Building Trust in Teams: A Leader's Role

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Building trust in teams is one of the key aspects of learning takeaway that every team building workshop delivers, be it indoor or outdoor, or outbound. The attitude and ability to trust one another in a team is considered one of the most critical elements that help team members bond with each other and work together seamlessly towards their common goals. As leaders of teams, every individual constantly looks for this trait in their teams. However, just a few practice activities like trust fall, obstacle path, etc. in a workshop or the knowledge that trust is essential may not be enough for a team to have and work with that trait. Apart from these intermittent activities, leaders also need to consistently do their bit, day in and day out, to ensure that trust gets built and stays in their teams. This paper introduces the concept of trust in individuals and teams, describes the various steps that leaders need to take, and the techniques that they can apply at different stages of their teams to develop and maintain trust within them.

The leaders who work most effectively, it seems to me, never say 'I'. And that's not because they have trained themselves not to say 'I'. They don't think 'I'. They think 'we'; they think 'team'. They understand their job to be to make the team function. They accept responsibility and don't sidestep it, but 'we' gets the credit… This is what creates trust, what enables you to get the task done.

– Peter Drucker

Trust in Teams

As Harold Macmillan said, "A man who trusts nobody is apt to be the kind of man nobody trusts." Trust is the foundation of every successful relationship, be it personal or professional. In organizations today where teams have to work together, it is imperative that employees trust one another.

In a social context, trust usually is referenced when one individual or party is willing to rely on the words or actions of the other individual or party and though not sure of the outcome of the actions, is willing to leave control to the other party knowing well enough that the possible risks involve failure of the task or harm to self if things do not go as trusted (Figure 1).

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Figure 1: Risks in Trust

Source: http://tellmewhytheworldisweird.blogspot.in

In fact, the Merriam-Webster dictionary defines trust as the assured reliance on the character, ability, strength or truth of someone or something, i.e., the confidence that is placed in someone.

Trust : The Foundation of Relationships

Trust is mainly attributed to relationships between people and amongst social groups. It is said that when an individual trusts another, s/he tends to expose certain vulnerabilities to the other person believing that they will not take advantage of the individual's openness. Individuals in personal relationships such as friendships to marriage to working together, tend to do just that—to feel the other person is trustworthy. Most times, the other emotions that go hand in hand with trust include friendship, love, agreement, peace of mind, comfort, and ease.

Many a time, with trust as the foundation of the relationship, one tends to predict what the other can do even without knowing much about the other person or without much knowledge of the situation.

The History of Trust

Psychology studies state that to trust is to believe that the other person will do what is expected. Erikson (1950), in his famous theory of eight stages of psycho-social development, portrayed that how much an individual trusts another begins to form as a foundation right in the first two years of the person's childhood, i.e., during infancy itself (Figure 2). In fact, trust is also known to be neuro-biologically traced and connected to the activity of the human brain and is altered or aligned with the levels of the chemical oxytocin present.

Trust building starts within the family, and then slowly as the child grows up, the foundations traverse to the other social groups and this continues on over time. Every experience either increases or decreases the levels of trust that one can place in others—

Figure 2: Trust Building in Childhood

Source: http://prathamthinking.blogspot.in

success leads to feelings of security, trust, positivity and optimism, while failure results in a sense of insecurity and distrust.

Since the early works of Luhmann (1979), Barber (1983), and Giddens (1984), trust is considered, in sociology, as one of the several social-constructs along with control, confidence, risk, power, etc. It is considered an element of social reality and functions between and amongst various social groups (Figure 3). In philosophy, trust is considered more as a point of reliance and dependability. In economic terms, trust is often used as a lubricant to reduce the cost of transactions between parties by enabling cooperation.

Overall, in general, trust is a popular framework to create effective interpersonal relationships. A trustworthy person is usually someone in whom one can place their trust and remain assured that the trust will not be betrayed by the other person.

With the above in mind, many a time individuals tend to ask themselves a lot of questions with regard to trust—What is trust? How do I decide that I will trust someone?

Figure 3: Trust in Social Groups

Source: http://holykaw.alltop.com

Am I just convincing myself or can I really trust this person for sure? How do we decide if enough time has passed to be able to easily trust someone? How do I ensure that I can be trusted, that others can call me trustworthy? Not only individuals struggle to answer these questions, so do organizations.

Trust in Organizations

The dynamics of trust-mistrust in an organization can make or break the culture and bond in an organization. There can be nothing more damaging than a lack of trust between the employees of an organization. Lack of trust can create a hostile environment that can be toxic to several people and other teams around them. So, what does trust mean in an organization?

