

Trust at work

It all starts here

Trust. Without it, you may get results, but you will never unlock the true potential of your team or your people. Trust is essential to everything that you do.

Here are a couple of ideas to help build a high-trust environment.

Where are the gaps?

Often, people view trust as a “yes or no” situation – you either have it, or you don’t. But the truth is, there are gradients of trust and you may have a high level of trust for someone in one area but not another. Consider the following questions to help you identify where the trust gap might exist?

- Do you trust that they are honest and will do what they say?
- Do you believe that their motivations are genuine and not selfish?
- Do you think they are capable of doing what is required?
- Have they previously shown you that they have the skill or desire to accomplish what is needed?
- Would you let them run your company, borrow your car, paint your house, be alone with your sweetheart???

Those last few are outlandish, but they are there to illustrate that we might trust someone’s intent, for example, but not their capability. We trust their skill, but not their integrity. In order to bridge trust gaps, we first have to identify where the gap is. Is a lack of trust based on integrity, ability, motivation, track record, honesty? Or all of them?

What are the signs?

At work, high trust is a key factor to creating, not only a great place to work, but also results. What do your people think? Ask them the following questions:

- What signs, symbols, or behaviors tell you that you are trusted at work?
(for example, a lack of an established dress code could tell employees that they are trusted to do the right thing)
- What signs, symbols, or behaviors send you the signal that you are not trusted?

What are the behaviors?

Once we’ve established what is working and what needs work, engage in healthy conversation to help build that high trust environment that will benefit everyone. What behaviors do we need to implement, eliminate, modify, or highlight to get the trusting environment we desire?

