

Pillar 8: Consistency

It's the little things, done consistently, that makes the biggest difference, every time, all the time.

All of the Pillars of Trust are critical to becoming a trusted leader. However, if they are not practiced consistently, they will crumble.

- Character once in a while, is not character.
- Commitment, only when things are going well, is not commitment.

On the other hand ...

- Consistent clarity builds a trusted message.
- Consistent compassion reveals a trusted character.

If consistency is missing, the Pillars of Trust will fall.

Consistency for a company is the only way to build a company.

Consistency is the only way a leader can build a good reputation. This pillar is based on two things. Being predictable and being reliable are the foundations for consistency. Consistency builds trust.

When we can depend on people to deliver on their promises every single time, they become indispensable. And what's more, people will talk about it. What people say about another person is important, the pillar of consistency takes patience to develop and must be maintained with care. One instance of broken trust can create doubt and suspicion, it can destroy a person's reputation, and may result in the loss of relationships.

Apply it!

Ask yourself: Am I the same way Every time? Do I deliver the same quality, act with the same Consistency, and speak with the same honesty all the time regardless of the circumstances or the people around me?

David Horsager points out that consistency can be compared to a savings account. Put in a little each day, and over time, it will pay you back with safety and security. There are no short cuts to a reputation, you cannot win it as a prize. Be faithful in small things and bigger opportunities will come. Just as Jesus said in Matthew 21:25, His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.'

You will never get one big chance
to be trusted in your life;
you will get thousands of small ones.

Consistency of character and performance regardless of circumstances or who is watching is what matters to people. The leader who delivers a consistent message will enjoy a unified team whereas a leader who is not predictable or reliable in their actions will have few, if any followers.

A football player who gives his very best every time he plays, will at some point, make great things happen.

Trust is very similar to spiritual capital; it increases or decreases with every interaction. This is true for every interaction between a leader and a follower, a businessperson, a politician, a person in civil service, law enforcement, or the judicial system. Every interaction they have with others will provide the basis as to whether they are trusted more or less.

"Trust Me"

Actions, not words are what sharpens the trust edge.

Someone may say "Trust Me", but it doesn't mean people will believe it. If a person that you have just met, or don't know very well says, "Just trust me", your first reaction is likely not to be trusting them, it is more likely to be suspicion. Trust is not established just by the words that are used. In fact, if people need to ask for your trust, they may not have the ability to earn it. Trust is earned by the actions that are taken.

Trust Versus Love

True love can be unconditional. Trust is not, nor should it be. We may love our little child, but we don't trust them yet. Trust must be earned.

There are people that we may know well, we may enjoy discussing things with them, or talking with them about sports, but we do not trust them. We may never leave them in charge of our children or become business partners with them. Trust is the highest compliment, and it is reserved for those who have earned it.

Even when there is love, trust may be broken or weakened. A woman can relearn to love someone who has deeply hurt her, but it does not mean she will automatically trust them again. The strength of trust depends on the consistency of intent and integrity.

Consistency Builds Habits

People are not who they are because of a particular achievement or action. If a man is a good husband, it is not because he gave her a gift yesterday. It is because he has been faithful and caring to her over many years. Many people focus on the big things, the big achievements, but through the course of our lives we make hundreds of thousands of small choices and decisions, people's lives then are the sum total of those decisions.

One of the great things about the Gospel is that it opens the door in a person's life for genuine change to happen. Roman's 12:2 tells us that as we study the Word of God, we need to examine our lives and see where changes may be needed so we can be conformed into the likeness of Jesus. Much of what we do as people are the result of habits we have developed over the years and some of those habits may not be good.

Habits, however, can be changed, but they do not change on their own, even with good intentions. If we are serious about changing a habit, it is necessary to take the steps that will create an environment where we can succeed. The following is a helpful list to creating that habit-changing environment.

1. **Write down the habit** you want to change. Writing it down solidifies commitment.
2. **Note the benefits** of changing and consequences of not changing.
3. **Replace it.** It is easier to "replace" a habit than to "quit" it. If you are watching too much television, replace it with reading more.
4. **Work on one habit as a time.**
5. **Create a clear plan.**
6. **Break the plan down** into daily actions.
7. **Create appropriate accountability** through a trusted friend or professional.

8. **Keep it on top of your mind** (set reminders on your calendar, or post a note where you will see it).

Consistency

- Consistency leads to trust.
- Deliver the same thing every time and you will be trusted.
- The track record of trust is built over time. There is no other way to lasting success.
- Don't agree to anything you cannot deliver.
- You increase or decrease trust with every transaction.
- Trust is earned by consistent action, not just words.

Some questions to start discussion.

- **Are you consistent in words and actions?**
- **How could you be more consistent in your communications?**
- **How could your organization be more consistent?**
- **What one thing, if you did it consistently over the next six months would change your life?**
- **Can you think of an inconsistent experience you had with a business and how it made you feel? Will you go back to that business again?**