

Earned Trust Relationship Framework

How Prospects Become Clients and Clients Become Friends

START WITH INTENT

Before the first conversation, your goal is not to prepare a pitch. It's to understand the human.

Example: Before a discovery call, you review a prospect's LinkedIn and notice they previously lived in Tacoma, Washington. You don't file this away as trivia, you note it as a possible point of genuine connection because you were born in Bellevue, WA and played hockey for the Jr. Tacoma Rockets. The intent isn't to "use" this information. It's to be present and curious.

Find Common Ground

On the call, you don't lead with surface-level rapport like: "How are things going?"

"Where did you go to school?"

Instead, you bring up something real.

Example: You mention Tacoma and joke about the infamous "Tacoma Aroma." Anyone who's lived there immediately understands the reference. This creates instant ease and laughter not because it's clever, but because it's shared reality. That moment opens the door for the prospect to explain why they lived there in this case, because his wife was a traveling nurse. Now you've learned something personal, naturally.

REBUILD RAPPORT EVERY TIME

Rapport is not something you "establish" once and move on from. You treat it as something you re-earn at every interaction. Rule you follow: Every call, learn one new personal detail and build on what you already know.

Example: On future calls, you ask:
Where his wife is currently assigned?
How frequent moves have affected their family?
How his kids are adjusting?

Each conversation layers trust instead of resetting it.

RECIPROCATE & SHARE

You don't collect personal details without giving something back.

Example: As he shares about his family and lifestyle, you share relevant pieces of your own life:
Experiences that mirror his challenges
Personal lessons that connect to the conversation
Context that shows you're not hiding behind a professional persona
The relationship deepens because it feels mutual, not extractive.

BE VULNERABLE WHEN EARNED

Vulnerability is never forced and never early.

It happens only when: Trust already exists

The moment makes sense

The other person shows genuine concern

Example:

You ask to push a meeting due to a personal conflict. Later, the prospect checks in and asks if everything is OK. Instead of deflecting, you acknowledge it and explain that you're going through a divorce and the conflict was related. That openness invites him to share deeply personal things as well.

At this point, the relationship fundamentally changes.

Stay Connected Beyond the Deal

When the deal is done or even if it doesn't happen you don't disappear.

Example: If he/she leaves the company:

You still check in

You ask about his family

You stay connected without an agenda

That's why: Calls get returned, Texts get answered

Relationships span careers, not transactions

KEY PRINCIPLES TO REMEMBER

This framework ISN'T about:

- Oversharing
- Turning business into therapy
- Being personal for the sake of it

IT'S about:

- Being human
- Intentional
- Staying connected over time

**Trust isn't built in moments.
It's built in consistency.**

