

7 Tips for Building Trust in a Relationship

Trust is the lifeblood of all relationship – business or personal. It is the foundation of all mutually satisfying and sustainable long-term relationships.

More than just a concept, it is also a feeling state – based on our experience of other's behaviour over time – which is taken as evidence of their trustworthiness or not.

Here are seven principles that will foster trust:

1) Be your word.

As [Stephen Covey](#) puts says, “Speed happens where there is trust.” Work on building a high trust culture, brand and or organization.

The quickest way to erode trust is to say things and then not follow through with your actions. It is better to under promise and over deliver than vice-versa.

If you are unable to keep up your promise – for whatever reason – then being upfront and transparent about this can still be a trustworthy act.

2) Take responsibility

Taking responsibility means identifying and acknowledging when things go wrong and taking ownership. One of the worst things you can do is to not

take responsibility.

Blaming, shifting responsibility, becoming defensive and or argumentative will not build trust. Share success but ultimately, as a leader, shoulder the blame.

3) Hold others to account

Leaders lose face when team members are allowed to get away with bad behavior. An example is where a direct report, who is very bright and keeps bringing in business He manages upwards really well but exhibits questionable behavior such as bullying, deception or lack of collaboration.

You can be sure that that team members will be looking up to you to take action and losing faith rapidly if this is not forthcoming.

4) Be values led

Live, breath and model the values that you and your organization hold dear be it respect, transparency, integrity. “Walk the talk and talk the walk!” You are creating the culture of your organization every step of the way.

Celebrate examples of where the team has gone over and above living these values say with customers but also deal with issues and people who are not honouring the agreed upon values.

5) Collaborate and value diversity

Collaboration means sharing and this is when we build trust. Trust deepens as people feel affirmed, validated and

respected for who they are and their ideas - not penalized.

Ideas can come from anywhere especially those right at the coalface be it production line, dealing with customers and or other stakeholders.

Be mindful of your own listening so your people feel heard and listened to, even if ultimately their ideas are not adopted.

“Trust is knowing that when a team member does push you, they’re doing it because they care about the team.”

— Patrick Lencioni

6) Dealing with broken trust

Being human we are almost guaranteed to stuff up from time to time. Trust takes years to build and moments to destroy.

However, what is important is how quickly we can own up to our mistakes and do whatever it takes to put things right. Most people tend to be forgiving especially where there has been no malice or a deliberate attempt to sabotage or deceive.

“If there is no sense of trust in the organization, if people are pre-occupied with protecting their backs....creativity will be on of the first casualties.”

— Manfred F.R.Kets de Vries, Insead, France

7) Be open to feedback. Trust is also demonstrated when you are able to ask and receive feedback and change behaviour accordingly feedback. Challenging as it can be to the ego, being able to accept this feedback and

then do something about it is a mark of a true leader.
This requires humility.

If you don't have trust inside your company, then you can't transfer it to your customers.
-Roger Staubach

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