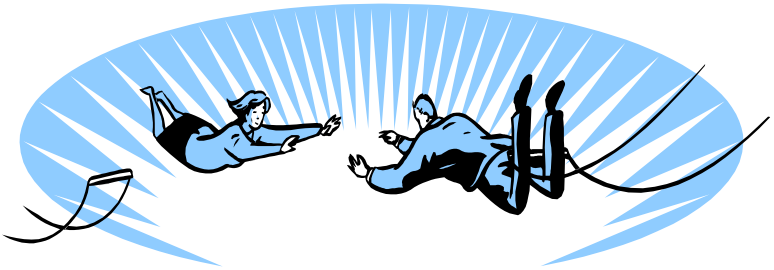


# How to Develop an Environment of Trust...

## That Enables Your Employees To Succeed



Number 4 in the *Problem Solver Series*<sup>™</sup>

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## **The Purpose**

The purpose of this booklet is to:

1. Understand why the power of trust is essential for an organization to accomplish its objectives.
2. Understand the two key conditions that must be present in order for trust to exist.
3. Learn how to initiate a process that will create an environment of trust.

## **The Benefit**

This booklet will enable you to:

1. Understand why employees lose trust.
2. Take action to fix the problem.

## **The Situation**

Employees, working alone or in groups, are the only way an organization can accomplish its goals. The more efficient and effective employees are, the more success the organization will enjoy.

Employees are most efficient and effective when they are engaged in the business. That is, when they have a personal sense of focus, understanding, commitment, and accountability.



These attributes are a function of personal desire. They exist in an individual in direct proportion to his or her desire to become involved and participate. When this desire is present, employees behave like business partners and provide an excellent return on investment.

Fear creates barriers to partnership and change. Fear acts to isolate an individual and shut down the desire to participate and become involved.

“Change is threatening to the fearful because it means that things may get worse.” K. Whitney

Without the desire to become engaged in the workplace, employees think, act and

perform like hired hands. They consume more resources in terms of supervisory and administrative time and effort, and provide minimal contribution to the organization’s success. They provide a poor return on investment.

## The Foundation

Developing trust in the workplace is part of a structured effort to improve the way we work together and the results we obtain. Studies show that unless a safe social environment is present people will not open themselves up to partnership with others. They will not lower their emotional defenses and will not take the risk of allowing themselves to change. A culture of trust can be a strategic competitive advantage.

## Trust

Trust is reliance on the integrity, strength and ability of a person. Trust in an organization is the confidence that these same attributes are held by all employees and are an essential part of the implementation of all policies and administrative procedures.

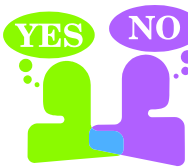


In an environment of trust, people feel free and safe to express their thoughts. They come to understand that mistakes are not linked to punishment. Rather, mistakes are considered opportunities to learn that which they did not know. Growth becomes a goal, along with participation and contribution.

It's important not to confuse trust with mistakes. A mistake is an unintentional error. It is possible to trust a person who makes errors because trust is all about intent. (Trust, but verify.)

## The Problem

Trust is based on opinion and feeling. It is a result of personal experience or good reason (the experience of others.) The problem is, once this opinion/feeling has been established, it is very difficult to change.



Trust is a matter of degree and most of us live somewhere between “*I trust ---- entirely*” and “*I don't trust --- - at all.*” The degree of trust that one holds for a superior, co-worker, subordinate or organization is the direct result of past experiences. In any company, the degree of trust, both individual and organizational, can be *established by the leader*. If the leader insists on the highest level of integrity then high integrity will be exhibited by all employees.

However, because we are human, we are not perfect. The faults in our behavior and our personal weaknesses provide the basis of experience from which others develop their degree of trust about us.

As a result, some level of mistrust, either of individuals or of the organization, exists within all companies. It may be stronger in one company than in another. It may be stronger on an individual level than on an organizational level, but it exists. This mistrust is a powerful source of organizational dysfunction and a subtle, yet significant, drain on overall performance.



## Time for Introspection

You will get the most value out of this booklet if you take a few moments to internalize the information by answering the following questions.

Using a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being “very low” and 10 being “extremely high”, apply the rating to the following question.

- ❖ *What overall level of trust exists within your company?*
- ❖ *Why did you give your company this rating? Be specific.*
- ❖ *Does this level have a significant effect on the performance of the organization? What would be the effect on the organization if the rating could be improved? Be specific.*

## The Solution

The solution to the problem of mistrust is found in the two aspects that create trust. These aspects are listed in the order in which they must occur.



1. Caring
2. Consistency

Understanding the aspects that create trust enables us to take action and change the negative effects of past actions.

## Easy as 1, 2...

Establishing trust becomes an ongoing act. Regardless of what others do, you can develop a high level of personal trust by practicing the two aspects.

1. Caring: If I am concerned for your welfare and make a conscious effort to show my concern, what will your opinion or feeling be about me? If my intentions are positive and I take your best interests into consideration, will your opinion or feeling about me be favorable?
  - *If you behave this way toward others will their opinion or feeling about you be favorable?*

2. Consistency: And if I always exhibit the same caring behavior toward you, time after time, will you begin to accept that behavior as my true nature? Something you can rely on to occur? Will you begin to trust me?
- *If you always exhibit the same caring behavior toward others will they begin to trust you?*

It is a fact of human nature. When people are consistently treated in a caring manner, they will develop trust. This applies to all people; employees, managers, customers, suppliers, spouses, children and everyone else.



### **Time for Introspection**

You will get the most value out of this booklet if you take a few moments to internalize the information by answering the following questions.

- ❖ *How does the aspect of Caring show up in your behavior? The behavior of your co-workers? In your company? Be specific.*
- ❖ *What would the effect be if this were to increase? Be specific.*
- ❖ *How does the aspect of Consistency show up in your behavior? The behavior of your co-workers? In your company? Be specific.*
- ❖ *What would the effect be if this were to increase? Be specific.*

## Summary

Trust delivers a unique benefit to those who hold it and to the organizations that have it. It makes people receptive to support and encouragement. In this state, people are more inclined to participate and become engaged in the group's objectives. They are open to dialogue and personal & professional development. They become more efficient and effective.

Want to improve the quality of your work experience and the organization's results? Practice consistent caring.



## Time for Introspection

You will get the most value out of this booklet if you take a few moments to internalize the information by answering the following questions.

For You

- ❖ *How do you plan to introduce these concepts into your behavior? Be specific.*
- ❖ *What do you think the effect will be on your relationships? Why?*

For Others and the Organization

- ❖ *What can you do to introduce these concepts to others in the organization? Who are they? Why would they benefit? Be specific.*
- ❖ *What do you think the effect will be on the organization? Why?*
- ❖ ***What rewards will employees receive for embracing this change? What's in it for them?***

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