

TRUST

SLIDE 1 – INTRODUCTORY SLIDE

You might start a discussion by asking students how they define trust.

Webster defines trust as the confidence in the honesty, integrity, reliability, and justice of another person.

Trust, or lack of trust, is at the root of all relationships with customers, colleagues, friends, employers, and organizations. It usually requires many positive actions to earn another’s trust. But it may only take one action for a person to lose the trust of another. Here you can refer to the materials on **REPUTATION MANAGEMENT**. *Ask students to comment on the relationship between trust and reputation.*

Trustworthiness is based on ethical principles including the principles of character (what we are as people) and competence (what we are able to do as people). The key for all of us is how to build and maintain trustworthiness.

As an overriding point of discussion for this section, *ask students to relate any of the aspects of trust presented and how it relates to ethical behavior and how it relates to their perceptions of the ethical behavior of others.*

SLIDE 2 – TRUST IS BASED ON TRUTH

Because trust is based on truth, trustworthy people must tell the truth. This is much more than the possession of the truth. *Ask students* to recall how they felt when they learned someone had lied to them or about them? What does it take to rebuild trust? What the non-truth teller may believe as harmless or even beneficial may not be so in the eyes of the one deceived.

You might use this quote to engage students in a discussion of the “little white lie.” The first one may not be easy to tell, but it often makes the next one easier in the telling.

“We do not err because truth is difficult to see. It is visible at a glance. We err because this is more comfortable.”
—Alexander Solzhenitsyn

SLIDE 3 – TRUSTWORTHY PEOPLE ARE HONEST

Trustworthy people are honest. This may sound like “water is wet.” Trustworthy people match their words and feelings with their thoughts and actions. They do not think one thing and act or speak another. They do not bad-mouth people behind their backs and sweet-talk them to their faces. Trustworthy people do not take credit for what others do. They share success and give credit where credit is due. They strive to keep colleagues honest through communication and constructive dialogue.

Talk with students about the fact that our memories are such that we have challenges trying to remember what is true. I make the assertion that seeking to remember what is not true is more difficult.

“No man has a good enough memory to make a successful liar.”
—Abraham Lincoln

SLIDE 4 TRUSTWORTHY PEOPLE ARE RELIABLE

Trustworthy people are reliable; they keep their promises. For a trustworthy person, yes means yes and no means no. They honor their commitments. Remind students that punctuality is a key indicator of trustworthy persons. Procrastinators are stealing others’ time.

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Here, you can talk about students' experiences on teams. Some students provide many facts to their teams, but "plagiarize" them from the Web. The facts provided may be accurate, but the fact provider is not reliable.

"Facts from paper are not the same as facts from people. The reliability of the people giving you the facts is as important as the facts themselves."
—Harold S. Geneen

SLIDE 5 – TRUSTWORTHY PEOPLE ARE LOYAL

Trustworthy people are loyal ... even to those who are not present. They defend those not present if they are defensible. They are careful not to repeat the words of others unless they have strong reason to believe those words are truthful and beneficial.

Students often struggle with loyalty to others. When someone makes a mistake, or does something they do not like, or even creates a bad first impression, students will often "cut them loose." They must learn to separate the persona from the isolated act, as long as the persona is not engaging in chronic behavior.

"The loyalties which center upon number one are enormous. If he trips, he must be sustained. If he make mistakes, they must be covered. If he sleeps, he must not be wantonly disturbed. If he is no good, he must be pole-axed."
—Winston Churchill

SLIDE 6 – TRUSTWORTHY PEOPLE ARE UNBIASED

Trustworthy people are not biased or prejudiced. They strive to attribute good motives to the actions of others. Being quick to question the motives of others is not a sign of trust. However, being slow to tell the truth when the motives of others is obvious is not a sign of strength.

You can have some fun with this question. *How can a person render an informed opinion if he/she truly has no interest in something? Bring up decision making – every alternative has pros and cons, advantages and disadvantages, things we like/dislike. We always make choices that are "less than perfect" as the individual sees them.*

"Few things can help an individual more than to place responsibility on him, and to let him know that you trust him."
—Booker T. Washington

SLIDE 7 – TRUSTWORTHY PEOPLE ARE HUMBLE

Trustworthy people are humble, recognizing the truth might not always be with them. They interact with others on the assumption they do not have all the answers. They value viewpoints, judgments, and experiences of others. They empathize, while maintaining their commitment to their own values. The ability to be humble in the face of being criticized is often the difference between those who lead and those who demand respect.

Ask students about becoming vulnerable. Vulnerability enables you to be hurt by others who know your weaknesses and strengths. This is an essential step in trust-building between people. It lays the cards on the table in a gamble that, in such total self-revelation, the others will accept you for who you really are rather than for who they want you to be. In order to get to full self-disclosure you must take the risk to be vulnerable to others. This is an important building block in trust development ."

"After crosses and losses men grow humbler and wiser."
—Benjamin Franklin



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SLIDE 8 – TRUSTWORTHY PEOPLE ARE ACCOUNTABLE

Trustworthy people are accountable. They recognize (to the best of their ability) and accept responsibility for their own mistakes. They are quick to apologize and quick to seek to make amends. Anger may get them in trouble, but pride keeps them there.

I tell students that they should have no fear of accountability if they are doing their jobs to the best of their ability. Accountability does not produce failure ... action, a “response-ability” (or lack of it,) is the creator of failure.

“Accountability breeds response-ability.”
—Stephen R. Covey

SLIDE 9 – TRUSTWORTHY PEOPLE ARE COOPERATIVE

Trustworthy people are cooperative. They abide by the rules and policies of the organization. They also exercise judgment in not invalidating the spirit of the law by demanding the letter of the law. They know that just because they have the right to do something does not mean that it is the right thing to do.

Ask students about placing confidence in others so that they will be supportive and reinforcing of you, even if you let down your mask and show your weaknesses

“We may have all come on different ships, but we’re in the same boat now.”
—Martin Luther King, Jr.

SLIDE 10 – TRUSTWORTHY PEOPLE PROMOTE UNDERSTANDING

Trustworthy people promote communication and understanding. Open and honest communications are the mortar for the bricks of trust.

Here, you can discuss traits such as listening and understanding. For example, for those professionals who are seeking to “sell” something, they must listen more than they talk. They must also be able to empathize – to see things from other points of view.

“Understanding is a two-way street.”
—Eleanor Roosevelt

