



HIGH TRUST VS. LOW TRUST

The importance of integrity, intent, capabilities and results in developing trust – the core of every relationship

BY: DOUG CAIN

Have you noticed that your relationships, whether they are business, social or family, are all guided by trust? Even things as simple as driving to work and flying out of town are guided by trust. You trust the guy next to you is going to stay in his lane, and you trust the pilot for the airline really knows how to fly the plane. If we did not have that trust, we would all just curl up in a fetal position and not move.

I have been reading and teaching our managers a great book called, “The Speed of Trust” by Stephen M. R. Covey. It completely changed how I view not only my relationships with my clients and vendors, but my relationships with family and friends. As I built a training program for our managers, I started thinking about a few things.

WHO DO YOU TRUST, AND WHY DO YOU TRUST THEM?

As I went through this exercise, I thought about the people in my life I have trusted,

what it took to earn that trust and in some cases, what broke that trust. From there, I started thinking about who trusted me (both singularly and at Lake) and what developed that trust, and then I took a long, hard look at who I have failed and where I broke that trust. This self-examination was both painful and rewarding at the same time.

WHAT IS YOUR OWN PERSONAL BRAND?

We all are familiar with logos and slogans of companies that engender trust. Nike stands for extraordinary effort. The McDonald’s golden arches mean consistent quality (well, at least to me). When people think of Douglas Cain or Lake Truck Lines, what do they think? When I look at myself in the mirror, what do I think of my own personal brand? What do people think when they hear my voice, read my name or see our logo?

We are all branding ourselves every day. What does your own personal brand say about you? If you don’t like the answer,

“THE MOMENT THERE IS SUSPICION ABOUT A PERSON’S MOTIVES, EVERYTHING HE DOES BECOMES TAINTED.”

– MAHATMA GANDHI

there are ways to fix it. As Hank Paulson, chairman of Goldman Sachs, said, “trust is established through action.” Start by making and keeping your commitments. Move on to “talking straight in every situation,” and then go to “deliver results.” If you want to establish trust rapidly, out of 13 behaviors that develop and strengthen trust between people, I have found that these three work almost instantaneously.

But what I learned most from this book is the business benefit of high-trust relationships. I started thinking about the high-trust versus low-trust relationships I was in. The way they work in your business and your personal life is completely different. Where trust is high, speed

goes up and costs go down.

Think about the low-trust relationships you are in with vendors. Does it feel sluggish to work with them, and are you quick to judge? Do you feel like the two of you do not share common goals? Does it feel like the two of you are working from what looks right instead of what works best? We recently fired a vendor because we no longer had any trust in working with them. It was an exhausting and ineffective exercise. Where trust is low, speed goes down and costs go up.

I asked you earlier about your own personal brand. Well, I ask you now: Do you exude trust? There are four things that go to the very

core of your credibility: integrity, intent, capabilities and results.

I used to feel that trust was based entirely on simple integrity, but I have found that it is more like integratedness. It’s how all elements of your core values work together to make you a person people trust. Is your intent to look out for what is in everyone’s best interests? In expressing that, you make major strides in developing trust. Do you have the capabilities to solve the client’s problems and establish, grow, extend and restore trust? And finally, can you deliver the results the people in your life require? At game time, do you score or fumble?

Trust is at the core of every relationship. If you learn how to effectively establish, grow, extend and restore trust, it will change your life. I am writing weekly on the subject of trust in my blog at www.laketrucklines.com, and I welcome your comments and thoughts. Until next time ...

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