

TRUST

7 Ways to Build Trust in a Business Relationship

Building trust is imperative when it comes to making sales and conducting business. **It doesn't matter how good your products or services are if people don't trust you to execute.** And chances are, if you are falling short on developing trust, your services and products probably aren't as good as they could be anyway.

Here are 7 ways to build trust plus some additional insight:

1- Start by Trusting Others

A lack of trust can ruin relationships—both personal and business. If you don't trust others, you'll end up establishing a kill-or-be-killed spirit. While you might trust others, there may be people who distrust you for whatever reason.

It can originate in the other person, and that can be really hard to remedy.

But think about it... What's causing those people to distrust you and others? Chances are they've had bad experiences with people in the past who they've come to realize they really can't trust.

It's not going to be easy to convince them that you're different; it's not going to be easy to get them to trust you. But it's worth a shot. Not only can it lead to a strong relationship, but it can change their life for the better.

Tony Hsieh, the CEO of Zappos, got a lot of pushback from those he told his idea to before he started the business. An online shoe store that relies on women buying shoes without even trying them on first? Fat chance, said most.

For it to work, Hsieh had to trust the women not to wear the shoes and use them, only to send them back and return them. Likewise, the women buying the shoes had to trust his return policy, so that if the shoes they ordered didn't, in fact, fit, they could return them and get their money back.

Now, Zappos sells shoes to thousands and thousands of women *and* men, and none of it would have been possible without trust.

2. “Be a Mensch.” -My Grandmother

Mensch is a German word for “human being,” but in Yiddish the meaning goes way beyond that definition. A mensch is fair, kind, honest, and transparent, even if no one is there to see it. In the book *Enchantment*, by Guy Kawasaki, he lists the ten way to achieve menschdom as explained to him by a friend of his:

1. Always be honest.
2. Treat people who’ve wronged you with civility.
3. If you’ve made promises, keep them.
4. Help someone even if they can’t be of any use to you.
5. Instead of looking to blame someone, ask “What can we learn?”
6. Instead of feeling threatened by people who are smarter than you, hire them and give them opportunities to grow.
7. Allow people their moment by not interrupting them, by not dismissing their concerns, by not changing the subject and don’t rush to give advice.
8. In anything you undertake, try not to do any harm.
9. Don’t be too quick to shoot down others’ ideas.
10. Share your knowledge with others. If you know the best practices and you have expertise, be generous with it.

3. Be Open About Your Motives and Goals

Oftentimes, and especially upon first meetings, everyone is wondering what everyone else’s *real* motivation is. Get it out of the way as fast as you can. Let people know what your interests are.

We all have to make a living, so it’s best to let someone know that you are trying to sell them something rather than them finding out later on and subsequently losing trust for you.

Have you ever been approached by someone you considered a friend only to find out that they are really just trying to get you to buy into their nutrition shake pyramid scheme? It would have been better to find out when the appetizers arrived than when you’re paying the check. What a waste of time with someone who, in retrospect, only called you to “catch up” in order to sell you a cleanse.

4. Be an Expert

It's one thing to know something, and another to be good at actually doing it. In other words, knowledge is knowing what to do, and competence is doing what you know.

In many instances you may have learned what you should do, but when it all comes down to it, plans don't go as expected. In those cases, it's invaluable to have both knowledge *and* experience so that you can competently achieve the desired goal—even though it means getting to that end-goal differently than planned.

When people consider you both knowledgeable and competent, they tend to trust you much more.

5. Sincerely Interact with People

All of these trust building traits are great, but if you don't interact with the people you are working to gain trust from, none of them really matter. In other words, you have to be responsive. It's easy to accidentally neglect responding to an email, but it's even easier to do it on purpose.

Responding, however, may mean so much to whomever it was who reached out.

Imagine getting an email from one of your smaller clients with a question you could easily pass off to someone else. Instead, try taking the time to respond in the most helpful way possible. It could make their day, and come time to renew their contract with you or schedule more services, that moment may resurface.

You never know, but you can know this for sure: If you don't do what's necessary to delight them, they won't feel delighted by accident.

6. Think in Terms of Win-Win

There's a HUGE misconception about business in general, and it's one of the reasons trust is lost so easily amongst businesses and their customers: That businesses is a zero sum game.

On the contrary, one's gain does not necessitate another's loss.

Think about it... When you walk into a store to buy a pack of gum for \$2, you don't think of yourself as \$2 poorer; you think of yourself as one pack of gum richer. Assuming you value the gum at equal to or greater to you in value than your \$2, it's a

win for you. But it's also a win for the store owner, because she would rather have your \$2 than that pack of gum.

In other words, good business means trading, not taking. Good business is a win/win.

7. Build Trust with Your Employees

This could have been the first one in the list as it's super important. After all, if you can't earn the trust of your employees, how can you possibly cultivate a feeling of trust with your customers?

It really does start at the top. As a business owner or manager, you have the opportunity to create a positive work environment. Essentially, following the other ways of building trust in a business relationship explained in this article is a good thing to do with regard to how you interact with your co-workers and employees.

- Trust them and they'll trust you
- Treat them with respect
- Tell them what you're after and what to expect
- Learn about their jobs so you have credibility
- Truly listen and respond thoughtfully
- Remember, your relationship with your co-workers and employees is a win/win

Building trust in business relationships is no easy task. It takes work and effort. Setting a good example with your employees can spread the trust like wildfire.

One thing not mentioned in this article but I want us to think and talk about is the **Transfer of Trust** in referring our client to another member in the GROW business network. How important is that and what implications does this carry with it?

