

Building Higher Trust 87 Trust Requires Constant Attention

by Bob Whipple, MBA, CPTD



Several aspects in life require constant attention. Love is a perfect example of this philosophy. You can never assume you have enough love and can stop investing in it. The minute you let your guard down you are in danger of losing momentum. It is not a burden to invest in love because the benefits are foundational to life.

Trust has the same characteristic as love

Because trust is transactional, you should never assume that your investment in it is no longer needed. In other articles, I have likened trust between people to be similar to a bank account. There is a current balance, and we make deposits and withdrawals on a regular basis. My observation is that trust is easily gained in small deposits. It can also be lost in large or small withdrawals.

The reason we rarely make huge deposits in the trust account with people is due to the nature of the deposits. It takes a special situation to create the opportunity for a mega deposit in trust. The example I often use is if you have to land a plane in the Hudson River. There are more everyday situations that might constitute an opportunity for a large deposit.

Example of a large trust deposit

Suppose you were on an overnight business trip. You have just retired after an exhausting day with a client. Your cell phone rings. It is a supervisor from your plant informing you that there was a small fire on one machine. The entire shift was forced to evacuate at night. Of course, you express your shock and concern. You might decide to get out of bed and drive four hours to get to the plant in person. That would constitute a large deposit in trust.

Going out of your way to show you care is a good way to build trust quickly. On the withdrawal side, it is easy to have a small withdrawal become huge rather quickly.

People read your body language

When you interface with people, they instinctively read your true feelings based on your body language. Especially hurtful to trust is when your body language does not agree with what you say. Certain quick and small gestures called “micro-expressions” can give away your true feelings when talking with people. It may be just a slight roll of the eyes or a pull of your cheek to one side. It can have huge implications.

Authenticity is the antidote

The way to stay out of trouble with body language is to ensure you are 100% authentic with people. Your gestures and words are always consistent, and people come to expect that of you. An important component of being consistent is to watch your private self-talk. Never allow yourself to lapse into an unhealthy private attitude toward a person. The disconnection will eventually be evident to people.

Conclusion

Maintaining trust requires constant attention and care. Practice the art of being transparent and genuine with people and your track record will improve with time.

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