Rapport must be conversational but it must also be intentional. The key is to find common ground for conversation. **One way to do this is by remembering the acronym F-O-R.**

**F-O-R stands for Family, Occupation, and Recreation.**

Since you are walking into a business, 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. With this information you can discuss things that you know are of particular interest to them.

The following are brief, basic principles to help build rapport with the Gatekeeper.

1. Make a friend of the Gatekeeper. Notice what they have near, on, or around their desk and include it in your rapport building discussion.
2. Once you feel rapport has been established, ask to speak with the Business Owner.
3. When asking for the Business Owner, use first names only. For example: (Agent to Gatekeeper) “Would you do me a favor? Please tell (Business Owner first name) that (Agent first name) is here.”
4. After asking for the Business Owner, disengage from the gatekeeper. This is done by breaking eye contact with them or simply turning away and beginning to power down your cell phone. If working with a partner Agent, simply turn to your partner agent to ask them a question.

**Coaching Tip:** You might be wondering, ‘Why do this?’ The reason is that if you continue eye contact with the gatekeeper, it’s a natural reaction for that person to ask you a question regarding the subject matter of your visit. By being assumptive, and disengaging, many times the gatekeeper will simply do as you have asked. Actually, I just want to speak to him for a minute and set an appointment.

If the Gatekeeper asks what the appointment is for, say ‘It’s about voluntary benefits and tax savings for the company and the employees.’