

## 10 Leadership Steps to Trust

1. **Listen.** To truly listen put your internal dialogue – your opinions, personal agenda and judgments - aside. Listen instead for the speaker’s point of view and what’s important to them. Stay open to the possibilities that the speaker has to offer. Listening requires hearing, perceiving and understanding with your mind and your heart. Listening well makes a profound statement of respect and value for the other person.
2. **Communicate openly, directly and completely.** Be clear and precise in providing not only factual information but in expressing your own thoughts, opinions and feelings. Withholding information or running hidden agendas are actually very transparent and lead to resentment and suspicion. Scheduling regular times for two-way discussions as well as being readily accessible gives the message that you are caring and approachable.
3. **Respect others.** Show consideration and respect for everyone in the organization. Acknowledge each person for his/her value and contributions. Treating people with respect regardless of their position within the organization will empower them to do their best work.
4. **Maintain confidentiality.** Perhaps the most blatant breach of trust is divulging confidential information. Safe keep business and personal information. Gossip ruins relationships and businesses.
5. **Maintain integrity.** The truth may hurt but the long term consequences of dishonesty not only undermines the trust of others but trust in one’s self. When you are not honest it’s as if you cannot trust yourself to manage the consequences of your actions. Be a role model of integrity by ensuring that your thoughts, words and deeds are congruent.
6. **Keep your word.** Give yourself and others the freedom to make commitments wholeheartedly. Only make commitments that you know that you can keep. When circumstances arise that prevent you from keeping your promise notify others in a direct and timely manner. Once you let someone down it is difficult to regain his/her trust and faith in you.
7. **Be reliable.** People like to know that they can count on someone. It is reassuring to be able to depend on someone to follow through with his/her responsibilities and commitments. Unpredictability and inconsistency causes others stress and unnecessary second-guessing.
8. **Be responsible.** Take ownership for problems and breakdowns. Making excuses and blaming others creates fear, increases cover-ups and stops the flow of much needed information. Taking a positive proactive approach to problems frees others to be creative and surface issues early on.
9. **Give authority.** Delegating projects and responsibilities without appropriate authority to make decisions sends the message that the person/team is not trusted nor seen as capable of the task at hand. Build confidence for yourself and others by gradually delegating the authority and providing the support and resources needed to ensure success.
10. **Reward risk.** Remove fear from the organization and create a highly motivated team by rewarding risk and initiative. Tolerate mistakes and use them as positive learning points. Provide clear and consistent parameters to build confidence.