

Building Higher Trust 5 Planting a Seed of Trust in the First 10 Seconds

by Bob Whipple, MBA, CPLP



Developing a full mature trust between people takes time, because people need to see consistent behaviors. However, it is possible and extremely powerful to plant a seed of trust with another person in just a few seconds.

Malcolm Gladwell wrote a book entitled “Blink” where he described how human beings have a remarkable ability to size one another up in just a few seconds.

He called these encounters “thin slices” after the phenomenon where if you slice something thin enough, you can actually see through it.

We take in a huge amount of data about another person in a few seconds, and it is all going on subconsciously.

We make an initial decision about the trustworthiness of an individual, and that first impression has everything to do with how quickly the relationship develops into full blown and lasting trust.

The way we accomplish this remarkable feat is by observing the body language of the other person. Through several layers of data, we deduce how much this person can be trusted, and that initial feeling starts us out on a path to high or low trust.

The interesting thing is that most body language signals we send are done subconsciously. We may put on a smile consciously, but if it is not genuine, then the incongruent body language will send a signal for the other person to be on guard.

It is very difficult to manipulate your body language so you send consistent signals. If you are faking a genuine desire to meet the other person, it will show in numerous ways all over your body. The other person will pick it up on some level either consciously or subconsciously.

If the seed of trust is planted well during the first 10 seconds, then the relationship will take off toward high trust at more than 10 times the rate than if the seed was not planted. That is a significant advantage for any relationship.

Bonus Video

Here is [a brief video on Planting a Seed of Trust](#).

Bob Whipple, MBA, CPLP, is a consultant, trainer, speaker, and author in the areas of leadership and trust. He is the author of four books: 1. The Trust Factor: Advanced Leadership for Professionals (2003), 2. Understanding E-Body Language: Building Trust Online (2006), 3. Leading with Trust is Like Sailing Downwind (2009), and 4. Trust in Transition: Navigating Organizational Change (2014). In addition, he has authored over 1000 articles and videos on various topics in leadership and trust. Bob has many years as a senior executive with a Fortune 500 Company and with non-profit organizations