

4 Essential Steps to Building Trust in Leadership



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Trust in leadership is an integral part of a successful organization – employees need to feel like they can depend on their leaders. Not only does trust offer team members support as they do their work and guidance that they feel like they can follow, but it also contributes to employee engagement. That's because employees are more motivated to put in more effort and go the extra mile when they're in a workplace that's transparent. So how can you develop trust?

Books such as *The Thin Book of Trust* by Charles Feldman and *The Four Factors of Trust* by Amelia Dunlop and Ashley Richfield explore why trust is so crucial in organizations and what leaders can do to foster it. Here are the top four key components to developing workplace trust for long-term organizational success.

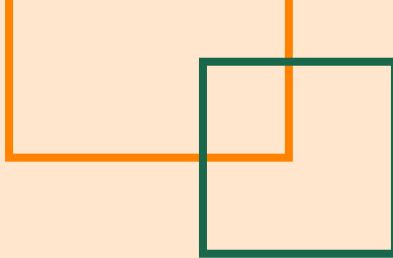
1. Be open and provide transparency

It's essential to be honest – no matter if things are going really well in your organization or if you're facing difficult times – so that people aren't making up stories in their heads about what might be happening. Taking a transparent approach by being open about challenges helps employees feel like they can trust you because they know you're going to be honest with them since you're not just going to paint a rosy picture. It also boosts their confidence and self-perception since they'll feel that their supervisors trust them with telling that information.



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2. Show that you care

Many organizations still have the old-fashioned notion that in order to maintain a professional image at work, you need to shut off all emotions when working with others, especially those who report to you. Being caring and warm is somehow seen as weak – but that’s simply not true. When emotions are involved, such as empathy and genuine care, employees are actually more likely to trust their leaders. At the end of the day, we are human beings, not human doings, and it’s critical that we treat each other as such – even at work.

3. Do what you say you’re going to do

As a leader, it’s important to reflect on whether you’re actually dependable and someone your team can rely on across the board. For example, if you commit to something, such as moving forward with a project, mentoring someone, or recommending a team member for a promotion, are you actually following through? If you continually make empty promises, people may start to become suspicious of you and think that you’re not a trustworthy leader.

4. Be competent

Finally, ask yourself if you’re capable of fulfilling the responsibilities that your role requires. This is important because at the end of the day, employees want to follow someone who understands their job, has knowledge, and can teach them about their roles and responsibilities in the organization.

We see it time and time again that across all types of organizations, successful and trusted leaders are the people who we feel actually do what they say they’re going to do. This kind of leadership creates an environment where employees feel supported and motivated to succeed, and organizations reap the rewards of an engaged workforce.

Wondering if your organization benefits from trust in leadership? OGC offers [organizational assessments and employee surveys](#) that provide leaders an objective, 3rd party analysis of current state. Our [leadership workshops](#) teach key skillsets such as creating psychological safety and communicating transparently. Reach out to us to learn more!

Thank you to OGC Sr. Consultant and Facilitator Michele Kawamoto for serving as contributing editor on this article.

About Orange Grove Consulting



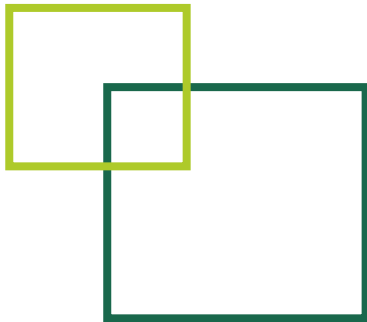
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