The International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) defines trust in an organization as, "The organization's willingness, based upon its culture and communication behaviors in relationships and transactions, to be open and honest, based on belief that another individual, group, or organization is also competent, open and honest, concerned, reliable, and identified with common goals, norms and values."

IABC also, as an organization, funds and conducts surveys to measure the Organizational Trust Index (Figure 4) which gives us not only research findings about the importance of organizational trust but also, more importantly, a tool to measure trust in an organization. It is said that there are five dimensions that create organizational trust, which statistically increase job satisfaction as well as comfort levels.

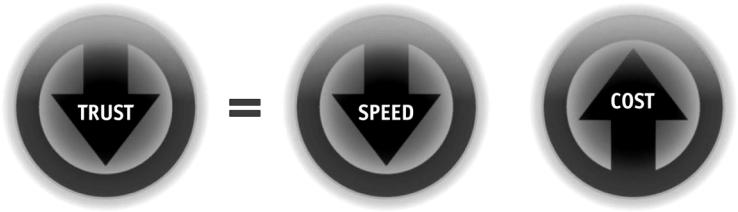
Stephen Covey (2006), in his book, *Speed of Trust*, describes trust existing in an organization as confidence, and the lack of trust as suspicion—in people, their abilities

Figure 4: Measuring Trust in Organizations

Source: http://www.gold-station.com/

and integrity, etc. He defines trust as a feeling that one individual has for another individual's capability and reliability which is supported by their past actions. Covey also talks about how an organization which has trust (Figure 5) as its culture can have faster productivity with lesser cost.

Figure 5: Speed of Trust



Source: http://www.myspeedoftrust.com

Why Should Leaders Focus on Trust?

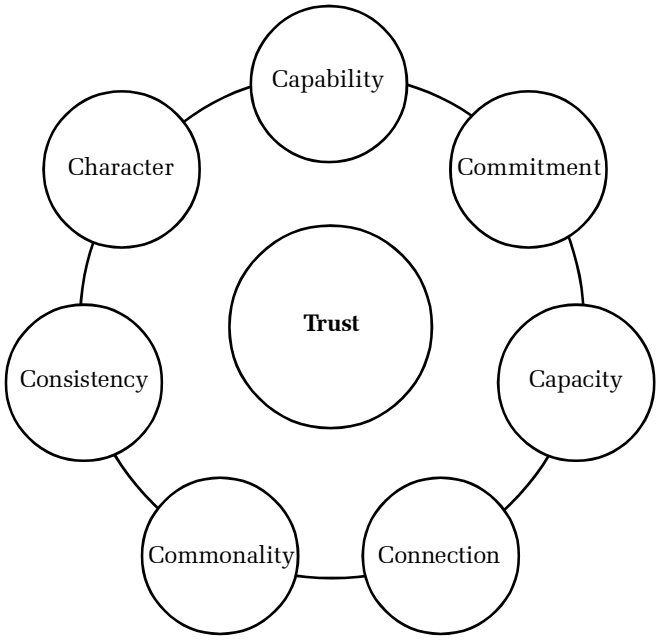
Leadership, in the context of today's organizations is not just about having a vision, setting huge targets, and creating strategies to reach there. Yes, these are all still very much in the purview of leadership. However, along with these, in order to succeed, leaders also need to focus all their energies on building synergy amongst their team members. There are many workshops and books that talk and teach the various skills that leaders need to learn and apply in order to effectively manage their teams. These skills range from listening and coaching and mentoring to effective delegation and conflict resolution. One factor however, which forms one of the key parameters that hold teams together, is a sense of belongingness, a sense of being one with the organization, of bonding with each other—in short, team members need to be able to trust one another. It is thus critical for a leader today to learn the appropriate actions from his/her side that will help build, maintain and sustain these bonds of trust, which in turn will thrust the team forward.

There are many books and programs and frameworks on how to build trust, and what leaders need to do to create the culture of trust in their teams.

Apart from Gary Cohen's 7Cs of trust that are taught in many workshops (Figure 6), in fact, Robert Shaw (1997) in his book, *Trust in the Balance*, describes three key elements to build trust: (1) Achieving results (leadership needs to fulfil their commitments); (2) Integrity (consistent honesty in actions), and (3) Demonstrating concern (expressing care and concern for each individual, group, and team).

The IABC model of organizational trust index suggested by Shockley-Zalabak (1999) consists of five factors that suggest and influence trust in an organization: (1) Competence (effectiveness of the team members); (2) Openness and honesty (the sincerity and

Figure 6: 7Cs of Trust



Source: http://www.co2partners.com

quantity of information flow); (3) Concern for employees (showing empathy, tolerance, safety and security); (4) Reliability (consistency/dependency); and (5) Identification (sharing common goals and values).

