



## TRUST IN LEADERSHIP

Leadership is a relationship, founded on trust and confidence. Without trust and confidence, people don't take risks. Without risks, there's no change. Without change, organizations and movements don't thrive.

### LEADERS GO FIRST

When leaders create trusting environments, people are safe to challenge the system and perform beyond expectations. People feel more open to collaborate with others and freer to express creative ideas. They are more willing to take, admit and learn from mistakes. Leaders create trusting environments by setting an example and building commitment through simply daily acts that create progress and momentum. Leaders go first in all respects.

Trust has been shown to be the most significant predictor of individuals' satisfaction with their organization. It is identified as the foundation for meeting strategic objectives, e.g.

- Increase participation and risk taking
- Increase creativity and innovation
- Increase self-motivation and empowerment.

To lead a cohesive, creative, collaborative team to a new edge: cultivate and restore trust.

Our capacity for trust is our readiness to trust ourselves and trust others. When we trust others, we see ourselves as reliable and dependable to others. When we trust others, we feel we can rely on their judgment, and we have confidence in them. The same is true for ourselves. Our capacity to trust influences our perceptions and our beliefs. Our capacity for trust expands or contracts, depending on our experiences, positive or negative. It involves managing our expectations of ourselves and of others.

### WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN TRUST SHATTERS?

Breakdowns in trust are at the core of any conflict. Restoring trust is at the core of renewed collaboration. Cultivating one's capacity to trust is a practice. The human journey is such that just as you begin to experience mastery in some area of your life, life presents you with the challenge of practicing in yet another area or at a deeper level. Where we pay attention to trust issues, we open the possibility of reconciliation and healing for the sake of moving forward into another future—either alone or together. Cultivating capacity to trust is a life-long practice in cultivating the Self.

Consider, for example, the following scenarios:

You have finally finished negotiating a settlement you both agree is fair and sensible. You could live with it...if you believed that the person who let you down time and again would actually follow through. In your heart, you may be strategizing how to survive the loss. Or, instead, you may be strategizing how to inflict penalties for non-performance.

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Or...

You have finally finished negotiating a settlement that you know is not fair but is the best you are going to get. Despite the impression that this business partner has shown you her worst, you have agreed to continue working together. You now know what is possible and you think you know what to expect. This time around you are ready. No more Mr. Nice Guy from you. Nobody takes you for a fool twice.

Or...

The colleague who publicly tried to block you from authorship on a paper describing your collaborative research is now furious. Despite all his efforts, your name was included among the authors; to his dismay, his efforts backfired and his own name was left out. There is ample funding to continue working on this project but the funding is under his control. You are passionate about the cause but you cannot bring yourself to work with that person anymore. The vigilance required to protect your “back” is too exhausting.

Something has shattered. While you may have done your best to resolve the issues ostensibly under dispute, you find yourself unable to move with the same ease or energy as before. The basic (and possibly blind) trust you once were prepared to grant is unavailable now. And even if you reach an agreement—establishing what could be the basis for authentic trust—you may still experience the residue of betrayal.

## TYPES OF TRUST IN THE WORKPLACE

In most workplace situations, trust is earned. It is a reciprocal transaction. People earn trust by, for example, disclosing relevant information in a timely manner, sharing influence and rewards, competently applying their knowledge, being fair in their dealings with others, fulfilling the spirit of their agreements, and by not abusing their power. The reciprocity factor is key: you have to give trust to get trust. When trust has been broken, shattered or betrayed, giving trust anew generally happens in much smaller, slower, and more controlled increments and with heightened awareness.

A person’s capacity for trust begins with Self. The trust you are able to extend to others corresponds to the trust you are able to extend to yourself. Building one’s capacity to trust is not about training for trustworthy behaviors (e.g., those that may be organizationally approved or politically correct). It is about becoming more aware of the attitudes, behaviors, and interpretations that, over time, have shaped our willingness to stay open, present and connected to ourselves and to others. Our capacity to trust shows up in how we make and fulfill agreements—commitments to ourselves and to others. What authors Solomon and Flores describe as “basic trust” provides the basis for one’s entire personality and demeanor toward the world (See “Building Trust: In Business, Politics, Relationships, and Life,” by Robert Solomon and Fernando Flores). Basic trust is relatively open-ended and indiscriminate. By contrast, authentic trust exists in each and every instance of the practice of trust. Authentic trust focuses on relationships rather than single transactions or outcomes. The key to authentic trust is action and commitment: commitments made and commitments honored.

