



## **Great Leadership Revolves Around a Single Concept**

**by Bob Whipple, MBA, CPLP**

As a young boy, the study of leadership was fascinating to me. It seemed important to know what distinguished the great leaders from the many individuals who try hard but never measure up to greatness. My early years were spent observing leaders but not finding answers to the true key to leadership.

After starting my career, the study of leadership became more pressing. Reading numerous books and taking courses or watching videos pointed me in the right direction. I was mentored by the great leadership gurus of all time: people like Napoleon Hill, Earl Nightingale, John Maxwell, Brian Tracy, and hundreds of other authors.

The most important lessons came when my team created a leadership laboratory in the areas that reported to me at work. For over 30 years we learned from each other the most important lessons about leadership.

In the final analysis, we discovered that there are hundreds of behaviors that constitute great leadership, but all of them are enabled by just one concept. That concept is trust.

Leaders who create high trust enable other engagement activities to work like magic, but leaders who fail to generate high trust work like crazy on all the other behaviors without much success. Trust becomes the golden key to the door of great leadership.

If you know how to create trust, your success as a great leader is assured. If you do not have the ability to generate high trust, you will be locked out of the halls of great leadership.

Spend some time today thinking about how well you currently do at building and maintaining trust in your organization. If you are honest with yourself, the answer will be obvious in how others interface with you daily. Low trust is easy to spot, and so is high trust. For example, low trust is often evident in body language where people find it difficult to look each other in the eye. There is a lot of gossip, and people say things in one venue that are different from what they say somewhere else. With high trust,

communication is more genuine, and leaders can readily admit mistakes without loss of respect by their subordinates.

In the coming weeks you can read several articles about trust right here. We'll discuss what trust is, how to achieve it, how to repair it when compromised, and how to use it to create an excellent organization. We will discuss how creating an environment of low fear is the great enabler of trust within any group. My favorite quotation on the Leadergrow website is; "The absence of fear is the incubator of trust." When people know it is safe to voice their opinions without the worry of being reprimanded, then trust grows quickly.

*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)*

