

Health and well-being

# FACT SHEET

## BUILDING TRUST IN THE WORKPLACE:

*Trust is the highest form of human motivation. It brings out the very best in people.*

Stephen Covey

### Introduction

Trust is an essential part in managing people and building a high-performance organisation. It's the foundation upon which all relationships are built. As in any relationship, trust is central to stable and productive workplace relations. High trust environments correlate positively with high degree of employee involvement, commitment and organisational success. If trust is present in the workplace, the organisation gets maximum effort and commitment, and the employees receive security and know they are appreciated.

### So what is trust?

Trust is central to any healthy relationship and is the foundation of any healthy work environment. To articulate what trust is, think about the characteristics of trust. They include doing what it is you have promised, acting with integrity, having the competence or skill to carry out tasks, being reliable, honest and caring. When people talk about trustworthy companies and individuals, they use enthusiastic phrases, as "They have never let me down before," "They do what they say they will do," "I know they have my best interests in mind," "He knows what he's talking about and admits it when he doesn't."

One perspective of trust is to consider it from the inside out – self-trust it at the core of being trustworthy and trusting. These concepts comprise the three sides of the Trust Triangle.

### The Trust Triangle

#### I. Self-Trust – Inner Trust

Self-trust is based on acceptance of yourself and your own inner intuition and wisdom. It is that deep, intuitive sense or gut feeling about something. If you follow your inner intuition, your self-trust is high. Peter Block sums it up as "Trust comes out of the experience of pursuing what is true. What is true lies within each of us." Self-trust is at the core of trusting others and being trustworthy.

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### 2. Trustworthiness – Being Worthy of Trust

Usually when we think of trust, we think in terms of trusting others. But how trustworthy are you in others eyes? Do you follow through on your promises? Do you act with integrity? Are you honest, caring and reliable? Do you have the competence or skills to carry out the task at hand? Do you fulfil others' expectations of you? You are worthy of others trust if you score high in these areas.

### 3. Trusting of others, this is based on:

#### Expectations

We typically trust someone if we know they will fulfil our expectations

#### Characteristics

We each have a set of characteristics, known only to us, of someone who we deem worthy of trust.

#### World view

Our degree of comfort with trust is also based on whether we see the world as a friendly, safe place or a hostile, unsafe place. The more we see the world as basically friendly and safe, the more open we will be to trusting others. The reverse is true if we see the world as unsafe and unfriendly.

#### Risk

Another factor impacting our comfort with trust is the risk involved and thus our degree of vulnerability. Risk and trust are inseparable. The more we are at risk or feeling vulnerable, the more trust is an issue. We are often distrusting in order to reduce our risk and vulnerability.

#### Common values, interests and assumptions

When we share common values, interests and assumptions, trust flows.

#### Capabilities

When we are confident about the capabilities of others to fulfil what is expected of them, we feel we can trust them.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Self Trust – Inner Trust</b></li> <li>● Knowing your values and beliefs</li> <li>● Owning your intentions</li> <li>● Living from inner integrity</li> <li>● Provides a solid base for trusting others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Trustworthy – Worth of Trust</b></li> <li>● Being worthy of others' belief in you</li> <li>● Living from honesty, caring and integrity</li> <li>● Following through on commitments and promises</li> <li>● Only trustworthiness will produce trust</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Trusting – Trust others</b></li> <li>● Seeing the world basically as a "safe-friendly place"</li> <li>● Believing others will fulfil your expectations</li> <li>● Trusting builds motivation and empowerment</li> </ul>
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Enduring trust is a process that takes time and effort, learn more about this on the  
Champion in Health and Well-being Management.

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## Guidelines to building trust:

### Learn to Trust yourself

- Clarify for yourself why you are doing something. Are your intentions pure?
- “Listen” to your thoughts. Are they pre-programmed or are they your own, based on your own experience?
- Trust your inner wisdom. Listen to your “voice” inside yourself.

### Trust others

- Get to know people as people. Check that you are not being driven by prejudices. Seek the best out of people.
- Speak your truth.

### Be trustworthy

- Achieve results. Deliver on your promises.
- Act with integrity. Live consistently by your values and ethics.
- Demonstrate concern. Act respectfully to others and show you care.

Lead the way by creating a safe and trusting environment for others to be their best too.

## Conclusion

Trust is central to productive workplace relationships. Building trust is a win-win strategy – the employee gains from feeling acknowledged, respected and trusted; the manager gains from having a happy, motivated workforce, the company gains from improved productivity, and a sense of well-being prevails.