



TRUST

This section explores one of the fundamental building blocks of relationships — trust. The ability to establish and consistently build trust is a key component of being a successful leader.

Factor	Insights and coaching points
<p>Competent Perception that I know what I'm doing.</p>	<p>In general, the higher you go, the more likely it is that competence is assumed. Other factors then play more heavily into overall perceptions of trustworthiness.</p> <p>Reality: When others lack the ability to fully and objectively assess your substance (which is most of the time), they make inferences based on your style (whether you run a tight ship, whether you appear organized, how you dress and talk, how well you know your numbers, etc.).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Style is not a substitute for substance. • But it is important to be aware how your style impacts perceptions of your competence and therefore, how it influences your ability to create important outcomes for you and the organization.
<p>Believable Perception that I tell the truth (“I say what I mean”) and that I am open (“I share relevant information”).</p>	<p>Six leadership behaviors that promote perceptions of believability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being candid and courageously authentic, even when it’s uncomfortable or otherwise costly in the short-term. • Being transparent. Revealing your real motives, desired outcomes, thoughts, and feelings. • Owning mistakes (instead of finger-pointing or excuse making). Most people will forgive your mistakes. They won’t forgive your perceived indifference to those mistakes or their consequences. • Giving credit to others. • Being clear. Being crisp and concise. Being consistent. • Showing a bias to inform others about things that may affect them.
<p>Reliable Perception that I follow through. My words and actions consistently match (“I mean what I say”).</p>	<p>Four coaching points for promoting perceptions of reliability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make and meet small commitments. • Be precise in how you manage commitments (see next page for more). • Learn to say “no.” Manage expectations. Don’t kill yourself for a -1. • Recognize that as a leader you are always broadcasting messages through multiple channels: (1) what you say; (2) your decisions and actions; (3) what you reward and tolerate. If you are not broadcasting the same messages on all three channels, you will not be seen as reliable or trustworthy. (Corollary: What you say goes over the weakest of the three channels; what you reward and tolerate broadcasts with the strongest signal).



<p>Connected Perception that I am on their side (“Belong to the same tribe”).</p>	<p>Millennia ago, humans developed the ability to quickly read subtle cues to sort everyone we encounter as either “in tribe” or “out of tribe.” If you’re in a primitive culture and you know that everyone around is a fellow tribesperson, you can let down your guard and devote your energy to hunting, gathering or finding a mate. But when members of other tribes are in your midst, you wisely stay wary. The “quick scan and sort” is a survival mechanism. We still use it (we’re hard wired with it) to intuitively (and usually sub-consciously) help us decide whom to trust.</p> <p>Coaching points to promote a sense of connection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put the needs of the team ahead of your short-term self-interests. • Be there; be visible (in person > on the phone > email). • Show up in a crisis. • Frequency of contact is more important than duration of contact (15 * 2 > 1 * 30). • Adopt their language and frames (instead of trying to impress them with your specialized language or jargon). • Demonstrate an understanding of what it’s like to walk a mile in their shoes.
<p>Vulnerable Perception that I trust others.</p>	<p>For others to trust you, they’ve got to be willing to make themselves vulnerable. That’s why, to promote mutual trust, it’s helpful to practice the Golden Rule and model the behavior you want to see. You can demonstrate appropriate vulnerability — and create a climate of trust — by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking a more Creative/Outcome-focused stance and shifting away from a reliance on Reactive tendencies that serve to protect the ego. • Demonstrating comfort and confidence in revealing your flaws and deficiencies, and making it safe for others to reveal their vulnerabilities. • Demonstrating comfort and confidence in requesting help, and making it safe for others to do the same. • Assuming positive intent — charitably interpreting others’ motives — until there is credible, compelling evidence that this orientation is unwarranted.

More on reliability: Be precise in how you manage commitments.

Demonstrate discipline in your response to requests. Commit to one of FIVE POSSIBLE ROUTES:

1. Yes. Saying “yes” to a request is a promise. For serial over-committers, it sometimes makes sense to go on a “yes diet,” where for two weeks you can’t say yes to anything on the spot; you can only commit to commit. Then go away and think about it.
2. No. This is a declined request. It is also a promise: “Not now, not ever.”
3. I have to check. This sounds like, “I can’t even tell you if I can do that; I have to go back and look at my calendar or I have to check with other people; I’ll get back to you by such and such a date [which is a promise].”
4. Counteroffer. “I can’t do that; I could do this.” Or “I can’t do it by that date, but I could do it by this date.”
5. Renegotiate. This is when you made the promise, then stuff happens, and you realize you can’t deliver. In that case, it’s your responsibility to let people know with enough time that they have an alternative. Hoping that something will change and you’ll still be able to pull it off and letting time slip away without telling people you are not going to deliver is unacceptable.