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Aug 28, 2019 Issue #37: Kaa on Trust: Lessons Learned

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Elizabeth M. Lembke - Chief Talent Navigator (HR Consultant) @elizabethlembke

Back in the days when we were kids, we watched (or read) the Jungle Book and saw Kaa, the sneaky snake, serenade the little man-cub Mowgli on trust and draw him into his snare. But how did we know that Kaa was untrustworthy?*

His statements were good but we didn't believe that he meant them in a trust-worthy manner (*TBH the googly eyes were a good tip-off).

Trust is at the center and core of strong relationships. Often times trust seems like something we sense rather than can explicitly describe. Which is why I would like to do a little analogy for trust exercise with you.

- Take a new sheet of paper. This paper represents the basis for a new relationship / friendship or negotiations. What does it look like? It is blank.
• Until we write on it those little moments that build-up our trust and confidence in one another. So do that now: write a few of the things that are the key essentials for you in building up trust in someone else - and the things you do that build trust for others.
• Ok now answer: what would be a major trust-breaking infraction in a relationship for you? It could be a slip of the tongue, going behind the back to negotiate a different deal, taking credit for shared work, not answering a DM, postponing a career discussion: whatever it is for you.
• Now depending on the severity, crumple the paper up according to how bad you think the damage to your relationship would be.
• What does the paper look like now?
• What would it take to flatten that sheet of paper back out?
• What tell-tale signs would be left behind?

I was teaching a facilitator training and one of the participants used that exercise - and moved the whole room. To date, I think it is the best representation of the implicit and personal nature that building-up a trust relationship is, how precarious a slight can be and how conscious the process of building trust back up truly is.

To quote Zig Ziglar "If people like you, they'll listen to you, but if they trust you, they'll do business with you."

Trust is paramount to teams doing deep work and collaborating, for creating social change, to employee engagement, to respecting (and buying into) companies brands, and for successful relationships.

So what is trust?

Trust is braving - to lean on research professor Bréne Brown and her definition:

Boundaries | You respect my boundaries, and when you're not clear about what's okay and not okay, you ask. You're willing to say no.

Reliability | You do what you say you'll do. At work, this means staying aware of your competencies and limitations so you don't over promise and are able to deliver on commitments and balance competing priorities.

Accountability | You own your mistakes, apologize, and make amends.

Vault | You don't share information or experiences that are not yours to share. Need to know that my confidences are kept, and that you're not sharing with me any information about other people that should be confidential.

Integrity | You choose courage over comfort. You choose what is right over what is fun, fast, or easy. And you choose to practice your values rather than simply professing them.

Nonjudgment | I can ask for what I need, and you can ask for what you need. We can talk about how we feel without judgment.

Generosity | You extend the most generous interpretation possible to the intentions, words, and actions of others.

What impact does trust braving have?

Quite a considerable one as I am sure that Mowgli, Kaa and a few researchers can tell you.



Feel the need for speed? Put trust and teaming at the forefront.

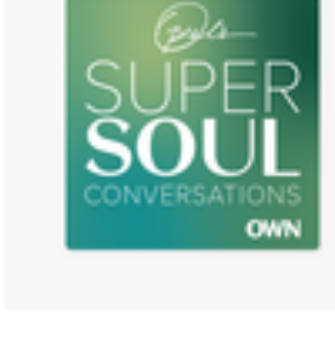
What is TRUST?

Trust - Our World in Data

Trust is a fundamental element of social capital - it's essential in building well-functioning and effective systems, ranging from small groups to large countries. How do levels of trust vary across the world, and how have they changed over time? See global and country-level data on trust and its impact on social outcomes. The trust measure is what is widely used in engagement surveys - so this article gives a good backbone of understanding as to why.



ourworldindata.org



Oprah's SuperSoul Conversations: Dr. Brené Brown: The Anatomy of Trust

Marble jars at the ready? Research professor, social scientist, and TED Talk instant winner Dr. Brené Brown discusses the fundamentals of trust and how the small moments over time build up trust - like adding marbles to a jar. You can view the video of the talk here

podcasts.apple.com

TED Radio Hour: Trust And Consequences

Our lives are fueled by trust: in our loved ones, our colleagues, our leaders, our institutions and in ourselves. The question is how do we cultivate it, and restore if it's lost? In this 2015 episode, NPR's Guy Raz, explores our relationship with trust with conductor Charles Hazlewood, management theorist Simon Sinek, former Greek Prime Minister George Papandreou, author Rachel Botsman, and psychotherapist Esther Perel.



