

## Building Trust through Leadership

Building trust with employees is a key component of a company's culture, and requires a conscious effort. Once trust is lost, it can be very difficult to recover, leading to major barriers for employee engagement and a broken workplace environment.

Managers and supervisors are naturally prepared to act when there is a customer complaint, an equipment failure or a leaking roof, however, many leaders get defensive when someone points out that their culture is broken.



One perspective when evaluating your culture is to acknowledge and measure the “trust” factor of employees and the impact on their performance. Management's ability to genuinely listen and value employee's feelings and ideas require that their opinions are not minimized or dismissed.

It is also important while engaging with employees at a personal level to respect individual confidences, and avoid acknowledging or participating in rumor or speculation.

Here are additional considerations for leadership when building trust:

- Be visible and available to your employees and make every effort to create informal settings when possible.
- Do not delay the delivery of relevant information, and resist the temptation to communicate a vague or superficial presentation of reality.
- Treat the occasional mistake as a learning opportunity, and recognize employee achievements as part of their legacy.
- At a foundational level, consistently doing what you say should be the essence of your behavior.
- Celebrate individual and team performance, and avoid a focus on corporate results that dilute personal effort.

In summary, building trust is the responsibility of leaders, and opens the opportunity for HR departments and consultants to promote a strategy that impacts a company's culture and employee engagement.

Whether an individual is preparing for a leadership role, or has been in a position of leadership for a time, a leadership assessment is a powerful tool to determine their natural leadership orientation.