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<p><b>BASIC TRUST</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provides the basis for one's entire personality and demeanor toward the world.</li> <li>▪ Relatively open-ended and indiscriminate.</li> </ul> <p><b>AUTHENTIC TRUST</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Focused on relationships rather than single transactions or outcomes.</li> <li>▪ Exists wholly in its particulars, in each and every instance of the practice of trust.</li> <li>▪ The key to authentic trust is action, and, in particular, commitment: commitments made and commitments honored.</li> </ul> <p>Source: (Solomon &amp; Flores) Building Trust in Business, Politics, Relationships, and Life</p>	<p><b>TRANSACTIONAL TRUST</b></p> <p>Trust is a relationship of mutual confidence in contractual performance, honest communication, expected competence, and a capacity for unguarded interaction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Competence</li> <li>▪ Contractual</li> <li>▪ Communication</li> </ul> <p><b>TRANSFORMATIVE TRUST</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Conviction</li> <li>▪ Courage</li> <li>▪ Compassion</li> <li>▪ Community</li> </ul> <p>Source: (Dennis Reina &amp; Michelle Reina) Trust &amp; Betrayal in the Workplace: Building Effective Relationships in Your Organization</p>
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Additional Source: (Kouzes & Posner) The Leadership Challenge

### RESTORING TRUST & HEALING FROM BETRAYAL

Rebuilding trust often starts with an apology and doing something to make amends. The apology is more than saying "I'm sorry." The recipient will be listening for cues—generally non-verbal ones—that indicate that the apology is sincere and reliable, not just an easy or flippant thing to say so things can move on. The recipient may be listening for an acknowledgement that the person apologizing recognizes the damage and suffering connected with their action or omission. In making amends, people are sensitive to whether the action meets the need and the quality of energy behind the actions they witness. When trust has been damaged in the relationship we become all the more attentive to the apparent congruency between what a person says and what they embody. Any incongruency can be interpreted as just another reason not to trust.

Healing from betrayal and moving on to build trust anew requires a willingness to understand *and* to forgive. As described in the Reina Trust and Betrayal Model™, there are seven essential steps to healing from betrayal (See "Trust and Betrayal in the Workplace: Building Effective Relationships in Your Organization," by Dennis & Michelle Reina). The first step is understanding what actually happened. It takes courage to see the larger truth about a situation that created damage in a relationship. It takes courage and emotional resilience to be willing to see things in hindsight that you missed before. A second step in the healing process is allowing your feelings to surface. Acknowledging—and feeling—your own real feelings allows you to drop into the heart of the matter for yourself. It also may create the possibility of empathy for what another person is experiencing.

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We choose to heal the internal damage from trust breakdowns for the sake of being able to move on. The process tends to be messy, non-linear and often irrational. And when you are in the thick of it, it is important to have support. Opening yourself to receive support is the third step for healing. It is a way of taking care of yourself and the situation. Support comes in human and non-human form. Acknowledging what support you really need and taking the steps necessary to have it helps build trust in yourself.

Reframing the experience to include others' perspectives and to be open to learning is the fourth step for healing. The challenge is to learn and grow in resilience, overcoming the temptation to become hardened, rigid or closed. The fifth step is to take appropriate responsibility for our own intentions and actions. This may involve acknowledging—at least to oneself—the hidden agendas and often unconscious needs that drive our behaviors. You come to acknowledge that, despite good intentions, your actions may have produced unintended consequences. As you become fair witness to yourself, this inquiry for understanding can produce greater compassion and even fierce determination to grow in wisdom from the experience.

Understanding is only part of the equation for healing. The other necessary element is forgiveness. By its complex and paradoxical nature, forgiveness may be the most difficult aspect of the healing process. And just as trust begins with Self, so does forgiveness. If you feel betrayed, self-forgiveness may not be the first place you dedicate your attention. But it might be the most important thing you do in making yourself more trustworthy to yourself. Forgiving yourself and the other person unlocks the possibility for you to let go and move on.