Teams and Team Development

However, trust can be created from a different practical perspective (Figure 7). To understand a few things that a leader needs to do at various times to develop and maintain trust in his/her team, we need to understand the various stages that a team and the team members go through and how leaders can help trust to transit between these stages. Of the many models given, Tuckman's 4-stage model is most popular and has subsequently led to many other models. When a team is in the process of getting created, like every other model, it goes through certain predictable growth stages. Tuckman (1965), a well-known American psychologist and researcher, proposed a theory of group dynamics that described the distinct phases of development as the forming-storming-norming-performing model of group development, Tuckman maintained that all the four stages are necessary for a team to go through in order for it to grow, face up to challenges, tackle issues, find solutions, plan and deliver results.

Team members tend to show certain traits and behaviors in each stage, and each stage has its own highs and lows. In each stage, individuals assume the roles as needed

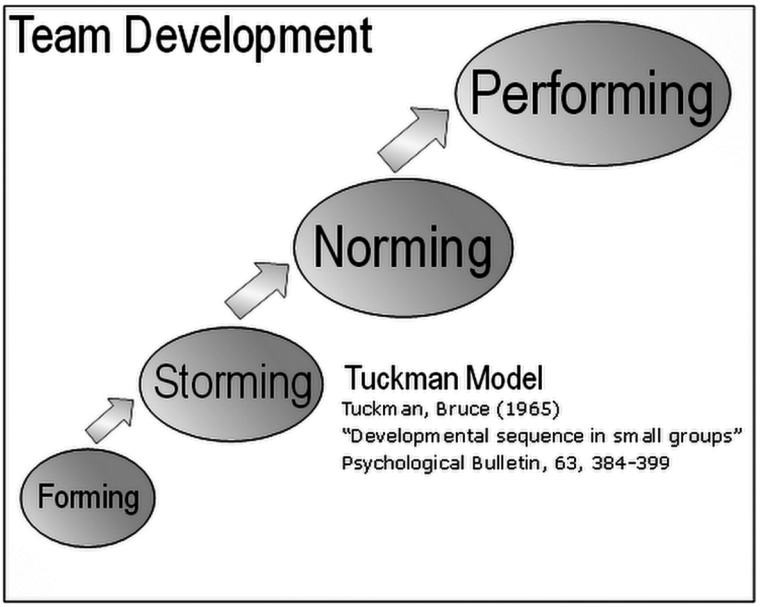
Figure 7: Team Development

Source: http://www.osneyhr.com/

and slowly, through stages, get to know and understand and be comfortable with each other (Figure 8). A brief understanding of each stage is as follows:

- Forming: The first stage is all about getting to know each other. It is the first step in the transition from being a group of people into a properly functioning team. During this stage, members slowly get to know each other, get comfortable with each other and start to build strings of confidence and bonds of trust in each other as well as with their leader. Of course, this is also the stage where people start to understand each other and the initial bonds of trust are built.
- Storming: As people start to get comfortable with each other in the forming stage, they soon start to voice out their opinions and ideas easily. This leads to a number of viewpoints and thus begins the storming stage. Here, the team members can be defensive or can question the various other team members and the management too. This is the stage where the conflicts and potential conflicts in a team surface, and the team is given a chance to resolve them effectively.
- Norming: As a successful team solves the various conflicts constructively, it starts moving into the norming stage. In this stage, the members slowly get used to working with each other. Conflicts are lesser and the team members start to work more productively and comfortably with each other to accomplish goals. This is the stage where a team can start getting into what experts call a well-oiled machine. The team members adapt to each other and create a working synergy.
- Performing: As a team matures, it smoothly starts to accomplish a significant amount of work easily and effortlessly. In this performing stage, all the team members easily participate and collaborate with each other effectively and

Figure 8: Tuckman's 4-Stage Model



Source: http://jurnalqms-2c.blogspot.com

independently by working with each other without needing to put in a conscious effort. In the performing stage, the team members tend to complement each other to achieve results.

A leader's strong communication skills can help a team develop through these stages effectively. The paper continues to explore the various techniques a leader can use to build and maintain trust as the team goes through various stages of the Tuckman model.

