

## MODULE 27

### TRUST IN TEAMWORK

Segment	Content
Introduction	<p>Stephen Covey claims that you cannot do successful business without trust. He states, “Trust is the lifeblood of all relationships, of all transactions, and is so foundational and fundamental to everything in life.” Covey encourages leaders to learn specific things to do which will positively impact the trust levels in every relationship including professional, personal, and family. If a workplace is described as being plagued by political games, back stabbing, and a multitude of regulations and rules; there is no trust. The good news is that there are specific things you can identify which undermine trust and actions good leaders can take to instil trust.</p>
Learning and development objective	<p>At the end of Module 27, you will be able to describe specific ways to destroy trust in your team and specific ways to build trust.</p>
Main text	<p><b>Where to start as a leader?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <span style="color: orange;">▶</span> <b>Question #1: Are we really a team?</b> Are you part of a group of between 3 – 12 people which shares common goals as well as the rewards and responsibilities for achieving them? Does this group readily set aside their individual or personal needs for the greater good of the group?           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If your team doesn’t meet these criteria, you might want to consider whether you are involved in a smaller subset of the group, which is the real team. Or maybe the group, is simply a collection of people, who report to the same manager, but who have relatively little interconnectedness and mutual accountability (this is not a team)</li> <li>○ Remember: It’s alright to decide your group isn’t a team. In a world where teamwork is rarer than we might think, plenty of non-teams succeed</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>What’s involved?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <span style="color: orange;">▶</span> <b>Question #2: Are you ready for heavy lifting?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Having defined whether you are really a ‘team’ in question #1, let’s be clear:</li> <li>○ The advantages of being a true team are enormous</li> <li>○ It’s important to go into this process with eyes wide open, and with no illusions about what is required               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Becoming a team doesn’t take years and doesn’t have to be unpleasant. In fact, most teams can make significant progress in weeks or</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>

months and find the process itself to be one of the most rewarding aspects of their professional lives.

**Creating Trust**

Now trust. What is trust? Trust is the ability of a person to feel that they can be open, and vulnerable in front of the group, and know that in doing so, that they are comfortable, protected, and safe, within that group. It's the ability to be able to be yourself without fear of criticism, without fear of being told off, or fear of being ridiculed. And trust is something which starts from the top. Trust is something which begins with you, as the leader.

An easy way to think about creating trust as a leader is to think of each person on your team as having an 'Emotional Bank Account.' As a leader, you can consistently make emotional 'deposits' by being empathic and maintaining a relationship with your team which is characterized by high integrity. As you make deposits, your account balance grows and you have more freedom and flexibility, as you work with your team. In contrast, if you make frequent 'withdrawals' by engaging in any of the six 'cancers,' you will quickly find yourself becoming overdrawn. Stephen Covey states that there are six 'cancers' which destroy all relationships, including team member relationships. These 'cancers' are criticising, complaining, comparing, competing, contending, and cynicism. While competition in workplace relationships is not necessarily a negative trait, it becomes a problem when individuals are competing to increase their own sense of worth. When your balance begins to drop, or you make frequent withdrawals, you will quickly find your team responding to you with little trust. Your team will lose their creativity, flexibility, and productivity.

Patrick Lencioni asserts that every leader must make the intentional choice to create a team and creating it requires a significant amount of work. This is not an easy task. Lack of trust is the most common dysfunction in a team, according to Lencioni. He believes there are two keys for building trust with your team.

- ▶ **Key 1: Model vulnerable behaviour with your team.** If the leader is not able to model vulnerable behaviours with the team, it is unlikely that the team members will be vulnerable either. The leader must be willing to admit personal mistakes and weaknesses as they occur.
- ▶ **Key 2: Lead your team in exercises designed to create a comfort level.** Simple exercises which take no more than 10 to 15 minutes to conduct, and very little advance preparation can help a leader increase the comfort level of their team. For example, take a few minutes at the beginning of a team meeting and ask each member to share a fact or experience from their childhood. How many siblings did they have? What was a traumatic event they experienced during childhood? Where did they grow up? When doing an exercise such as this one, remember to move quickly through the process. Do not focus on one person for any length of time and avoid long comments which could be perceived as lectures. Encourage team members to share. Push a little harder than you might usually feel comfortable.

	<p>This is part of the Leader’s risk taking. Make sure you volunteer your own personal information over the course of the exercise.</p>
<p><b>Key point</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ As a leader, you own an emotional bank account with your team. You can make ‘deposits’ with your words and behaviours when you demonstrate empathy and model integrity. You can also make ‘withdrawals’ with criticising, complaining, comparing, competing, contending, and cynicism.</li> <li>▶ As a leader, develop trust by modelling vulnerable behaviour and creating exercises to promote a more trustful environment.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Task for the day</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ We talked about some of the activities in the text, but I'm asking you today, to think about times when you can simply say, “I'm sorry. You're right, I was wrong.” And find ways of opening yourself up, being more open than you normally are, and being clear with people and allow them to be open with you. Hold back from any form of criticism, strive to be positive and create that safe environment.</li> <li>▶ So, see what you can do today. See how you feel and watch how other people react. Think about the pointer Patrick Lencioni and Steven Covey offer about trust. And then let's come back tomorrow in the next module, and start seeing how we can build upon the trust which you started to create within your team.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Questions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ How easy is it for you to admit you have weaknesses or have made a mistake?</li> <li>▶ As you consider your emotional bank account with your team members, what kind of balance do you have?</li> <li>▶ What will you begin to do to create trust within your team?</li> </ul>