

# 360 Degrees of Trust Model™ Overview

*A behavioral diagnostic framework that measures how trust is built, experienced, and sustained across individuals, teams, and leadership within an organization.*

Trust is not a “soft skill.” It is a critical capability that directly affects speed, cost, innovation, retention, and overall organizational performance. **Within the 360 Degrees of Trust Model, trust is defined as the confidence that people will act with integrity, competence, and respect in ways that support shared success.**

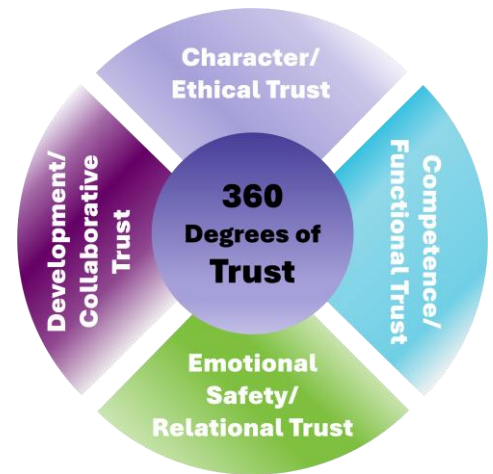
Measuring trust provides clear insight into where culture, individuals, team dynamics, or leadership behaviors may be unintentionally draining value. High-trust environments consistently produce better results, stronger collaboration, and more engaged teams.

The **360 Degrees of Trust Model** synthesizes insights from leading research in leadership, organizational psychology, and trust development to create a practical, measurable framework for building high-trust cultures.

By measuring **18 Dimensions of Trust** on a **5-Point Scale** across **four layers of the organization**, the model provides a holistic view of organizational culture, interpersonal dynamics, and team synergy.

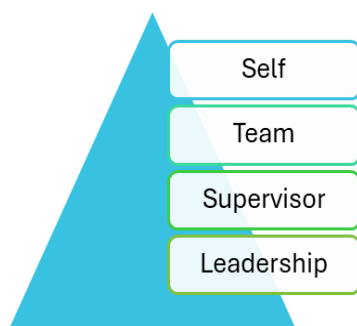
Using this tool, HR professionals and organizational leaders can measure critical workplace behaviors in real time. The model moves beyond abstract discussions of trust by assessing the specific behaviors and organizational dynamics that strengthen or weaken it, providing clear, actionable insight into how trust is experienced across the organization.

With this insight, organizations can diagnose where trust is strong or fragile, identify which behaviors matter most in specific contexts, and implement targeted strategies to improve leadership effectiveness, strengthen relationships, and build more resilient, high-performing teams.



## The 4 Layers of Assessment

For each portion of the survey, employees reflect on four perspectives within the organization: **self, team, supervisor, and senior leadership**.



**Self:** Practicing self-reflection is essential for personal accountability and professional growth. This layer encourages individuals to evaluate their own behaviors and identify opportunities for development.

**Team:** Building synergistic, high-performing teams begins with strong team dynamics. This layer allows teams to assess their current culture and collectively identify goals and agreements for improvement.

**Supervisor:** Research consistently shows that employees often leave managers rather than organizations. The 360 Degrees of Trust model provides leaders with meaningful feedback about their relationships with their teams, creating a foundation for focused leadership development.

**Leadership:** This layer focuses on the organization’s senior leadership and key decision-makers. Whether this includes an executive leadership team, a C-suite, or nonprofit officers, employees can assess the trustworthiness and effectiveness of those whose decisions shape their day-to-day work.



## Organizational Score

The whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Scores across all four layers are combined to generate a **360-degree view of trust across the organization**.

This comprehensive score reflects the overall health of the organization and highlights patterns in how trust is experienced across teams and leadership levels.

From the full organizational picture to individualized reports, the model provides a clear interpretation of results along with targeted recommendations for improvement, helping organizations intentionally strengthen trust where it matters most.

## 18 Dimensions of Trust

Character/ Ethical Trust	Competence/ Functional Trust	Emotional Safety/ Relational Trust	Developmental/ Collaborative Trust
Integrity & Values Alignment	Credibility	Psychological Safety	Growth Mindset
Fairness & Advocacy	Dependability	Connection	Valuing Feedback
Self-Accountability	Clarity	Addressing Conflict	Collaborative Authority
Self-Compassion	Transparency	Team Orientation	Grace for Mistakes
		Holding Others Accountable	Extending Trust

## Foundations of the Model

The 360 Degrees of Trust model draws on decades of research in leadership, organizational psychology, and trust development. Rather than focusing on trust as a single abstract concept, the model integrates insights from several well-established frameworks to identify the specific behaviors that build or erode trust in organizations.

Research on leadership credibility and trust emphasizes the importance of character and competence, a concept widely explored in the work of Stephen M. R. Covey and others. Studies on psychological safety, particularly those led by Amy Edmondson, demonstrate that environments where people feel safe to speak openly and learn from mistakes consistently outperform those where fear and silence dominate.

Additional insights come from research on values-based leadership, vulnerability, and feedback, including work popularized by Brené Brown, as well as studies of high-performing teams that highlight the importance of trust and collaboration. The model also reflects principles found in the well-known Trust Equation, which emphasizes credibility, reliability, and relational connection as key drivers of trust.

The 360 Degrees of Trust framework synthesizes these research traditions into a practical system that focuses on observable behaviors rather than abstract traits. By measuring how trust is expressed through everyday actions—such as communication, accountability, collaboration, and decision-making—the model provides organizations with clear insight into how trust is experienced across the workplace and where it can be strengthened.