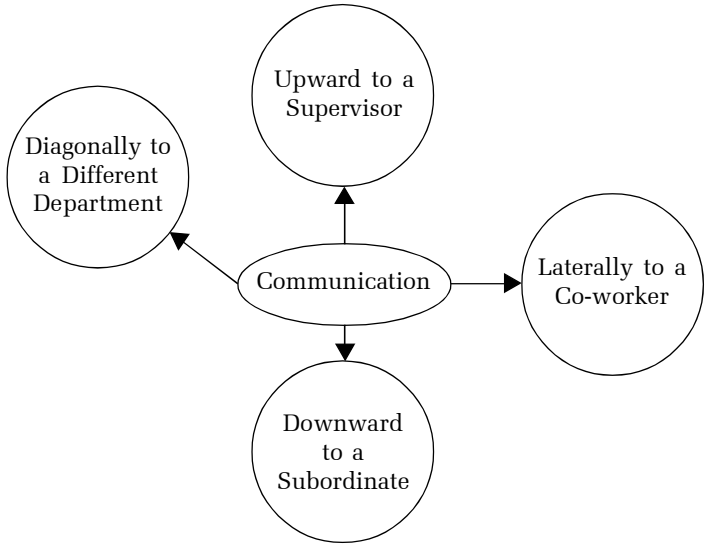
Trust in Forming Stage: A Leader's Role

In the forming stage, there can be tendencies of individuals not being comfortable with each other or the organization's policies, not being able to focus properly on relevant points during discussions, not speaking out too much, and having less interactions with each other.

As a leader, it is critical to help the team to get to know each other and work with them through this phase in a very positive and nurturing way. In this stage, to enable trust, a leader needs to consistently perform the following:

- Open Communication Channels in the Team: In the initial forming stages, it is essential for a team to have more than one set of communication channels. The team members will not yet be comfortable with each other and so may not be willing to talk to each other easily. In such a case, the communication may not be easy within the team. The leader, right from the start, needs to establish the norms and processes for communication flow (Figure 9) in the organization.

Figure 9: Communication in a Team



Source: http://catalog.flatworldknowledge.com

More than these processes of communication, s/he needs to create a friendly casual atmosphere and enable the team members to communicate with each other in that atmosphere. The more the communication between the team members, the faster will the bonds of trust form within the team members.

- Keep Information Flow Transparent: The forming stage is where most team members do not know much about the organization, about the vision and the goal of the team. The leader, who has access to this information, should be able to talk to the team members and constantly keep them appraised of the happenings and the goals and the priorities being set in the team. The more transparent the leader is, the more transparent the team members will be and the easier it is to start building a bond of trust.
- Define the Purpose and Goals of the Team: The forming stage is where the team gets its project, vision, goals and action plan. A leader needs to ensure that s/he meets these expectations of the team to establish the purpose and goals. Many a time, a team comes together with a lot of enthusiasm and communicate well with each other and after a while the energy fizzes out because the team does not find a sense of purpose or direction. They are not sure why they are together or towards what they should be working, and this can create confusion and doubt amongst team members and thus reduce trust. A leader has to ensure that the team knows the purpose and direction of the team so that they can work together.
- Clarity in Roles and Responsibilities: A team member needs to feel that s/he is important for the team and that amongst the other team members,

s/he has a particular role to play and has a specific responsibility that s/he is going to be working on. Knowing this (Figure 10) makes them less edgy and more comfortable with the others. The leader can constantly rotate certain roles to ensure that no frustration is felt until s/he finds who fits into as well as is comfortable in which role.

Figure 10: Role Clarity

Source: http://yesvinay.blogspot.com

Trust in Storming Stage: A Leader's Role

The storming stage can be a difficult and challenging stage for a team. During this stage, a leader dons multiple roles, including that of a mediator, a motivator, and sometimes even a counselor. An effective leader will be able to easily identify the existing and happening power struggles in the team and resolve them early on. In this stage, to maintain trust, a leader needs to consistently perform the following:

- Resolve Conflicts Constructively: Conflicts are an integral part of any team (Figure 11) anywhere where two or more people are concerned. Once the team crosses the forming stage and the team members start to feel comfortable with each other, they open up and start expressing their ideas and opinions to each other. No two people always agree on opinions, and so there is every chance of potential conflicts happening. When these conflicts are not resolved effectively, the trust that started building up in the forming stage slowly begins

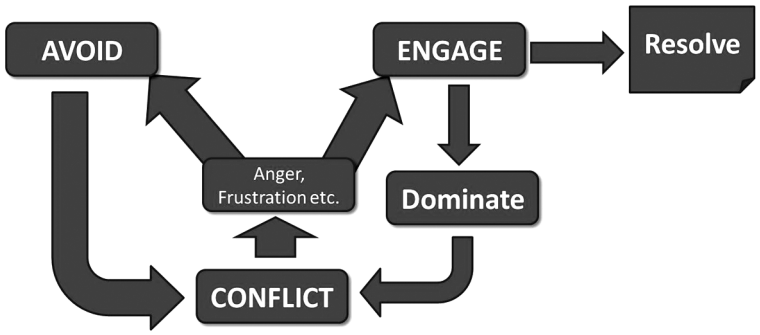
Figure 11: Conflicts in Storming Stage

Source: http://gangsunitecic.org.uk

to erode. An effective leader needs to build a positive and safe environment within the team so that the team members can express their ideas and opinions comfortably and still maintain a sense of positivity.

