Trust: How to Create It & How to Lose It _By Clint Maun_

Perhaps one of the most critical elements of a team is trust. After all, in order to accomplish objectives, co-workers must be mutually dependent on one another's experience, abilities, and commitment. Without a common trust among employees, achieving a smooth and efficient work environment becomes a near impossibility.

There are three excellent ways for leaders to build trust into their teams, and three quick ways to lose it. First let's consider how to create it.

Establish a Level Playing Field. Trust is created when even the newest worker, part-timer, or lowest paid employee feels important and part of the team. It's not as hard as it sounds. Sometimes all it takes is management

making the effort to be visible—especially to the employees that are "lower on the totem pole." Simply learning the names of employees and treating one and all with genuine respect can go a long way in the trek to develop trust.

Keep in Constant Communication. Communication is the vessel that relays information and truth to your team. Keeping in regular contact with the members of your team is key to a successful outcome. This communication can be as simple as asking a team member how their weekend was, to as specific as sharing the organization's vision and values.

Stay Focused on the Big Picture. While many different people comprise a team, their goals and mission should be uniform. To create trust,

In this issue . . .

Announcing the Winner Extraordinary Team Day

Practical Team Activities: Active Listening

From the Bookshelf: The Five Dysfunctions of a Team

Team Basics Mem-Cards

Is It the Team or the Work?

BTW, IM is a GR8 Tool 4 Fast, EZ Convo

I confess. I don't know much about instant messaging (IM), other than my daughter loves to chat online in hieroglyphics that r kinda like English. While my ignorance may be bliss, Gartner Inc. predicts that by next year, employees at 70% of all companies will use IM for business or personal communication. By 2005, Gartner says at least 50% of U.S. businesses will rely on IM to interact with customers – and that most customers will use IM more than email!

First popularized by America Online, IM is a communications technology that basically does two things: 1) it tells you who else is connected to the network at that particular moment and 2) lets you exchange data (typically shorthand messages) instantly.

Over the last few years, more and more teams are using IM as a way to connect – especially "virtual teams" of geographically dispersed team members. Like the telephone, IM is a "synchronous" method of communication, which means you get instant responses to the information you share and questions you ask. Email, on the other hand, is "asynchronous." There is a time delay from the moment you press "send" to when the message actually lands in the receiver's inbox, especially if the receiver is using a dial-up connection. Some allow you to share documents, graphics, video clips or voice

IM Acronyms

BFN or B4N: Bye for Now
BRB: Be right back
Convo: Conversation
CU: See you
GFC: Going for coffee
HAND: Have a nice day
IC: I see
JK or j/k: Just kidding
JW or j/w: Just wondering
NP or n/p: No problem
OTL: Out to lunch
OTP: On the phone
Ping: To send an IM
SB: Stand by or wait
SN: Screen name
TTYL: Talk to you later

IM programs also clips,

Team Humor

A man was driving through the country and ran his tiny MG Midget off the road, into a muddy ditch. Nearby, a farmer and his dog were watching. The farmer walked up to the man, pointed to his giant Alaskan Malamute and said, "Warwick can get you out of that ditch." The farmer hitched the dog to the MG. With a snap of the reins he shouted, "Pull, Fred! Pull, Jack! Pull, Ted! Pull, Warwick?" And the Malamute pulled the MG from the ditch with little effort.

The man was amazed. He thanked the farmer, patted the dog and asked, "Why did you call out all those other names before you called 'Warwick'"?

"Well," the farmer said. "Warwick is just about blind. As long as he believes he's part of a team, he doesn't mind pulling."
Thanks to Elliott Black of Chicago and Joan Stewart!

▶ Teams and Trust   *(continued from page 1)*

management should stay focused on shared, rather than personal goals. If team members feel that it's everyone for him/her self, they're going to be less likely to listen, let alone trust your judgment. On the flip side, if employees feel everyone is pulling together to accomplish a shared vision, rather than a series of personal agendas, trust among the team is more likely.

There's the positive. Now brace yourself for the negative. Below are three sure-fire ways to lose trust among your employees.

Taking Credit Where Credit is Not Due. Want to lose the trust of your team and gain their resentment in one foul swoop? Then take sole credit for a project well done. One who is out only for him or her self, especially in a team environment, quickly loses the respect and trust of others. Even as the manger, or leader of the team, it's a collaborative effort. No one single person can take all the glory. It's just the way it goes.