podcasts.apple.com

TRUST & Team



WorkLife with Adam Grant: How to Trust People You Don't Like

The difference between a feel-good quick team building trust-fall, and doing real teamwork based on deep trust is the cornerstone of this episode. Adam dives into the experience of a crew of astronauts from different countries - and the wilderness trainer who was called in for an emergency intervention - share fresh insights about handling conflict and building deep trust in teams. This is a good call to reflect on how to build teams - rather than just a group of people coordinating work packages.

podcasts.apple.com

Trust: does it impact team performance... or not? • ScienceForWork Wendy Hirsch

This is an excellent summary and important read-up on the value of trust impacting team performance. Wendy Hirsch brings key insights out of the Bart de Jong and colleagues 2016 meta analysis (Drawing data from 112 studies, with over 7,700 teams, around if intrateam trust (how much team members trust one another) makes a difference for team performance (the achievement of shared goals.)



Key insights: Trust likely helps team members focus on collective goals rather than personal interests, intrateam trust is a unique predictor of team performance, and the more interdependent the team, the more trust seems to matter. Read the article for more on the why's and some good infographics.

scienceforwork.com

TRUST & Leadership

Why People Believe in Their Leaders — or Not – MIT Sloan Management Review

What's at the heart of credibility? There are two critical elements: perceived competence (people's faith in the leader's knowledge, skills, and ability to do the job) and trustworthiness (their belief in his or her values and dependability). Research authors Daniel Han Ming Chng, Tae-Yeol Kim, Brad Gilbreath, and Lynne Andersson dive deeper into the actions, behaviors and outcomes around credibility. They close the article with good insights for everyone - not only those in leadership positions.

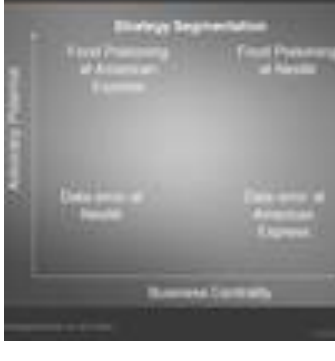
sloanreview.mit.edu

Trust in Leadership - One Key Factor During Organizational Change - ScienceForWork

A powerpoint presentation or an email about a major organizational change is not cutting it. If you want change to be successful, trust in leadership is key. Period.



scienceforwork.com



Four Perspectives on Re-establishing Trust | Reputation Rules

Professor Daniel Diermeier is kind of the go-to management professor on the topic of trust. I found this old article from 2012 based on rebuilding trust in Japan after the nuclear power plant disasters.

Daniel introduces his trust radar - with particular focus on what people want in order to put their trust into brands, institutions or corporations. In particular the elements of transparency, professional knowledge, commitment and empathy. A good read for anyone - business owner or not.

rerules.wordpress.com

5 practical ways leaders can build a high-trust culture in the cyber-physical age

"Trust is essential for organisations to succeed in the cyber-physical age, and people, structure and environment are key to building a high-trust culture." This is a very high-level recommendation on the things one can and ought to do. If you or your company need help transforming your organization by implementing these 5 things, let's have a chat.



www.insidehr.com.au

Question: What do you do to build up deep trust between colleagues?

Trust and its effects on the future of work, society, technology, capitalism and relationships was part of a wine-fuelled discussion I had this past week with my Airbnb housemates. Based on our various upbringings - Slovakia, Turkey, USA, and Germany - and personal outlooks, differing elements that came to the table which, at their core, really encompassed the integrity, generosity and walk-the-talk elements from Brené Brown.

Trust in thinking beyond profit margins is becoming the new way to do business. As we can see by last week's Business Roundtable announcement around the redefined purpose of an organization and its 181 CEO signees the expectations of consumers, employees, stakeholders goes beyond the profit expectations of shareholders. It is a significant move in itself as it signifies that Kaa's of the world are having a difficult time if they only look to serve quarter-end profit. People are demanding more from their brands, organizations, and leaders. Which is great IMHO.

On that note, fostering a culture of trust in teams and organizations is one of my favorite things to do. If this is something that you would like support with, please let me know.

Wishing you all a wonderful final kick to your summer and talk soon!

All of my very best regards,

Liz

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Elizabeth M. Lembke - Chief Talent Navigator (HR Consultant) @elizabethlembke

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Elizabeth Lembke, Transforming Talent Consulting: www.transformingtalent.co and www.transformingtalent.de

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