- Understand Decision-Making Processes: This is a stage where the leader may have to make some tough decisions. Often in the storming stage, different people have different ways; they may want to do things in their own way and the leader needs to listen to all sides and come to a conclusion. When these decisions are not communicated properly, team members start questioning the transparency, which can create holes in the trust that is being established. An effective leader needs to keep the team members in the loop and inform them of the decisions and, wherever possible, the reasons behind those decisions.
- Appreciate the Differences in Each Other: The storming stage is the stage where the differences in the team members come out. Each starts to realize that the other thinks, speaks and acts in a different way from them. When this happens, the team members can either start to understand and appreciate the other person's point of view (Figure 12) or they can start to disagree and push their point of view. While the second can create distance in the team, the first can enhance the competence and the positive attitude in the team. An effective leader tends to help the team to be aware of the various different thoughts and ideas, thus enhancing the positivity in the team.
- Be Sensitive to Non-Verbal Communication: In the storming stage, there will definitely be times when a team member tends to disagree with the other team member. Though this may not always be mentioned and spoken by the team members, there are always subtle and sometimes even predominant ways in which this shows through the body language of the individuals. An effective leader is acutely aware of the responses and cues that each team member gives out and helps them to work with each other.

Figure 12: Appreciating Differences



Source: http://maximumadvantage.com

- Show Respect for Individuals: In the storming stage where everyone seems to have an opinion, it seems like everyone wants that their viewpoint is taken up, and in such a situation, sometimes, they may not be able to empathize with and be sensitive to the other individuals' viewpoints. In the urge to get their points across, sometimes, an individual team member can make the others feel that their points are not valid, and the others may tend to take it personally. As conflicts become personal and the individuals start to talk against other individuals rather than the views, the value placed in each other tends to reduce. An effective leader helps the team members to separate the egos and personalities from the opinions and ideas, thus helping the team to maintain the bonds of trust forged in the forming stage.
- Be Assertive: In the stage where conflicts happen, many a time, most people, to ensure that they do not create a disruptive environment, may choose not to voice out their opinions. Now, this may seem like a good idea; however, over a period of time, these team members will slowly start preferring not to be heard, and this is bound to create some discomfort in the team. An effective leader identifies the subtle silence of these individuals and talks to them and helps them to express themselves so that the openness in the environment stays as it is.

This stage in a team's evolution can prove to be a very emotionally charged time for many of the team members, so a leader may also need to develop the ability to read between the lines and get an understanding of how the team is progressing.

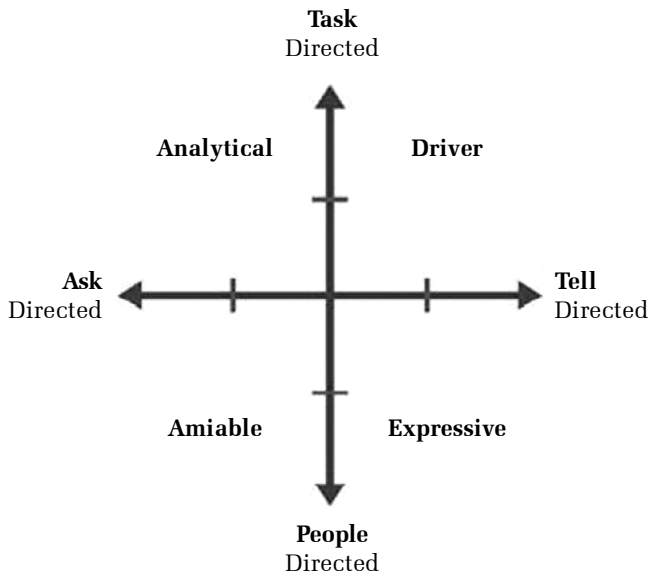
Trust in Norming Stage: A Leader's Role

In the norming stage, the leader needs to continue to find opportunities to sustain and transition trust by encouraging and recognizing both the individual and group achievements. S/he needs to have consistent communication within the group and with self. In this stage, to smoothly transition trust, a leader needs to consistently perform the following:

