



## Building Trust or Mistrust?

### Actions Leaders Can Take to Build Trust

**1. To build mistrust:** Talk with others about problems you are having with a peer without doing everything reasonably possible to solve the problem through direct communication with that peer.

**To build trust:** Solve problems through direct communication at the lowest equivalent level: yourself and peers; yourself and your direct manager; yourself, your manager and her manager.

**2. To build mistrust:** Take credit for yourself, or allow others to give you credit for an accomplishment that was not all yours.

**To build trust:** Share credit generously. When in doubt, share.

**3. To build mistrust:** Make a pretended or "soft" commitment, e.g., "I'll respond later."

**To build trust:** When in doubt about taking on a commitment, air your concerns with the relevant parties. When engaged on an ongoing commitment, communicate anticipated slippage as soon as you suspect it.

**4. To build mistrust:** Manage/supervise from behind your desk only.

**To build trust:** Spend "informed" time mingling, asking non-assumptive questions, making only promises you can keep, working back through existing lines of authority.

**5. To build mistrust:** Be unclear or not exactly explicit about what you need or expect. Assume that anyone would know to do/not do that.

**To build trust:** Be explicit and direct. If compromise is productive, do it in communication, not in your mind alone.

**6. To build mistrust:** Withhold potentially useful information, opinions or action until the drama heightens, thus minimizing your risk or being wrong and maximizing credit to you if you're right.

**To build trust:** Be timely; be willing to be wrong

**7. To build mistrust:** Communicate with undue abruptness when others venture new opinions or effort.

**To build trust:** Acknowledge the intent and risk of innovation first, then address the issue with your honest opinion.

**8. To build mistrust:** Withhold deserved recognition at times when you yourself are feeling under-recognized.

**To build trust:** Extend yourself beyond your own short-term feeling and validate success or new

effort.

**9. To build mistrust:** Hold in your mind another department's productivity or behavior as a reason for less cooperation.

**To build trust:** Get in direct, tactful communication, airing your problem and seeking win/win resolution.

**10. To build mistrust:** Have performance evaluation time the only, or primary, time for coaching input.

**To build trust:** Schedule regular meetings for input and feedback for those reporting to you; develop systems for floor people to evaluate supervisors and managers.