

Leadership Barometer 171 Are We There Yet? Robert T. Whipple, MBA CPTD



If you are a parent, you have heard “Are we there yet?” many times from your children. The view from the back seat of a car in a car seat is severely limited. It is boring just sitting there, and the child anticipates the fun we will have upon arrival. The same frustration occurs in organizations that are pursuing a better culture.

Obtaining a state of high trust is a long journey and we never reach a state of perfection.

Painting a picture of the future

Leaders have the responsibility to model a better existence for their organization. A vision of a smooth-running organization with no conflict is highly appealing. Leaders frequently talk about a culture of high trust. Many actions move us in the direction of higher trust, but it seems we never fully reach the destination.

Culture requires constant investment

Culture at work is a race with no finish line. If you ask, “Are we there yet?” the answer will always be “no.” There are always further investments that we can make. Obtaining maximum trust is a great goal but do not think you can ever reach it. There is always more that you can do.

Likewise, it is the mindset to keep investing in a culture of trust that makes it so powerful. In [“Lead the Field”](#) Earl Nightingale observed that true success is in the journey rather than the destination.

Similar to love

In a family situation, we must always invest in love. We never reach a state of perfection. I believe the real power of love is in the continual investment in sharing it. As we strive to deepen our love and affection for each other, we enable excellence. We should never take our foot off the gas because we have achieved love. Keep improving!

In our organization, are we there yet?

We never arrive at perfection, but that does not make the journey any less rewarding. The more trust we can build in an organization, the more benefits will accrue. I have studied organizational trust for decades. I have written four books on the topic. My own observation is that the productivity multiplier of high trust versus low trust is two to five times. What organization would not welcome that level of forward momentum?

In addition, trust is the best antidote for the “quiet quitting” phenomenon many organizations are experiencing recently. For many organizations, the lack of a culture of trust is proving to be fatal. Do not let your organization fail because of low trust.

Conclusion

When it comes to building a culture of trust, we should never ask, “Are we there yet?” Rather, we should ask “what more can we do to invest even more in our culture?” Doing that will provide the greatest possible rewards.

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