
Developing Trust

Trust is an essential element in the success any relationship, family, team, department, business, or organization. Outstanding performance and winning teams are based on trust and competencies that produce results. Trust is a belief that those who you depend on will meet your expectations, and that you will meet theirs. When trust is present, people will work effectively together, share information freely, share their challenges and mistakes, admit lack of knowledge, and commit themselves to the success of the group.



Its easier for people to build trust when they are in the same physical environment because they will be exposed to many visual clues. Researchers say that it takes less than four minutes to make a trust judgment based on someone's voice, body language, and words. In today's business conditions, there are times when a team functions remotely. Nevertheless, creating an environment where developing trust is a priority can never be forgotten or pushed to the wayside.

In his book, *Building Productive Teams*, Glenn Varney introduced what he calls the *Trust Cycle* as a means of showing how people in leadership positions can prevent cynicism and establish trust. The Trust Cycle shows "Trust is developed from adequate to total information so that the individual can influence or make decisions, which builds more trust." If this cycle were viewed as a continuous circle, it becomes obvious that for an organization to develop trust, communication and the ability to make individual contributions are essential elements.

When people don't trust each other, they fail to work well together, and it is often specifically because there is no trust. When there is no trust, there is fear, and fear is a major deterrent to innovation and productivity. Without trust the best ideas will never surface. Trust can never be mandated, it must be earned. There must be honest, complete, and open communication delivered in a way that fosters mutual respect. People must feel free to ask questions with the confidence that they will receive support and the information they need to make good decisions. They must also feel free to openly express their thoughts and feelings. There can be no hidden agendas or clandestine activities.

Studies have shown that the second most important thing (second only to 'a full appreciation of their work') that people want from their jobs is to feel that they are 'in on things'. To lead and



influence people you must build trust by becoming an expert at ensuring everyone is kept informed and feels that they are 'in on things'.

Analyzing Trust Within Your Team

There are many factors and behaviors that build trust, and even though developing trust is a very individual experience, research has shown there are some common factors which help create an environment of trust. Trust can be enhanced when you, as a leader, focus on building strong relationships with and among your people.

Review the following categories and concepts as it relates to your department, team, business unit, or company.

<p>Results</p> <p>All members are focused on and produce results that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exceed customer’s expectation • Meet delivery and response times • Focussed on the customer • Measure results that are documented • Make enhancements to project requirements • Are more efficient and effective • Maintain or beat budget requirements 	<p>Integrity</p> <p>Team members can be trusted to mean what they say and say what they mean</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate follow through on their commitment to the team • They do what they say they will do • Detailed communication is essential • Behave in the best interest of the entire group • Openly share information, ideas, and technology for the best results
<p>Change</p> <p>Willingness to change and adapt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not hanging onto “we have always done it that way” attitudes • Demonstrate flexibility • Seek out ideas and other point of views • Willing to let go 	<p>Empathy</p> <p>Putting themselves in another person’s shoes and showing care and concern</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitive to cultural differences • Deal with performance issues in a timely manner • Share in the difficult tasks • Ask for other’s viewpoints and opinions • Sensitive to the impact of decisions on others