- Have Regular One-on-One and Team Meetings: In the norming stage, where the team members have arrived at common ideas and opinions and are willing to easily communicate with each other, it is imperative that the leader keeps these communication channels open. It is said that trust is maintained as the communication happens more and more. Consistent team meetings and one-on-one interactions with the team members help the leader to sustain the levels of transparency and belongingness in the team.
- Adapt One's Style by Understanding Others': In the norming stage, there are less conflicts (Figure 13). Most team members are at a stage where they can listen to each other, understand each other better and quickly work with each other. However, the challenges to communication in this stage are very different

Figure 13: Adapting Communication Styles

The Social Style Model



Source: http://wilsonlearning-americas.com

from the ones in the earlier two stages. In this stage, most team members speak to each other easily enough; however due to this ease, they may spontaneously react to each other. Some people who are more task focused tend to focus on the results and not consider the sensitivities of others, not because they do not care but because their focus is more on results. Then there are others who tend to be more people-focused and they may want to ensure that everyone in the team is comfortable with what is happening. Now, though everyone wants to achieve the goals, the method of approach is different and the team members need to adapt to each others' approaches and work together for results. An effective leader can take along the team members with different styles of communication and encourage them to work together adapting to each other's styles so as to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency and retain the fundamental bond created in the team.

- Informal Team Events and Team Building Activities: The norming stage is the stage wherein the team needs to go to the next level. The team members are comfortable with each other, can talk to each other easily and get along well together. This is the time when the team also needs to have informal time out with each other. Activities such as dinners and get-togethers, which help the team members to gel well and interact with each other in informal contexts,

are an integral part of the norming stage. An effective leader, in the norming stage, creates such simulated situations where the team can discuss collaboratively and achieve higher levels of synergy.

- Big Picture and Milestone Progress: The norming stage is where the team is in a regular automated functioning mode. In this stage, it is imperative for the leader to constantly keep the team members updated on the vision and provide constant feedback on the progress of the project, and ensure that the entire team is moving on together in the right direction towards the end goal. An effective leader keeps the team focused not on the individual directions but on the big picture so that the team keeps moving forward with the same level of trust and bonding.

Maintaining a sense of progress and creating a positive environment is an essential element of transitioning trust through norming.

Trust in Performing Stage: A Leader's Role

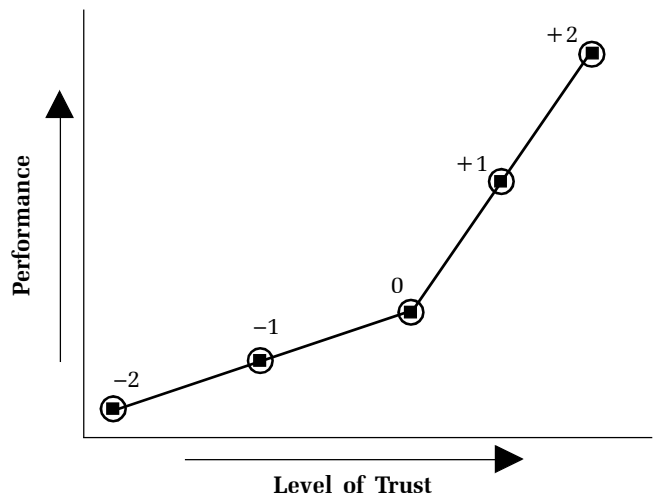
By the time the team reaches the performing stage, the teamwork or even leadership will start to appear very effortless. The team has an ease within itself and follows established processes and has consistent communication happening seamlessly. In this stage, a leader should continue to help enhance the trust within the team by creating capsules and smaller environments of trusting teams working together. The tasks that a leader has to carry out in this stage so as to create an environment of trust and synergy include:

- Communication Within the Team: While a team is performing well, many a time, the leader tends to think that everything is in place and can relax. While this is true, still, a leader needs to ensure that the channels of communication stay open and the information flows seamlessly. At the performing stage, where the trust levels and comfort are extremely high, it just takes one simple miscommunication to shatter the strong bonds which were consistent till then. An effective leader constantly stays aware of the situation and keeps the communication flow alive, thus keeping the trust alive in the team.

- Create Ownership Within Individuals: In the performing stage, each team member is fully aware of his/her tasks and responsibilities and that they can be held accountable for the same. In this situation, it is imperative that one team member does not intrude into the other team members' roles and tasks, as this might create disdain amongst them. Thus, it is essential that an effective leader gives authority and freedom to one of the team members for a particular responsibility and asks the others to align with that person. The same is done for each task, with one person managing the task and others helping her/him. This helps in enhanced mutual trust and bonding.

