

TOP TEN LEADERSHIP TIPS FOR BUILDING TRUST IN TEAMS





BUILDING THE FOUNDATION STONE OF YOUR TEAM

Having spoken to many leaders over the years, who tell me 'Orla, I know trust is very important and it causes me a big headache when I sense it's slipping in my team, but you know you either have it with a person or you don't'.

In my experience that is nearly always not the case. Yes you can have trust from the get go and you can lose it as quickly. What I have found is that you can build trust on purpose by your behaviour, mindset and language.

Trust is the fundamental building block of all human relationships either professional or personal. It allows us to go the extra mile, to share, to stretch, to express our passion and everything in between.

On the following pages are outlined my top ten tips for every leader to increase trust in their teams, purposefully.

Orla



TOP TEN TRUST TIPS

Tip No 1 - Be Transparent with Your Team

Be Honest as possible at all times. This means treating each member of the team as adults and not second guessing 'what they can handle'. Most team members once they understand the context of a decision and understand how it impacts them in reality, even if it may be negative, prefer to deal with reality. Obviously there may be some situations e.g in non disclosure situations that price sensitive you can tell them everything. In that case tell them that.

Tip No 2 - Demonstrate Respect

Treat each member of the team in the same way you would expect to be treated - with respect. Recognise their expertise, diversity and background. Understand that each team member has a unique contribution to make and try as much as possible to respect differences, particularly differences of opinion. You can acknowledge without agreeing.

Tip No 3- Clarify Expectations

Be very transparent on your expectations of behaviour, goals and performance. Most misunderstandings and undermining of trust occur because either party has not been clear on expectations of the other party. Be really clear on goals, behavioural expectations and how the team interact with you and each other.



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Tip No 4 - Right Wrongs and Tackle any Residue as soon as possible

Tackle any misunderstandings as soon as possible. Don't let it brew until the next review, the next week etc. If you have been in the wrong, say so and if they have been in the wrong, listen and then move on.

Do not harbour grudges or resentment within the team. Model this behaviour yourself and ensure that others know the expectations of them.

Ensure there is no 'residue' or bad feeling present in the team.

Tip No 5 - Show Loyalty

Show loyalty to your team members. This does not mean accepting every story they tell you hook, line and sinker but acknowledge their hard work. For example, listen if there is a complaint but do not immediately move to accept it unilaterally. Undertake to investigate and come back to the person, having heard from team members. If they have made a mistake, acknowledge that, be clear on expectations and be transparent on how you are going to manage the complaint.

Tip No 6- Confront Reality and Be Honest

Be as straight as possible with your team. If they have done something that you don't agree with, say it to them directly. Do not share your thoughts with others before sharing it directly. If there needs to be a significant change to structure, behaviour or processes, be open and honest.

If there are business imperatives that need to be acknowledged e.g downturn ensure your team understand the context and the reality of how it will impact them directly. In this case agree a plan.



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Tip No 7 - Listen First

Your first role as Leader is to Listen. Resist the temptation to do all the talking. Listen, listen, listen - to language, body language and what is not being said. Then enquire based on what you've heard and then check and acknowledge that you have heard correctly. Only when you have gone through this process should you act.

Tip No 8 - Deliver Results

As a leader one of your primary roles is to delivery results, for the organisations and for the team. Ensure that everyone is very clear on what those results need to be and how they can impact them individually. This is as true for the most junior members of your team as the most senior. It really helps to visualise results and what they will deliver in organisational results.

Tip No 9- Practice Accountability

Everyone should be very clear on their roles, what is expected of them and how they can impact results. Once these areas have been agreed, you as leader should practice accountability. Holding each member of the team accountable for what you both have agreed needs to be delivered. This also means that you are not reliant on one or two team members but everyone contributes. Then you ensure that each project that is done well and delivered on time is acknowledged and if this doesn't happen that the team member is clear on what needs to be happen the next time to get it done as agreed.



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Tip No 10 - Keep Commitments

Having implemented the other 9 tips the final one is making sure you deliver on your word. This is particularly important on resources, timing etc, If circumstances change, you need to be honest and transparent with your team as to what happens now. Explain the context, what has shifted, ask for ideas and suggestions on how the team can flex around expectations and go from there. Don't renege on commitments and then never mention them again. That will kill trust stone dead!

Leading a team and really understanding how they can live into their full potential is both exhilarating and rewarding. It is also time consuming and sometimes confusing. However the key to all of the above is extending trust to others in the first place and empowering them to use their talents and expertise for the common good of the team, whilst at the same time enjoying the work they do and the team relationships that they forge. If you follow the above tips and forge strong trust in your team, your professional life will be more fulfilling, your achievements will be rewarding and you'll live into the leader you always aspired to be.



When you are ready to move to the next steps in building a cohesive, collaborative team who surpasses your expectations, book a consultation and let's talk about moving forward!

www.orlascott.ie Tel 00353 879162256

No one can whistle a symphony, it takes an orchestra to play it.....