



## The Transactional Nature of Trust

by Bob Whipple, MBA, CPLP

To experience maximum trust with the individuals in our lives, we need to be aware of the transactional nature of trust. Everything that happens between us will have some impact on the level of trust. It is important to build trust constantly by our words and deeds. Sometimes we will encounter a loss of trust, and we need the equity of past trust-building transactions to withstand an inevitable let down. Here is a true story from my past that included a trust transaction.

George came into my office and closed the door. He was a manager reporting to me, and we had a relationship of high trust. My Division had just been combined with another Division to form a larger organization. George wanted to tell me some unflattering things about one of the managers I was inheriting. Rather than my trust in George going up, it went down that day because he was undermining a peer. I told him that I would rather not deal in gossip and wanted to give the new manager a chance to start out with a clean slate.

As we interface with people in daily activities, our level of trust goes up or down constantly depending on the transactions happening between us. This adjustment includes e-mail, phone calls, and even body language in a meeting. Any interface creates an opportunity to modify the level of trust.

**Exercise for you:** Seek to pay more attention to the transactions you have with other people today. Notice the small things that happen which have a positive or negative impact on trust. Learn to read the body language of others so you can read when something you have said or done has made the level of trust go down.

Trust is never static. It is always moving depending on our assessment of the character, consistency, competence, congeniality, and care the other person is showing us. I call these elements the five C's of trust. Also realize the other person is making similar judgments of us. So trust is an ever-moving target. Make sure you are always doing things to build rather than destroy trust with other people.

**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 <http://www.avanoo.com/first3/517>**

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