- Effective Delegation: In the performing stage, most team members can be empowered to carry out their own tasks. This is because their competence levels are by now high and they are also committed to the team. A leader usually needs to adapt the style of leadership or delegation based on the task and the individual. For example, Ken Blanchard, in his 'situational leadership' framework, emphasizes that when the team member is new to the team and has a lot of interest in the task, the leader need not spend a lot of time motivating the person and just has to give detailed instructions. Over time, as the competence of the person increases, the leader can reduce the amount of specific instructions and be there to motivate and encourage when things do not work out, i.e., to coach the team member. Once fully competent (Figure 14), it is important for the team member to constantly be motivated and encouraged and supported so that the interest level stays high. In the phase where the team member is fully competent and also retains high commitment levels, the leader can empower and delegate complete ownership and authority. At any phase, when the appropriate style is not utilized properly, team members start to feel suffocated and frustrated. An effective leader needs to use the appropriate style with the appropriate person so that the levels of commitment towards the task, the leader and the team stay at a higher level.
- Celebrate Successes: As a team performs well, it achieves good results. To sustain the bonds of commitment, it is essential for the team to feel good and celebrate their successes and achievements. A team that celebrates together stays together for a longer time. Celebrations are also a key to keep the motivation and the performance levels high. This also helps in positive

Figure 14: Performance and Trust



Source: http://teamtrustsurvey.com

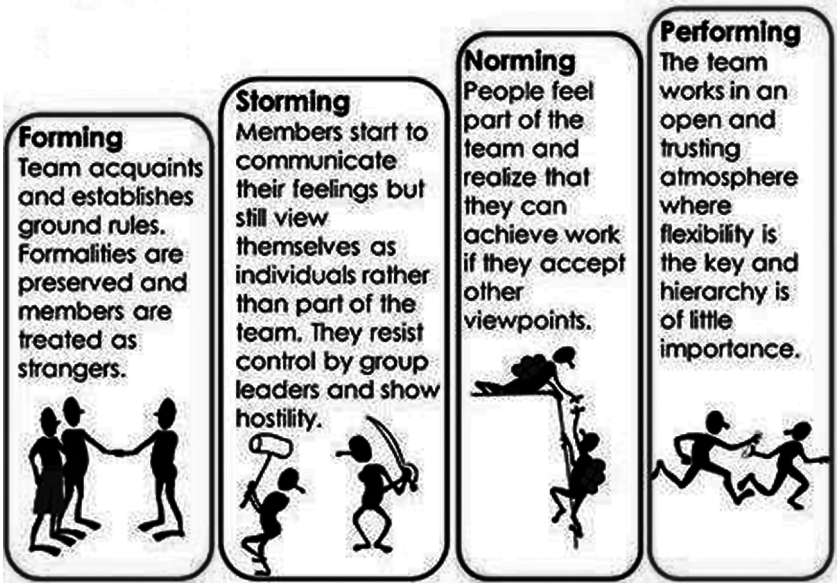
information flow within the team and everyone is aware of what the others are working on and succeeding on, and knowing more about what others are doing helps keep the levels of bonding high. Also, ultimately, celebrating successes brings about more cheer and positivity in the team, thus making the task of an effective leader much easier.

Backsliding of Trust into Tuckman's Model

When trust is not transitioned properly in a team, many a time, the team experiences what experts call 'backsliding', i.e., the team tends to wean back into the storming stage from a norming or performing stage (Figure 15). There is also the danger of backsliding happening when new member join the team or some members leave. If leaders do not manage these changes, a high-performing unit may start to face challenges and slowly may become dysfunctional.

An effective leader helps his/her team to transition effectively from one stage to another during all these changes, with the same levels of trust and bonding. S/he helps the team to absorb any changes easily and work together to restore the trusting environment as soon as possible.

Figure 15: Working of the Tuckman's Model



Source: http://shift-it-coach.com

The Framework for Building Trust

Given that there are a number of action items that a leader has in his/her kitty to help develop, build, maintain, sustain and retain trust and bonding and belongingness among the team members and within the team, there can also be a simple framework that they

can reflect on to see what they are doing right or not doing right in order to enhance trust in the team.

