

“Trust—The Most Important Thing”

In this session we will explore why trust is the foundation of influence, leadership, and godly transformation.”

Objectives

By the end of the session, participants will:

- Understand the definition and dimensions of trust.
- Recognize the impact of trust in leadership, relationships, and discipleship.
- Reflect on their own trustworthiness.
- Be able to become an encourager of trustworthiness in others.

The Definition of TRUST

- A firm belief in the integrity, ability, or character of a person or thing; confidence or reliance.
- The condition and resulting obligation of having confidence placed in one. (Being trusted)

Why Trust Matters

“Trust not money is the currency of life and leadership. Without it, influence collapses.”

Trust can speed up the development of any business, organization, or relationship. Distrust can destroy any business, organization, or relationship. Trust is a requirement for strong friendships, families, organizations, and businesses. Are you a person that other people trust? Are you trustworthy?

David Horsager in his research on trust that he had done for his graduate work, found that trust is not just a virtue, but the table that supports all



other virtues. It is an actual competency that can be measured.

Does it matter if I am trusted? Trust has a major impact on every area of your life as it relates to effectiveness. Whether your organization is large or small, whether your business is large, or you have a small shed in the market, trust matters. If you teach and your students or congregations feel you are untrustworthy, they may question your lessons but if they trust you, they will listen carefully. People who are trusted will be effective.

David has broken his work on trust down into 8 supporting pillars, each one being a different area in which to build trust. He based his research on the characteristics, or qualities of top leaders in business and organizations. People who have been successful and have had significant positive influence on the lives of those they have served. These pillars are significant for anyone who is interested in building support for genuine success. He refers to this as having "The Trust Edge".

As we work through this material you will see that each of these pillars represent qualities that should be found in those people who are active disciples of Jesus and whose lives are being transformed by the Gospel and the word of God.

Trusting others is one of the last sections of the book and helping individuals and organizations become trusted is certainly the main point. However, as Jesus teaches us in Matthew 7: 3-5, "Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when there is the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye."-- we are to examine ourselves first. That said, try to resist the urge to think about others and whether or not they should be trusted. We should take responsibility for ourselves first. When we work on developing our own trust edge, we will enjoy greater success and impact. As we grow in trustworthiness (the opinion of

others) we will have the best chance of affecting our organization, our families, our relationships, and even our world.

Key Points, *Trust accelerates success; distrust destroys it. Trust is measurable and learnable.*

The impact of having THE TRUST EDGE

- Leaders will see expanded influence and increased morale among those they serve.
- Managers will see greater productivity and increased commitment from their people.
- People in sales will see increased business and positive results.
- People in service will see enthusiastic recommendations and loyal customers.
- Parents will see more peace and freedom in the home.
- Teachers will see more respect, impact, and classroom control.

The Two Dimensions of Trust, Time and depth.

Time, sometimes, you will meet a person and in the first few minutes of talking with them you may decide whether you will trust them or not. David compares trust to a forest. Like a forest, trust takes time to grow, and like a forest trust can be burned down quickly. The other dimension of trust is **depth**. Over time in a trusted relationship, trust goes from shallow to deep. Deep trust can also develop quickly if another trusted source verifies that this person is trustworthy, this is called ***transferred*** trust. For example; A trusts B, and B trusts C, therefore A trusts C.

When trust is deeply established in a relationship, a person is usually given the benefit of the doubt, rather than having his actions judged with skepticism.

Given the right dimensions of time and depth, trust can become a powerful tool for a leader. However, for this time of trust to develop, it must be earned. It can be established

by developing the 8 pillars of trust in each of our lives. I believe as we work together and interact through discussion, we can help each other develop visible, learnable, and measurable levels of trust.

Key Points - Time: Trust grows slowly but can be lost quickly. **Depth:** Trust deepens through consistency and transferred trust

Next Steps

The next discussion will be around “The Impact of Trust” then we will work through the 8 Pillars of Trust. These are qualities we can all develop to increase our trustworthiness. They are, Clarity, Compassion, Character, Competency, Commitment, Connection, Contribution, Consistency.

Some suggestions for discussion.

- Where have you seen trust make or break a relationship or project?
- How would you define *The Trust Edge* in your own words?
- What does it mean that trust is the table that supports all other virtues?
- Whom do you trust? Why do you trust them?
- Are you trustworthy? What makes someone trustworthy?
- What habits build or erode trust in your leadership?
- What biblical principles guide your trust-building? (e.g., Proverbs 3:5–6, Luke 16:10)

Luke 16:10 One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much.

Proverbs 3:5-6 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.