

## Building trust in a modern workplace - Webinar March 22, 2011

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All quotes below are verbatim as stated by Stephen M.R. Covey during this webinar.  
For additional comments see [Twitter](#) at #SpeedofTrust

### Today's Feature Speaker



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### Why is trust so important?

The workplace is now driven by interconnectedness, globalization, diverse languages and cultures. Consider Japan's recent crises affecting the entire world in terms of safety, supply chains, politics and economics.

### "Trust affects the speed at which you can move"

Where trust is low, work is less fun, less engaging and takes more time to get things done. We add steps to the process to compensate for a lack of trust. We build so many processes and procedures, rules and regulations for the 5% we don't trust, not the 95% we do

Examples: trust and confidence in air travel is very low post 9/11. We may be grateful for the extra security measures but the cost is high and it takes each of us longer at the airport to move through the gate. Enron and other scandals have eroded trust in public companies and public markets so the U.S. Congress passed new rules and procedures to compensate.



Covey speaks of the "Trust Tax" in which speed goes down and costs go up when trust is lower. The reverse "Trust Dividend" also occurs such that high trusting relationships are correlated with greater speed and lower costs. Notably, in the list of 100 best places to work, two thirds of the criteria are related to trust. These organizations outperform others by 400% or more.



***"It's trust that turns a group of people into a team."***

***You might be able to coordinate or cooperate with others but "without trust, you don't really collaborate."***

### Why is trust #1 ?

1. "If you get good at trust, it will make you better at everything else you need to do. You'll get the performance multiplier working in your favour."
2. Trust is going down at large and, in some cases, at an all time low. This includes our trust in institutions, media, government, political parties, business, education, churches and health care.

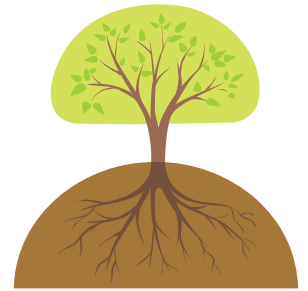
With high trust culture, you get:

- partnership
- innovation
- faster and less costly execution of strategy

Lack of trust impacts negatively on communication. It dilutes what you say and forces listeners to filter your words through their perception of distrust

Covey's three big ideas:

1. "Trust is an economic driver, not merely a social virtue.
2. Trust is the #1 leadership competency of the new global economy.
3. Trust is a learnable competency."



He described **trust as a function of credibility** (believability) such that one can not develop more trust than the credibility that an individual, team or company already has. Although we often speak of trust as an issue of integrity, Covey adds three other core components to credibility and relates them to a tree:

Cores of credibility	Description
<b>Integrity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forms the roots of the tree</li> <li>• Includes honesty, truthfulness, congruence: walk the talk, do what you say you value</li> <li>• Takes humility and courage. Easy to have integrity when no cost or consequence. True character is apparent when one does the right thing even though times are tough, cost and consequence are involved.</li> </ul>
<b>Intent</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The trunk of the tree</li> <li>• Includes motive, agenda. "Your motive matters."</li> <li>• Best motive is caring about the people and partners you serve and they have to know it. If they don't believe you care about them, they will withhold trust and question your motive and agenda.</li> <li>• Best agenda is mutual benefit (win-win), which supports interdependence. Self-serving motive (just win) will erode trust.</li> </ul>
<b>Capabilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The branches of the tree</li> <li>• Includes talents, skills, expertise, knowledge.</li> <li>• "Key question here is are you relevant, current, getting better?"</li> <li>• Capability = relevance = credibility.</li> <li>• Are we willing to reinvent ourselves? Look at Apple's resurgence over the past decade.</li> </ul>
<b>Results</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The fruit on the tree</li> <li>• Includes past and current performance on which people will project future performance</li> <li>• Track record of results = confidence.</li> <li>• Gap in performance erodes your team's trust in you to get things done.</li> </ul>

Thirteen behaviours matter more than others in building trust. See details in [Accelerating performance at the speed of trust](#). Examples:

Behaviours that create trust	What erodes trust
3. <b>Create transparency</b> – the more the better "People don't trust what they can't see"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hidden agendas and motives force people to ask for financials and other details to confirm</li> </ul>
9. <b>Clarify expectations</b> (especially with mobile workforce, virtual teamwork)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expectations are left undefined, accountability is lacking or expectations are shifting and arbitrary (shooting arrow first, drawing target second)</li> </ul>
13. <b>Extend trust</b> – grow more trust by giving more of it, which people will receive and return	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead with distrust and people will respond with distrust and suspicion.</li> </ul>

**"These are common sense things but they are not common practice."**

## **Questions from participants:**

### **Q. How can we talk about trust without getting defensive?**

A. Talk about performance and competency (language of business around capabilities) instead of “I don’t trust you” or “No one trusts you”. Focus on the behaviour not the person. Use language from 13 behaviours and 4 cores of credibility. We often talk about trust as solely an integrity gap but could be intentions, capabilities and/or results.

### **Q. How do we market trust? If working in a low trust environment, what is the first step? How to swim through the sharks?**

A. Best practices include:

1. Make the business case for trust and frame it in financial terms using the language of business, not just a social nice-to-have or trust for the sake of trust. If it takes too long to do things around here, if it’s too cumbersome, the roots of this are often trust issues that manifest in control points.
2. Connect trust to key business drivers such as engagement, collaboration, partnership, innovation and execution of strategy. Make trust the competitive advantage or “secret sauce” for being agile, responsive and having clients refer others to your business.
3. Declare the creation of trust as an explicit objective in addition to reducing cycle times or increasing productivity.
4. Measure trust levels and components accurately. Trust is a perception that can be measured through surveys, even in a low-trust environment (but must ensure anonymity). Measure all four components of credibility and all 13 trust behaviours to focus in on issues (answers the “why”). Will usually see gaps between management’s and employees’ perceptions of trust levels. Only 15% of companies are currently measuring this but Covey expects considerable growth in this measurement over next 10 years. Monitor social networks to see what people are saying about your organization. Use anonymous polls on web conferencing platforms.
5. Introduce the framework and process of growing trust through training, consulting and application. Example: Frito-Lay trained 40,000 employees on language and behaviours of trust and made it an expectation of how employees behave.

### **Q. How can we restore trust?**

A. Not easy but most trust can be restored. You must behave your way out of it. If trust is severely broken, may need third party (“trust bridge”).

- Confront reality that trust has been lost.
- Practice accountability and own up to responsibility.
- Right the wrong and issue apologies or restitution as needed.
- Recognize that it will take time to prove trustworthiness.
- Keep new commitments.
- Start acting trustworthy and it will become contagious.
- Note that we already have the tools to build trust. Now we need the paradigm to support it: the recognition that trust matters and can be improved.