

Rapport is the result of a good conversation

It is best to have something to talk about before you walk in the door to a business in order to start a conversation.

After we qualify a lead with the correct address, number of employees and decision maker, we research the lead.

Using a business' web page, LinkedIn, Facebook, or any other social media page, you will find at least three topics to start a conversation with a business owner.

Questions you want to answer when researching a business:

- How long has the business been around?
- What does that business do?
- Is it family owned and operated?
- If on Facebook, what are their ratings? What are their customers' comments?
- What awards/accomplishments have they received?

Research topics that can create an Emotional Connection

- A Decision Maker's (DM) Alma Mater
- The history of the company (i.e. family owned, started in a garage, etc.)
- Any awards the business has earned
- In-depth detail about the company profile and what the company does

These are a couple ways you can use the research you found to start a conversation:

- Use their name – "You must be" or "You wouldn't happen to be — it's nice to meet you in person"
- Use holidays – "Are you doing anything special for...?"
- Use local news – "Did you happen to hear about the new...?"
- Local events – "Were you able to make it to the local festival? I heard it was..."
- Top stories that are going on (not related to politics or religion) – "What do you think about...?"
- Use your research – "It's nice to meet you personally (DM first name). I noticed your father started the business back in... When did you come on board?"

Use the F-O-R (Family, Occupation, and Recreation) method when you're in business to help continue the conversation. You already have occupation as a point of discussion, however, building rapport is also about being observant. As you walk up to the desk or counter, look for something that gives you an indication about this person's family (pictures with a husband/wife, kids, grandkids, and even pets). Or, look for something that gives you an idea about this person's recreational activities, for example sports memorabilia, pictures of them fishing, etc., and use these as conversation starters.