

## Categories of Trust

by Bob Whipple, MBA, CPLP

I have always thought of trust as a single concept: I either trust you or I do not trust you at any time. It seemed simple enough, but after studying the phenomenon for over 20 years, I have come to realize there are many different flavors of trust with other people that we experience all the time.

For example, I might trust you because I know you have my back and will do what is in my best interest. I might trust you because you are consistent and always do what you say. I might trust you because we share common values, or because I know I can tell you what I really think without feeling punished in some way. So I now envision trust as it relates to others as a complex set of concepts about my relationships with them. I now think of it as a mosaic or pattern rather than a singular lens.

That pattern changes based on the transactions between myself and other people. The types of trust are ever evolving and either gaining or losing strength.

Picture the concept of trust as being like a kaleidoscope with an infinite number of complex designs that change as you move through time. The glass pieces that make up the design are a fixed number, but the mirrors in the kaleidoscope, just like the different categories of trust, make new patterns as you experience changes in your relations with others.

**Exercise for you:** Today, as you interface with people, try to visualize the different patterns of trust you have with them. Notice how the pattern shifts as the day progresses and transactions occur. Witness the beauty and variety of trust in your relationships. Each transaction has the potential to increase or reduce the trust based on your perception of what is going on.

Understanding that trust is a complex set of interrelated concepts will allow you to experience the richness of your relationships with others. It may become confusing or frustrating at times, but that is the reality of life. As you see the wonderful patterns of

trust unfold in front of your eyes, you will begin to experience the beauty of life and relationships at a higher level.

*The preceding was derived from an episode in "Building Trust," a 30 part video series by Bob Whipple "The Trust Ambassador." To view three short (3 minutes each) examples at no cost go to [www.avanoo.com/first3/517](http://www.avanoo.com/first3/517)*