Unwillingness to Take a Stand. There's really no way around it. Some time or another conflict will arise within the team. One of the quickest ways to lose trust is probably also one of the easiest—and that is of course, doing nothing. To be an effective, trustworthy team leader, you must take a stand. If you can't deal with conflict in a swift and fair manner, such as clearing up rumors or removing a "bad seed" from the team, you'll never gain trust and respect from your employees.

Not Being in the Know. Not paying attention or not properly allocating tasks according to team members' roles, responsibilities, leadership abilities, personal skills, and technical knowledge portrays you as a leader who doesn't know what's going on. If you're unaware of your teams' strengths and weaknesses, they're not going to entrust you with their ideas and feedback.

Trust and leadership go hand in hand.

Reprinted with permission. © 2003 Maun-Lemke, Inc. www.clintmaun.com

▶ Instant Messaging   *(continued from page 1)*

just like email.

If used correctly, IM can increase the fluidity of discussion, encouraging collaboration among team members who are not within arms length of each other. To get the most out of using IM, following these guidelines:

Be Picky. Just like your cell phone number, don't hand out your screen name to everyone. You may want to limit those who can access you in real time to your assistant, your spouse, your boss, your project team or your departmental team. Unlike email, if you carefully control who has access to your IM screen name, you won't be constantly copied (cc'd) on messages you don't care about.

Tailor Your Options. IM has the potential of being really distracting with useless pop-up boxes chiming in. Most instant messaging software allows you set your options to allow messages to come through (or not) and to alert you (or not).

Master Multi-tasking. These days, everybody multi-tasks and IM just makes it easier. For example, IM is useful when you are talking with a customer on the phone and need to get some information internally. Check to see if your team mate is online, then "ping" an instant message their way. Even if that person is also on the phone, they can read your IM and get back to you. Then you can have an immediate answer for the customer!

What's New at QPC Inc.

For the last quarter, I have devoted much of my time in the study of "expertise". Considering that my area of expertise is centered around helping organizations build high performance teams, I was commissioned to write a chapter on "Building Your Facilitation Skills" for the IAF *Group Facilitation Handbook.* Published by Jossey-Bass (Spring, 2004), my chapter is full of best practices elicited from over 140 facilitators from around the world. You can view the draft chapter at www.qpcteam.com/docs/iafguidebook.shtml where you'll be sure to glean some great ideas to enhance your facilitation skills.

I also had the great pleasure of working with Bob Treadway, CSP and Alan Parisse, CSP, CPAE for the National Speakers Association's Learning Laboratory entitled "The Expertise Imperative." Over sixty professionals gathered in Tempe AZ to discuss expertise—what it is, how to maintain and enhance it and how to leverage expertise as a competitive advantage in the marketplace. Talk about a strategic conversation! (You can view my session notes at www.qpcteam.com/nsa).

Enjoy your winter and let me know if I can share my expertise with your teams.   *Kristin*

An Extraordinary Team

Congratulations to the City of Norfolk Environmental Crimes Task Force

The City of Norfolk Environmental Crimes Task Force received the Fourth Annual "Extraordinary Work Team Award" in December, 2003. This self-directed team, comprised of city employees from various departments are engaged in various environmental inspections and interface directly with the citizens of Norfolk.

The team attributes their success in "our ability to seriously communicate with one another. There is no 'mandate' that keeps us together, so our ability to listen to one another, to show respect and care for one another, and to give and accept criticisms with good humor and understanding are indispensable."

The Task Force won a $200 gift certificate as well as a marble plaque to present to the leadership at the City of Norfolk. Congratulations for being an extraordinary team! For more information on the Task Force, go to our website at www.qpcteam.com/team.shtml

Practical Team Activities: Active Listening

Active Listening
To demonstrate the key elements to active listening
Time: 15-20 minutes
Nr. of Participants: Groups of 5 to 6 people
Materials: One marking pen for each group.

Whether your team is actively engaged in a "hot topic" or you want to use this as a learning activity, introduce this activity as a way to demonstrate "active listening."

First, select a "hot topic" – one that is relevant and that will have some people agree and disagree (e.g., gun control, abortion, casual dress policies, or Internet use in the workplace).

Pick up a marker and state, "He or she who has the pen has the 'floor.' The 'speaker' will tell their teammates his/her opinion about the hot topic.

