

Building Higher Trust 43 Trust and Safety

by Robert Whipple: MBA, CPLP



The concept of trust is closely linked to safety. We all know that when we do not feel safe, it is hard to trust in that environment. My favorite quotation for the link is, “The absence of fear is the incubator of trust.”

It is easy to buy into the concept, but we rarely go the next step to dissect the different types of safety and provide tools that managers can use to instill more trust. Here are three main types of safety and the implications for each one.

Physical Safety

The issue of physical safety is normally assumed in a professional environment. During the pandemic, we all experienced a huge degradation of safety in all aspects of our lives. We all went through significant pain in an attempt to mitigate the hazards that we faced. Of course, this disruption occurred in our personal lives as well as our professional lives.

People need to feel safe on the job. In the medical professions or in the trades, there are obvious precautions that must be taken every day to remain safe. These safety measures were significantly ramped up during the COVID Pandemic.

Now, the need to focus attention on physical safety is present in every workplace.

Psychological Safety

Having the ability to express one’s feelings or thoughts without having to worry about retribution is a key element of trust. In many organizations, it is not safe to voice a dissenting opinion once the boss has advocated his or her belief. Doing so will result in some form of ridicule or other retribution that will make the employee sorry to have brought up the issue.

Leaders who are smart enough to “reinforce people when they are candid” have a much easier time establishing and maintaining trust. I believe the practice of reinforcing

candor is the single most powerful method of creating trust by demonstrating psychological safety.

I have written a separate article on [“Reinforcing Candor.”](#)

Emotional Safety

People need to know they are going to be OK. In a time of extreme unrest and disruptions within all organizations and, even in family life, many people are suffering in these times of uncertainty. People need to reach out and know there is some help available to them.

There are a number of agencies and groups available to keep people from becoming desperate. My personal favorite organization that offers significant help for people who are suffering is “LifeGuides.”

LifeGuides® offers a community of trained and certified Guides, who provide guidance in 400+ topics of Personal Growth, Lifelong Learning, or Life Challenges. By providing employees with experienced and empathetic support, across the broadest range of “everyday” life events, employees lead happier and more productive lives - both at home and at work.

If anyone is interested in learning more about LifeGuides, contact me at bwhipple@leadergrow.com and I will put you in touch with someone who can help you.

Bob Whipple is CEO of Leadergrow, Inc. an organization dedicated to growing leaders. Website www.leadergrow.com BLOG www.thetrustambassador.com He is author of the following books: *The Trust Factor: Advanced Leadership for Professionals*, *Understanding E-Body Language: Building Trust Online*, and *Leading with Trust is Like Sailing Downwind*

