

The Manager's Emotional Bank Account - Trust

Stephen Covey says that building trust in a partnership is like an "emotional bank account. Whenever withdrawals exceed deposits" the relationship can become "bankrupt". A manager's success in any organization depends directly upon the trust established with each partnership throughout that organization. Those partnerships include manager to subordinate, manager to peer, and manager to superior. Here is a short trust survey to help identify areas that could help us improve as well as provide a guide to keep us focused on improving our trust quotient.

1. Do I Follow Through On All Projects?

It is important that I maintain consistency of effort in my role on all projects. While the natural tendency is to provide superior effort for those projects assigned by the boss, whenever those projects of importance to subordinates and peers are neglected I am unconsciously making withdrawals from my trust account with those individuals.

2. Do I Keep All Confidences?

It can be tempting to tell the boss of a confidence provided by a subordinate or peer in the belief that this demonstrates that you are a "go to person" in the organization. The problem is that the boss now knows that you cannot maintain a confidence and will see you as a manager of last resort. Once a confidence is broken it doesn't take long for everyone to know that has happened.

3. Do I Honor Agreements and Do What I Say I Am Going To Do?

Many people today think nothing about walking away entirely from an agreement, or only partially fulfilling the requirements of the agreement. That news travels fast. Future agreements will be harder to achieve and occur less often. The damage here is more obvious than that of failing to do what I say I am going to do. While often viewed as much less of a commitment than an agreement, it is a critical component of success for a manager. These "smaller agreements" help define our character for all to see and know.

4. Do I Share Information With People Who Need It?

Information is power. When I share information with subordinates and peers, they instantly understand that I have their best interests and the best interests of the company at heart. I am immediately recognized as a team player.

5. Do I Give Credit To Co-workers Who Help Me?

Success is prevalent in an environment that is void of credit hogs. All things are possible when no one worries about who gets the credit, because they know that everyone will.



6. Do I Show Respect To All My Co-workers Regardless Of Their Position?

Respect is an indication of value. Someone that does not feel respected does not feel valued. If they do not feel that I value them, they will never trust me.

7. Do I Look For Someone To Blame When Something Goes Wrong?

No one trusts those who are quick to establish blame. However, they almost immediately trust problem solvers and those who seek solutions. It remains important to understand what caused something to go wrong. But the first objective must be to fix the immediate problem, and then develop a common solution for preventing a recurrence.

8. Am I Candid When People Ask My Opinion?

Candid means not being secretive about my thoughts and opinions regarding the business issues. It does not mean being mean-spirited or rude in expressing those opinions.

9. Do I Avoid Micro-managing Projects?

Micro-managing of projects screams distrust. If I distrust those involved, they will surely distrust me.

10. Am I Critical Of My Team Members Outside Of The Team Environment?

Criticism travels fast. Criticism outside of the team environment travels the fastest. Nothing is gained and a significant amount of trust is lost whenever this happens. Once violated, it is one of the most difficult trust issues to overcome.