

# Reducing Conflict 23 Extend More Trust

by Bob Whipple, MBA, CPTD



If you are a leader and you want to see more trust within your group, your first order of business is to find ways to extend more trust.

Many leaders fail to recognize this basic law of trust, and they picture their employees as being not trustworthy. The reality is that the vast majority of people will act in a trustworthy manner if they are well led.

Leaders who fail to extend trust because their people are “not trustworthy” need to take a long hard look in the mirror to view the source of their problem.

I have witnessed numerous managers who beat on their people and have little faith in their capabilities. The employees habitually respond by lowering their performance to match their leader’s expectations.

Trust is reciprocal, so if you want to experience more trust within your group, you need to find ways to show more trust in them.

## Some Examples

If you cannot yet trust a professional colleague to handle a large and critical negotiation with another organization, perhaps you can trust her to assemble and present the relevant documentation for more experienced lawyers to use in the negotiation.

If you cannot trust your teenage son to drive the car to a late-night party, perhaps you can trust him to check in with you if he needs help and to complete his homework before he leaves.

If you cannot yet trust a newly-hired mechanic to rebuild a complex transmission, perhaps you can trust him to assist in the disassembly and cleaning of the parts.

## Show the tendency to trust more

By showing an inclination to trust other people to the edge of their capability you will encourage them to trust you back and be motivated to gain more skills for the future. They will almost always rise to meet your expectations.

Do not extend blind trust way beyond the current capability of the individual. That approach would be setting him up for failure. If there is a failure along the way, don’t persecute the individual, instead consider it a learning opportunity for the person.

We all learned to walk and talk by trial and error. We fell on our backside enough times to figure out how to balance our huge mass on two tiny feet. When you think about the skill of walking upright, it really is a miracle we can do it, yet we just take it for granted in most cases.

Give people the blessing of learning by trial and error. In the case of walking, coach them gently on how to obtain better balance. Don't yell at them for falling down. Praise them for getting back up and trying again.

### **Free Video**

Here is a 3-minute video that contains more information on how to extend more trust.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3clw\\_IY58QM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3clw_IY58QM)

*Bob Whipple, MBA, CPTD, 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.*