency and openness need to be woven into the very fabric of how things are done. However, by reinforcing your natural ability to forge relationships that have good rapport, you are leading by example and making it more likely that those around you will reciprocate. You will find that good relationships begin to come to you and you have kick-started the longer term process of building trust.