Just as trust can be transactional or transformational in nature, so can forgiveness. For some, forgiveness is like a deal: I'll forgive you if you...apologize...or do something I recognize as being worthy of the gift of my forgiveness. When it is transactional, the willingness to forgive may grow incrementally, perhaps in parallel with the painstaking steps of a renewed willingness to trust. When it is transformational, forgiveness no longer depends on the actions of the other person. You grant forgiveness. People who have forgiven someone long dead, for example, know what this quality of forgiveness takes...and what opens up as a result.

When forgiveness is hard, it can help to remember the purpose of forgiving. Forgiveness allows your own healing. Someone coined the idea of "Forgiveness: Giving up all hope for a better past." Is forgiving the same as accepting that what happened was acceptable or good? Probably not. But there is an element of acceptance involved: accepting that what happened, happened. It can be like releasing an old debt, the debt of "you owed me" a different way of behaving. Is forgiving the same as no longer holding someone responsible (response-able) for fulfilling promises made in the wake of damaging behavior? Probably not. Each person defines forgiveness differently. More than anything, forgiveness is about embracing your own need to be whole and fully available to love and trust again, for the sake of your own precious life. With different awareness and actions for self care, you choose to be yourself.

## AGREEMENTS AND PRACTICE

It is essential – in relationship as in leadership – to be able to express what you want or need, understand what others need, and to create and fulfill agreements that are responsive to those needs. Our agreements allow us to connect and coordinate with others. How do you negotiate and fulfill agreements in such a way

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that produces value and satisfaction for yourself and others. How do your agreements reflect your commitment to be accountable for achieving desired the results? In making agreements, do you stay connected to your overriding commitments and what you care about?

In the workplace—and in human interaction generally—everything moves by way of conversation; we are taking and catalyzing action through language. What *promises* are you willing to make to yourself and others, and what tendencies do you notice about how you follow through? Are you able to articulate directly and unapologetically an *offer* or *request*? What affects your ability to respond unambiguously to an offer or request by communicating clear *acceptance*, making a *counteroffer*, or choosing to *decline* the offer or request? When someone declines your offer or request, are you able to *insist* when necessary while still taking care of your “customer’s” concerns? What happens for you when it is most appropriate to *quit*—whether that means no longer interacting with a certain person or a given behavior? While these are all acts in language, they are communicated and experienced by the whole Body. Each of these speech acts produces a host of corresponding bio-chemical activity. Without conscious awareness and a commitment to being fully present, we can easily become hostage to that which “lights us up” and throws us into more or less familiar patterns of reaction or defensiveness.

We tend to trust people who are self-aware and where our gut instinct tells us it is safe to trust them. We tend to distrust people who we experience as inauthentic, selfish, self-absorbed or self-righteous—people unaware of what they create around them, oblivious to their impact. We learn to distrust those who blame and judge others without considering their role in the experience, those who distort the truth and change the rules for their own purposes. Trust arises when people have confidence in how they and others will use knowledge and power. They practice the values they say are important to them. They speak the truth without blame or judgment. We are more likely to trust people who take responsibility for their role in a relationship. We experience as trustworthy someone who listens to and responds to needs and interests—their own and those of others—with appropriate action. You can rely on who is really there.

Building and restoring trust is a practice of making and fulfilling commitments. These are the commitments that give a life meaning and are connected to a deep sense of passion and values. In any relationship, you have implicit and explicit commitments about the quality of connection that you want to co-create and participate in. When things get difficult or fall apart, you need to know what you are fighting *for*, not just what you are fighting. In identifying your commitments, you also clarify your conditions of satisfaction. That way, you can ask for what you need and want, communicating clearly what will satisfy you. When you know to pay attention to your core commitments, you begin to connect with others with that same focus and quality of attention. You become curious about their commitments and their conditions of satisfaction. You learn to discern where and with whom to devote your energy. You become more authentic, powerful and trustworthy by taking action from informed choice and an abiding connection to what you care about.