

## Building Trust Remotely

### Bob Whipple “The Trust Ambassador” MBA CPTD



I have heard that building trust remotely is more difficult than when you have a local team. It stands to reason that working together in close proximity will allow teams to work out the kinks.

In reality, it all depends on the quality of the leaders. With poor leadership, working together can lead to even more difficulties than working apart.

Let's look at some ideas leaders can use to allow teams to build strong trust remotely.

1. **At first, work face-to-face on a set of foundational team principles.** The principles include values, vision, mission, and behaviors. Establish these four elements together and get a strong agreement before proceeding.
2. **Establish a culture of mutual support and care.** When there are apparent disconnects, always assume the best intent. Investigate the differences and seek win-win solutions.
3. **Increase transparency.** Work to increase the level of information shared. This action demonstrates trust for the team members. They will reciprocate by showing more trust in the team.
4. **Promote psychological safety.** Have everyone understand that it is safe to voice concerns. Reinforce rather than punish their candor.
5. **Communicate more with remote members.** Let people know they are not forgotten, but do so in a loving way. Avoid the temptation to “check-up” on people who are remote. Check-in rather than check-up.
6. **Encourage reasonable risk-taking.** Help the entire team realize that creativity leads to growth. If there are setbacks, use them as learning opportunities. Be sure to celebrate when the team moves forward.

7. **Nip small problems in the bud.** Do not let the vicissitudes of life and work boil up into major obstacles. Pay attention to what is going on behind the scenes.
8. **When difficult measures are unavoidable, allow people time to grieve.** Most people have the ability to bounce back after a setback if the culture is supportive.

## **Conclusion**

These are just a few of the rules that can help leaders build trust remotely. They take practice and patience, but they really do work if applied correctly.

*The preceding information was adapted from the book **Leading with Trust is like Sailing Downwind**, by Robert Whipple. It is available on [www.leadergrow.com](http://www.leadergrow.com).*

*Robert Whipple is also the author of **The TRUST Factor: Advanced Leadership for Professionals, Understanding E-Body Language: Building Trust Online, and Trust in Transition: Navigating Organizational Change**. Bob consults and speaks on these and other leadership topics. He is CEO of Leadergrow Inc. a company dedicated to growing leaders.*