

# Six Guaranteed Ways to Build Trust With Your Team



As a leader, you know that trust is one of the most crucial things you must build within your organization. However, it can be challenging to understand how to build genuine trust amongst your team. Some managers try to create trust by organizing social activities or team-building exercises, but this alone won't be enough. Good communication and teamwork will help you build a successful foundation of trust. Here are six tips to help you build trust within your team.



## Give Trust to Get Trust

Trust is one of the core foundations of leadership. It is also one of the most powerful motivators. People want to be trusted, and if you want to gain respect and trust, show it to others. Trust is a two-way street, but many leaders think they'll get compliance if they simply give orders. While this will certainly get the work done, you won't have the buy-in and loyalty of your team. The reality is that most people will move mountains to repay this simple but powerful gesture of respect.

As often as possible, give others opportunities to develop plans or strategies and lead meetings. Any action showing you trust them will strengthen their confidence in you as their leader. For example, provide your team with clear expectations on deliverables and deadlines. It's also important to listen, then ask questions. Asking first shows trust in others' abilities and intelligence. It also allows everyone to offer ideas and share perspectives that will improve upon yours, helping to solve problems in new ways.

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## Keep Your Team Informed

Like every organization, your team should have a set of clearly defined values. Work from a set of values that describe what your team members should aspire to and how to be successful. If people know what's expected of them, they'll take less time figuring out what actions are acceptable and which ones aren't. Clear communication is also crucial at the top of an organization. Executives can't make decisions if everyone isn't on the same page. Employees need to know exactly how they fit into the organization's strategy if they want to contribute effectively.

When leaders keep employees in the dark, it creates an uncertain work environment and lowers morale. Transparency between employees and managers is vital to creating a culture of trust. Not communicating bad news leaves workers guessing what's going on and causes them unnecessary stress. It's also better for businesses to be open with their employees about their performance reviews and layoffs for downsizing or switching markets. If you communicate everything you know and commit to making things better, even if the outlook isn't looking so great right now, your employees won't feel compelled to look elsewhere because they'll feel like they're getting all the information they need from you while you work towards a solution together.

## Let Your Team Members Shine

As a manager, you know that giving credit where credit is due is essential. Many managers are accustomed to getting praise for their work, but your job isn't to be the center of attention. Your job is to help your team members accomplish tasks and make sure they get the praise they deserve for doing so. Recognition can be as simple as saying, "Good job!" but it's also vital that you help your team members get the recognition they deserve from others.

Ensure your team's contributions to the company are highlighted, and let your teammates bask in the public admiration. Remember that each team member has personal goals. By recognizing each person's achievements, you encourage them to reach those goals. To build trust and promote open communication, identify your team members for their hard work. Thank them for their contributions to the business, and let them know you appreciate what they've done. You can recognize achievements in several ways. At each meeting, ask everyone to share one piece of good news. You can also offer to buy lunch or give a gift card to someone who's done something outstanding.

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## Hold Yourself Accountable

The root of all trust is accountability. Leaders must create an atmosphere of accountability where everyone takes responsibility for their actions. You must first hold yourself accountable and call others to own up to their own actions, behaviors, and performance. It will be very difficult to expect your team to be accountable if they don't see you setting the example first. Therefore, employees need to trust the leader, and the leader needs to be trustworthy. In other words, you have to walk the talk and practice what you preach.

For example, if you promise to do something, follow through. If a task doesn't get completed, take responsibility for it and explain to your team how it will be handled. Take the time to recognize those who do a great job of getting things done. This is one of the easiest ways to reinforce good behavior and keep those behaviors going. Your team's actions are a direct reflection of you as the overall leader. Teach them well and hold them accountable to the same standards you have yourself.

## Show Your Vulnerable Side

One of the key characteristics of a great leader is their ability to show vulnerabilities. As a leader, you should work towards being transparent and open to the people who work for you. If you make a mistake, admit it. If other people give you feedback, take it in stride and do something positive with that feedback. Make sure to thank the people who provide you with input about your performance.

Mistakes happen – it's how you deal with them that counts. When a team member makes a mistake, take the blame and give private feedback. For example, if a team member forgot to add an essential topic to the meeting agenda, you can prevent embarrassment by taking responsibility for the oversight yourself and providing feedback. Encourage the team member to share what happened with their peers. It goes double for your own mistakes. Always acknowledge when you make a mistake, whether with a client or an internal project. You can also work on your vulnerability by listening actively and admitting when you don't have the answers. Sometimes, a leader's boldest thing when listening is to accept other people's ideas and solutions.

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## Tackle the Difficult Issues

When faced with difficult issues, tackle them head-on without letting it linger on the backburner. While your team members have empathy for you in navigating the complicated matters, they expect you to do your job so they can do theirs. Their compassion won't last forever—they need to see the department goals moving forward so the work they do can also contribute to the desired outcomes.

By deciding to tackle complex issues at work in a timely way, you'll gain your team's trust because they'll see that you can solve problems before they occur. When a problematic situation arises, make a plan to tackle it, assess what is needed, decide how to address it, and execute a solution. Work on these issues as a team by keeping open communication lines and listening to others. For example, if there is a project that will be difficult for your team takes on, make sure you are involved in the process of that project and offer your help where needed. This can help keep a project from falling behind schedule in time and resources. One of a leader's most significant challenges is to bring closure to a problem that has consumed a lot of time and resources for everyone involved.

Trust is essential to a successful team, and establishing it is one of the most important things you can do as a leader. Trust isn't something you demand from your team; you earn it by demonstrating your own integrity and ability over time. Each small decision and interaction can help build up this trust which will lead to better employee engagement, loyalty, motivation, and retention.

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