

Mirroring and Matching: Science of Synchronization

It is human nature to mirror and match, or to “synchronize” with, the people we connect with. We don’t even think about it. It happens so quickly and so subconsciously that without a replay, one is unlikely to even notice it. What if you *were* aware of it? Could it be used to help you be even more persuasive? Research says definitely yes. When you mirror your audience, you build rapport with them.

Mirroring operates at a subconscious level and demonstrates that the parties are starting to synchronize and get into rapport. People are inclined to follow and obey those they perceive as similar to themselves. If they shift in their posture, you should eventually do so, too. If they cross their legs, you should cross your legs as well. If they smile, you smile, too. When you mirror them, they will subconsciously feel that you have much more in common with them than may actually be the case. Why is this so? He likes you because you are like him. He perceives you the same way he perceives himself. When using mirroring and matching, you want your audience to subconsciously say, “It feels like I have known you for years.” Mirroring speeds up the process of connecting and effectively communicating with anyone.

Obviously, it is imperative that mirroring and matching come across as natural. Great persuaders know how to mirror or reflect their audience’s actions, not to imitate them. If people think you are imitating them, they may feel mocked and become offended. They will see you as phony, and they will no longer trust you. Instead of directly imitating, just mirror or match the overall tone and demeanor of your prospect. You can safely mirror things such as language, posture, gestures, and mood. The reality is that mirroring is the best predictor of rapport.

You can develop rapport by mirroring your audience in the following areas:

- Emotional state
- Energy level
- Language
- Breathing rate
- Voice patterns and inflections
- Mood