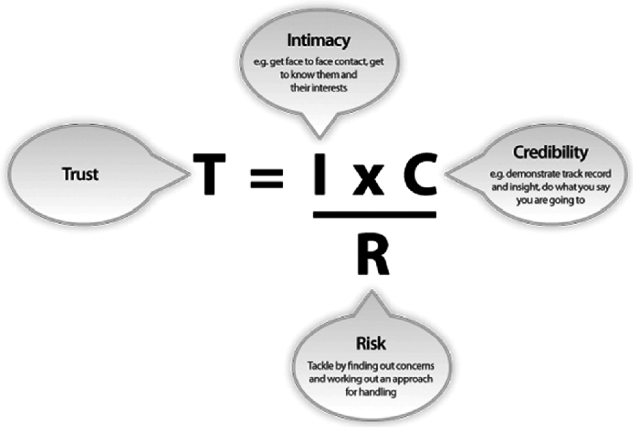
Many a time, while a leader works towards inducing trust in the team, there is another level of consideration from the team members towards the leader too. Not just one another, the team members also need to be able to trust the leader and his/her actions. Do we know that the leader is telling the truth? Do we know whether we have all information or anything is left pending? Are we sure that the leader is competent and skilled in what we are doing, to lead us? Whilst we are following, can we believe that the leader has our best interests in her/his mind? When we are being led, can we rely on the rest of the team to rally forth behind us wherever we go? These are the kind of questions, the kind of scenarios, where trust, single-handedly can make the difference between a 'yes' and a 'no'.

So, let us now turn this situation and question around and let the leader ask from the other perspective of the team. Yes, agreed that the team members have to trust the leader; it is a given—but having said that, they as a leader must not fail to ask the other question—What is it that I am doing from my side to ensure that I am trustworthy? (Figure 16).

As one thinks of the above question, there arises another very relevant question—What is trust composed of? How does one build trust? Yes, one needs to be reliable, consistent, and dependable and honest, but what really are the major components or ingredients of a trustworthy individual? One way to look at this is the following equation:

Trust = Reputation x Behavior

Figure 16: Framework for Trust



Source: http://i-realise.co.uk

Let us understand these two words independently first and then look at how the correlation tends to enhance or reduce trust.

Reputation: Reputation is many a time combined with other words such as image or character, etc., and more often than not, is used to talk about the beliefs or opinions that

we generally have about anything or any person. One's reputation is based not only on the people's beliefs about that person, but also on a certain track record of the person. For example, someone with a qualification or experience in an area is reputed to be a subject matter expert in that area. Reputation is the image that an individual holds at work—from knowledge and competency levels, to their experience, to how they look at situations, to how others have seen them perform. One's competency or reputation helps one to be more trustworthy. So, we need to constantly work on enhancing our knowledge and skills and keep learning as a continuous process so as to continue to build an environment of trustworthiness in the organization. An effective leader constantly ensures that his/her experiences, his/her competence, his/her skills, his/her information is effective and clearly communicated so that his/her reputation stays above questions.

Behavior: Behavior is almost always simply defined as anything that one says and does. Any word or action from an individual tends to reflect and define that person's behavior. Many a time, people tend to form judgments on one's attitude by looking at one's behavior, when in fact it is not important for us to know the attitude or the reason behind the behavior, but to concentrate on the impact of the behavior. When one's behavior stays consistent over a period of time, one is considered more and more trustworthy. An effective leader thus needs to ensure that his/her day-to-day behavior matches with how s/he asks the team members to behave, thus being able to keep the levels of trustworthiness high.

Reputation and behavior work dynamically together as a combination for trustworthiness. As a leader's reputation grows, team members expect consistency in her/his behavior, and as the consistency increases, people respect him/her more, thus generating a positive atmosphere around that leader.

A leader needs to remember that trust is either 0 or 100—there is no in-between. They also need to keep in mind that "It is easier to gain trust and still easier to lose it. The most difficult part however, is to retain and maintain trust." The ultimate objective of a leader is to create a High Performing Team (HPT) with mutual goals, while celebrating differences, to easily achieve the team's vision.

Conclusion

Today, in organizations across the world where individuals work in virtual teams and sometimes do not even meet each other for a long time, trust plays a very critical role to keep the teams emotionally bonded and consistently productive, with least interpersonal conflicts and problems. One needs to be aware of the image one is projecting to others, whilst also ensuring that their behavior is consistent with that reputation.

Especially, today, when everything is all about numbers and bottom lines, the skill development programs and, to a large extent, even attitudinal and motivational mindsets are given a lot of importance. However, the basic, simple, and profound concepts such as trust also need to be embedded in the employees to foster a sense of being there for each other, a sense of belonging, and a sense of togetherness.

Thus, every leader needs to choose to consciously work on techniques and actions to leverage the team at each stage and help them build, sustain, maintain, and spread the sense of trust, bonding and synergy in the team.⊙

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