

Leadergrow Inc. Trust Model

The Leadergrow model of building trust focuses on three dimensions:

- **Table Stakes** – These items are intuitive and must be fully in play if a leader is to have a chance of building an environment of trust. They are called “table stakes” after the phenomenon in poker where a player must have a level of investment to even be in the game. Leaders who cannot meet the minimum standards of honesty and integrity should get out of the leadership game and hit the showers.
- **Enabling Actions** - These items are important ingredients to building an environment of trust. The Leadergrow model lists 10 examples. In the real world there are numerous additional items that constitute enabling actions. Having these items in play helps foster the right kind of culture where trust can grow and endure. The more these elements are present the greater the ability for the leader to withstand trust withdrawals that happen as a result of ill advised decisions or unfortunate circumstances.
- **The Heart of Trust – Reinforcing Candor** is what makes the Leadergrow model unique. Other models on trust discuss this element as a part of “honesty,” one of the table stakes. In the Leadergrow model reinforcing candor takes center stage because the concept goes far beyond honesty. It is the magic that most leaders find difficult to accomplish, but if done well, it makes a huge difference in trust. Reinforcing Candor is the ability to make people glad they brought up an observation of a leader’s inconsistency. In most organizations, people are punished in some way for bringing forward a problem with the leader’s actions. Where the highest levels of trust are present, the leader has the ability to set aside his or her ego and reinforce the person who challenges an action. Doing so creates a large trust deposit and allows for future trust building exchanges. Without this critical element, the table stakes and enabling actions are not sufficient because candor is extinguished. People hide their true feelings and do not feel empowered to challenge the leader, hence real trust is hard to maintain regardless of the effort to do so. Leaders who consistently reinforce candor build an environment where trust continually grows and deepens.