

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?





Breaking Down The BDIP

Continued...

Incidental Infrastructure

Consider a casino – every design element in the building, from a lack of clocks to “free” drinks to a maze-like setup that makes it hard to find your way out - all of these things are in place to drive a few key behaviors: spend more money and don’t leave. And often, we don’t even these hidden elements are motivating our behaviors and decisions.

The same things exist at work. From speed to productivity, to cost savings and recognition, we often see well-intentioned motivators have unintended behavioral byproducts. Consider the frameworks and the structural motivators in place – are these things motivating behavior that benefits your organization?

Your organization values productivity, so much so that people are inclined to perform a whole lot of tasks to show that they are doing an insane amount of work. But is it the right work?

A few key questions here: What are we motivating people to do? Is what they are motivated to do helping the big picture? What are the incidental outputs of our motivators and are they magic...or muck?

What behaviors get:

- Recognized
- Promoted
- Resources
- Punished

And are those behaviors serving the greater good?

People

When we factor in the incidental infrastructure and combine it with personal motivation, we often see good people performing poorly. Some of the frequent examples:

- The micromanager – The desire for control leads to them applying an overly directive approach to others when a hands-off style is more warranted.
- The firefighter – Motivated to please everyone, suddenly everything is urgent and on fire, when we know for a fact not everything is a priority.
- The climber – motivated by recognition and the desire to elevate themselves, they throw others under the bus to move ahead.

Time to get the muck out.

