

It All Comes Down to Trust

by Rick Cronen and Angela Gonzalez
January-February, 2008

How to Build Trust Tips to Make You Happier and More Successful

Your work relationships have an enormous impact on your level of professional success and job satisfaction. There are many things that can disrupt or derail even the best intentions to preserve your work relationships; but the single most important factor in preserving and nurturing your relationships is trust.

Trust cannot be mandated. It is earned. Here are some actions you can take to build and preserve the trust of others.

- Assume the good faith of others, the easiest way to earn trust is to give it
- Resolve differences by being honest about your point of view and your expectations
- Remain open to influence and be prepared to change
- Make every effort to assure that your actions are consistent with your words
- Accept responsibility for your own actions
- Do not blame or complain
- Seek out opportunities to collaborate, cooperate and share

More Trust Quick Tips

Currencies of Exchange

Trust allows you to expand your influence in a collaborative work environment. The ability to influence others is enhanced by your ability to create value for another person, this is known as your "currency of exchange." Here are some examples of currencies that you can use to reinforce the trust you have earned AND expand your influence. Remember, you only influence others, when you focus on what is important to them.

Inspiration Related Currencies

- Vision: Being able to articulate and create enthusiasm for a vision of the future.
- Excellence: Doing something really well and developing a reputation of "quality".
- Moral/Ethical: Doing what is "right".

Task Related Currencies

- Resource: Being a resource means being willing to lend a hand when needed.
- Learning: Being a resource for information on "how to" do certain tasks or "where to" find certain types of information.
- Dependability: Doing what you say you will do, when you agreed to get it done.

Position Related Currencies

- Recognition: Acknowledgement of the efforts, accomplishments, or abilities of others.
- Connector: The ability to connect people with others that they need to know.
- Probing: Asking for and collecting information and data.

Relationship Related Currencies

- Understanding: Listening to and attempting to understand the issues and concerns of others.
- Attitude: Assuming that others act in good faith and a determination to resolve differences that may arise.
- Influence: Being open to the influence of others and being prepared to change.

Personal Currencies

- **Gratitude:** Acknowledging your indebtedness to others.
- Ownership: Taking responsibility for your actions.
- Self-Confidence: Affirmation of one's value, self-esteem, and identity.



Case Study

How One Company Built a Foundation of Trust

Here is an example of a company that built a foundation of trust with its' employees by making a major change in their corporate Culture. The company demonstrated a high level of trust for the employees making it made easy for the employees to feel and demonstrate the same in return.

Deloitte is one of the most recognized names in business. According to Jim Quigley, CEO of Deloitte, "During the early years we were smart enough to know that we had to change. Now we are smart enough to want to change even more." Several years ago Deloitte began the Deloitte Women's Initiative (WIN) from that program emerged the knowledge that work life balance was not just a "women's issue" it affected men as well and more importantly it affected their business through turn-over and the estimated costs associated with that knowledge drain were huge.

From the WIN program came an initiative known as *Mass Career Customization* that allows individuals to establish "a framework to better align today's workplace with today's workforce." After a nearly two year trial period Deloitte identified four important variables:

- The Pace of Work
- The Workload
- Location/Schedule
- Role (from Individual Contributor to Leader)

Each employee is able to customize their job according to each of these variables on a sliding scale and what is even more important this customization can be modified as needed according to each individual's changing life circumstances.

To learn more look for the book Mass Career Customization, Aligning the Workplace with Today's Nontraditional Workforce by Cathleen Benko and Anne Weisberg, published by the Harvard Business School Press in September of 2007.