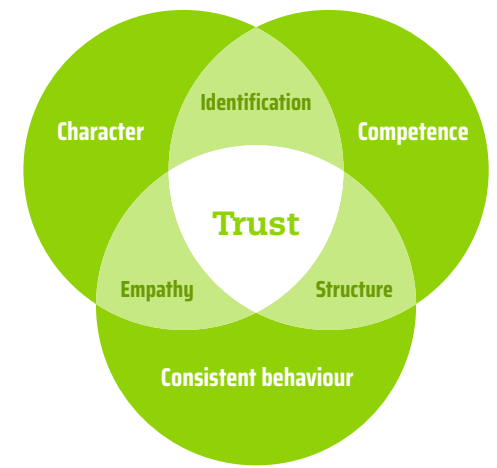


# Universal Principles of Trust



## #1 Character

You trust people with a strong personality and a clear purpose that you can lean on, and have your back.

- **Intent**

What are your intentions, goals and dreams? Knowing that someone is driven and ambitious influences the perception of trust in a strong way. Empowers character.

- **Invested**

When their ambitions align with your goals and dreams it creates an extraordinary bond. You feel they are invested in you, when they have your back. Deepens character.

- **Respect**

To truly see and hear someone is the essence of respect. A simple principle that's often overlooked in the workplace and company culture. Respectful behaviour elevates character and invokes trust.

- **Honesty**

Honesty unveils itself over time and influences the level of trust. It's the intention to uphold invisible values and norms between two parties through corresponding behaviour.

## #2 Competence

Having the right knowledge and experience is not enough to generate trust. You need evidence of it and a good reputation as well.

- **Expertise**

Trust is always connected to a topic or subject. You trust your accountant to be good with numbers, but you don't trust him to fix your car. What is your area of knowledge or expertise?

- **Experience**

Experience is crucial to becoming truly competent about a subject. You can't become a good swimmer when you never actually were in the water. Competence is a crucial pillar in a trust relationship.

- **Evidence**

Trust increases when there is evidence or proof of competence about a specific subject or topic, such as titles, credentials, awards or recommendations.

- **Reputation**

A good reputation invokes trust. It takes time to build it and become credible. But it can also be fragile. When a reputation is discredited, it directly influences trust.

## #3 Consistency

Do what you promise. Words matter. Clarity in communication and attention to detail strengthens trust in a relationship.

- **Congruency**

The closer the space between what we say and what we do, the higher the level of trust, and vice versa... We judge each other by our actions in congruency with our words.

- **Communication**

Clear, steadfast and active ways of communicating can increase trust in starting relationships, together with clarity in words and message. Confused people don't buy. The same goes for trust.

- **Details**

Attention to detail creates a baseline of trust. Sloppiness leads to uncertainty and steadily decreases trust in relationships. Attention to detail is a reassurance for quality.

- **Accountability**

Be accountable for your actions. Have a way of reflecting on what you do and how you do it. Self-assessment generates a level playing field within organizations and grows trust.

## #4 Identification

We subconsciously trust people from our tribe or peer group faster than we trust others. This also goes for people with given authority who wear uniforms or specific titles.

- **Tribes & Peers**

Biology and shared history is the one thing that holds people together. It creates the critical bonds of kinship and trust and a sense of common purpose.

- **Authority**

We trust people with assigned authority, such as official titles, uniforms or doctors coats. In companies, however, titles get respect, but trust has to be earned...

- **Conviction**

When we recognise and share the same convictions and ideas, this creates a bond and generates trust. Contrasting convictions, however, can limit the development of trust.

## #5 Structure

Our brain produces dopamine when we recognize patterns or frameworks. That's also why traditions and rituals strengthen bonds and create high-trust relationships.

- **Framework**

We trust others faster when we recognize how they work, that there is a system or framework in place. It takes away uncertainty.

- **Rituals & Traditions**

Rituals and traditions generate powerful shared memories. This forges special bonds, enriches tribal culture and creates high-trust peer groups like religious groups, college fraternities, club supporters, etc.

- **Values & Norms**

Values are rules of life that are important to someone. Norms are the yardstick up to what level these values are being upheld. People with similar values and norms trust each other with more ease.

## #6 Empathy

Without empathy or benevolence you simply can't have a high-trust relationship. Forgive someone, be vulnerable, ask for help, show humility.

- **Forgiveness**

When we give someone room to make mistakes it elevates a normal relationship into a high-trust relationship.

- **Humility**

Humility means not taking yourself too seriously. To challenge your assumptions, and to be open to the ideas of others. Leaders who do this seem more human, relatable and generate trust naturally.

- **Vulnerability**

The ability to ask for help is equally vulnerable and powerful. It invites others to be vulnerable as well. Very powerful in creating high-trust relationships.