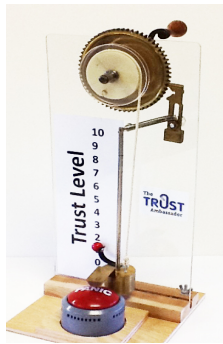


## Talent Development 47 Use of Models

by **Bob Whipple, MBA, CPTD**



Section 2.2 in the CPTD Certification program for ATD is Instructional Design. Section C states, “Skill in designing blueprints, schematics, and/or other visualization representations of learning and development solutions, for example wireframes, storyboards, and mock-ups.”

I do not use wireframes or storyboards in my work, but I do make heavy use of physical models because they help the concepts permeate into the brain much deeper. I will share a few examples of how I use physical models to spice up the training.

### Trust Barometer

I specialize in teaching leaders how to build higher trust. In part of my material, I want to emphasize how trust is built usually in small steps, but it can be destroyed easily in large steps. It starts out by describing a ratchet that goes one way with a series of clicks, but once the pawl is disengaged all the progress can be lost very quickly.

I actually built a “Trust Barometer” to demonstrate the phenomenon. Here is a link to a [three-minute video of me giving the demonstration](#). The physical model along with the panic scream really helps people visualize my key point about trust.

### Brain

When describing how the brain functions and how Emotional Intelligence can be enhanced, I use a full-size rubber model of the human brain that can be separated into the two cerebral cortices. Doing this allows me to describe the function of the Corpus Callosum, which is a band of fibers that connects the right side of the brain (where we deal with emotions) to the left side (where we deal with the consequences of possible actions).

The different parts of the brain are colored in bright colors to make them stand out. By engaging in training on Emotional Intelligence, we train the brain to be very efficient at

transmitting signals from the right side to the left side. This prevents us from lashing out at people when dealing with an emotional hit.

### **I AM RIGHT Button**

One of my most powerful demonstrations is a 3-inch button with the words I AM RIGHT on it. I start by explaining that all leaders wear the button at all times. This means, they are convinced that the thing they just said or did is the right thing to do at that moment. If not, they would do or say something else.

In other words, leaders feel totally justified in their actions. When someone challenges the rightness of something the leader is advocating, the leader instinctively becomes defensive because he or she was convinced of the rightness of the action.

The leader punishes the individual for sharing an alternate view, and this action destroys trust because people feel a lack of psychological safety. I then reveal the “cure” for the problem.

I hand everyone in the class one of the buttons. Now I explain to the leaders that when someone is candid with them and shares an alternate point of view, they are not automatically wrong because the leader now knows they are wearing the (invisible) button too.

The buttons become a prop that each participant in my class can take home and have fun with. They love the fun part, but the message about not punishing people who share their candor sinks in deeply. I believe that reinforcing candor (which means creating psychological safety) is the most important tool leaders can use to create higher trust.

### **Conclusion**

These are just three examples of physical props I use to liven up my classes and make them more enjoyable and memorable. I have many more props and also intersperse magic illusions that relate to the topics being discussed. These activities keep the class time active and fun for the participants.

*Bob Whipple, MBA, CPTD, is a consultant, trainer, speaker, and author in the areas of leadership and trust. He is the author of: The Trust Factor: Advanced Leadership for Professionals, Understanding E-Body Language: Building Trust Online, Leading with Trust is Like Sailing Downwind, and Trust in Transition: Navigating Organizational Change. Bob has many years as a senior executive with a Fortune 500 Company and with non-profit organizations.*