No one is to interrupt the speaker until the speaker is finished.

"The 'listeners' are to listen, without interruption. Before anyone else may speak, one of the listeners must paraphrase the speaker. The speaker then decides whether the listener accurately captured his/her intent *and* the feeling.

♦ If yes, then the speaker hands the marker to the person who accurately paraphrased him/her.

♦ If no, then another person attempts to paraphrase the speaker.

"You will continue this process until all have had a chance to speak."

After all have had a chance to participate, debrief the activity:

♦ What did you think about this activity? Was it easy to do? If not, what made it so difficult?

♦ From the speakers' perspectives, what made you think you were listened to?

♦ From the listeners' perspectives, what made you a better listener?

♦ What did your fellow team members do to help you listen more effectively?

♦ What did your fellow team members do to help you speak more clearly?

♦ What did you learn from this activity? How might we apply these learnings to our team's work?

THE extraordinary team ®

From the Bookshelf

The snow was falling gently as I curled up by the fireplace with Patrick Lencioni's *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team* (ISBN 0-7879-6075-6). What a wonderful fable about building extraordinary teams! A quick read on the surface, there are some golden nuggets of ideas to help leaders rescue their teams from the morass of dysfunction:

Absence of Trust. Team members lack confidence in each others abilities and intentions.

Fear of Conflict. Teams avoid conflict and are unwilling to discuss and resolve issues to produce the best possible solution in the shortest period of time.

Lack of Commitment. Teams are unable to make clear and timely decisions and move forward with complete buy-in from every member of the team, even those who voted against the decision.

Avoidance of Accountability. Unwillingness of team members to call their peers on performance or behaviors that might hurt the team.

Inattention to Results. Tendency of members to care about something other than the collective goals of the group.

If your team has one of these dysfunctions, your team may want to read this book (or ask me for help!).

Team Basics Mem-Cards™

Mem-Cards™ are an exciting, new learning tool that captures the world's most effective personal and professional development books. Authors such as Zig Ziglar, Brian Tracy, Jeffrey Gitomer, Dianna Booher, Tony Alessandra and our very own Kristin Arnold share their best strategies, principles, practices and inspirational quotes to get you motivated—all in a set of 27 cards you can carry in your pocket!
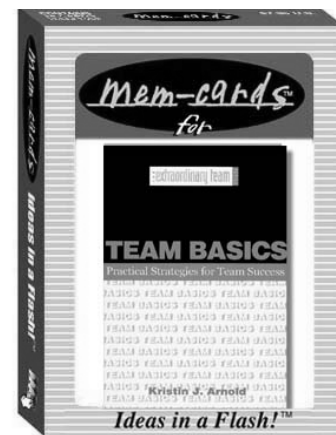
Each Mem-Card deck is a paired-down, simplified, and tightly-focused version of the author's personal and professional development books.

Kristin's book, *Team Basics* provides short bursts of information to help you build high performance teams. Individuals or teams can use these cards for self study, reflection, team training or team building.

Is It the Team? Or Is It the Work?   *By Jim Ball*

Have you ever seen a situation where a team of people was spending more time griping and complaining than doing their work? If so, maybe the problem is the work, not the team.

A manager told me the problems he was having with his team members. They complained all the time. They did not help each other or share information. His list of "personnel" and "teamwork" problems went on and on.

I asked, "What are your team's top three goals?"

The manager had to think about it. "Well…" he said. "We don't have what I would call specific goals. Everyone has various tasks they are responsible for performing and we have several little projects going on, but we really don't have goals."

After just a few minutes of discussion, the manager created a big overall goal that his team could pursue related to improving response times and accuracy rates.

A week later, I had another discussion with the same manager. He said it was like day versus night. The complaining was gone. Everyone was excited about the new project they were pursuing together.

The moral of the story is…If a problem exists with teamwork, the root cause of the problem is often not the team itself, but the fundamental work they have been given to accomplish.. If you find people complaining, infighting, or spending more time talking about what they are going to do than doing it, there is a good chance that the work that they have to do is far below their abilities.

As a friend of mine used to say, "What is the sense in having a bazooka if all you fire at is ants?" What is the sense of hiring great and capable people if you are not going to give them great goals to pursue and challenging work to do?

As simple, basic, and obvious as it may sound, all teams need big and challenging goals. It is the responsibility of the teams' leaders to make sure those big goals exist. How about your team? What goals are you pursuing today?