



every
woman
WORKBOOK

BUILDING AND ACCELERATING TRUST

About this workbook

At everywoman, we deliver a range of innovative products and resources that unlock the potential and talent of women in business globally. Whether you're just starting out, looking to progress your career, or even to build and develop your own enterprise, the everywomanNetwork provides a wealth of personal development resources, advice and inspiration to address the challenges you face at key stages in business. We produce workbooks on topics that matter most to our members and we're constantly listening to your views to give you the tools you need to propel you through your life's work, at a time and place that suits you.

Welcome to our workbook, *Building and Accelerating Trust*.

Building and accelerating trust — both on an individual and a team level — has never been more important than it is today. Without trust, we cannot build authentic intimate relationships, nor can we collaborate across and outside of our organisations to bring about innovation and growth to benefit our businesses and customers.

We all know that trust is the underpin to business success, and with the pace of change that exists across the world, we are being forced into situations which require us to take risks, be courageous, and try different things. All this requires huge amounts of vulnerability-based trust.

This workbook will give you an insight into what vulnerability-based trust means, and why it matters. You'll discover what can get in the way of trust, and practical ways for accelerating it with others. You will come away feeling that you can connect with others in a way that is authentic, empathise without judging, take acts of boldness, and move the dynamic in your relationships and teams up a gear.

We'd love to know how you get on – email us at karenmax@everywoman.com or tweet us @everywomanuk.

Max & Karen
and the everywoman team

What is trust and why does it matter for business?

Some ways to think about defining trust

1. The verb: to trust. The one who trusts, the act of trusting.
2. The noun: trustworthiness. A characteristic or trait of the one who is trusted.
3. The noun: trust. A quality of the relationship between people, and the level of trust that exists between them.



EXERCISE

Think of the relationships you currently have or have had at work which you would describe as 'trusted relationships'. What has made these trusted relationships?

The ingredients of trusting relationships are sometimes referred to as the 'three Ps'. When you reflect on your most trusting relationships, consider to what extent each of these factors played or play a role...

1. Trust is personal

When one person trusts and the other is trustworthy, then there is trust. Leading with trust requires you to focus on being trustworthy (credible, reliable, intimate, and focused on the other person).

Trust is all about people. Do you have others' best interests at heart and are you sensitive to their needs? 'It's not about you,' is a brilliant phrase to remember — trust is about relationships; trust is created in your exchanges with others and the experiences you create through those exchanges.

Reciprocity in trust-based relationships begins with listening. Listening can drive trust. If somebody feels listened to, they will listen to you.

2. Trust is positively correlated to risk

The essence of trust contains risk because in our individual or team relationships we need to take a chance in leading the way. Sometimes you may need to summon up courage and say or do something that leaves you exposed, or that might have uncertain consequences.

3. Trust is paradoxical

Trust is a higher-level relationship, therefore the human instincts of fight or flight, self-preservation, and the desire to win, are all motives that don't drive trust. By rising above such instincts, you will get better results than if you had striven for them anyhow. This requires humility and openness around our limitations, fears, insecurities, courage to act with uncertainty, being interested in and compassionate towards the other person.



EXERCISE

Reflect on teams that you've been in or lead where there has been a lack of trust. Indicate yes or no as to whether or not you experienced any of these consequences.

Consequences	Experienced?
Feeling unsafe to 'say it as it is' because of a fear of punishment, damage to relationships or reputation.	
Hesitant to ask questions because you didn't want to come across as stupid or 'rocking the boat'.	
Lack of risk-taking, experimentation and innovation.	
Lack of energy and low morale in the team.	

If you responded 'yes' to any of the above, it will tell you something about why trust matters.

Why does trust matter?

1. Trust builds psychological safety

Google did a study that showed that the number one factor for team success is psychological safety. What do we mean by this? Feeling safe enough to speak up, ask questions, admit errors and failings, apologise to others, take risks without fear of reprimand or concern that their comments or actions will damage their reputation or relationships with others.

As CEO of LeaderFactor Timothy R. Clark describes; 'Trust is essentially the predictive understanding of another's behaviour. The link between trust and psychological safety is based on my prediction of your behaviour based on your pattern of behaviour. If I can predict that you won't embarrass, punish, or humiliate me when I'm interacting with you and others in a social engage, I will participate, and release my discretionary efforts. If I don't trust that you will keep me safe, that lack of trust will trigger my self-censoring instinct and I'll play it safe and manage my own personal risk.'

2. Trust encourages questioning

We know that when people are curious, they ask questions. When people want to inquire to get to the best answers for a business or its customers, they will ask questions. Questions are invaluable for more in-depth debates, exploration of perspectives, and a different angle. Questions are also integral to enabling better understanding and interpretation between members of a team, which in turn increases the efficiency of a team.

3. Trust creates goodwill

When we have built trust with an individual and there is an underlying relationship, we are less likely to judge; more likely to empathise. Why is that? When there is trust, goodwill is likely to exist, allowing us to view others' comments or actions through a different and more well-intentioned lens.

4. Trust encourages innovation and decision making

When there is trust in teams, individuals are more likely to take risks, to experiment, to fail, and to learn fast. All these things facilitate innovation. In a world of total disruption where we can't rely on what we know or have done before, an experimental mindset is needed to accelerate the growth of our businesses, our customers' businesses, and drive sustainable change. Decision-making tends to be faster because team members don't end up second guessing one another, reworking tasks unnecessarily, or over-relying on just a few team members. This enables speed to market, speed of decision and completion of projects way ahead or on time.

5. Trust enhances morale

Teams are more likely to enjoy the ride when there is trust between members. Depending on one another when trust is high can create huge amounts of energy — the team feels 'in it together', with a deep desire to do its collective best and enable and support one another.

Neuroeconomist Paul Zak referenced that people at high trust companies report **74%** less stress, **106%** more energy at work, **50%** higher productivity, **13%** fewer sick days, **76%** more engagement, **29%** more satisfaction with their lives, and **40%** less burnout. Equally in a 2016 study by PwC, **55%** of Global CEOs surveyed think a lack of trust in business is a threat to growth prospects. So, trust is essential for fulfilment, engagement, productivity, and growth and something we can all have influence over in our day-to-day actions.

Barriers to trust

A number of things can get in the way of trust, but the most important is our own mindset. So, let's explore yours.



EXERCISE

Look at the statements below and think about your mindset towards trust.

Statement	Yes	No
I see trust as something I build, not as something that I have.		
I challenge and manage my cognitive bias towards others.		
I take action to ensure that trust doesn't erode over time.		

If you have scored 'no' to any of the above 3 items, then you may wish to reflect on your mindset to trust that could be limiting or holding you back from leaning into the active process of building trust with others.

Negative Mindset 1: I see trust as something I have, not as something I build.

When we think of trust as something that exists or doesn't exist with people who we assess as either trustworthy or untrustworthy, this leaves us powerless in groups or situations where we have judged other people as not trustworthy. Asking questions such as:

'Can I trust that they will have my best interests at heart?'

'Can I trust that they will come from a good-natured place?'

The problem with these questions is that if we're completely honest the answer is always 'no'. It's not because people are inherently untrustworthy; it's simply because we are all human and the world is a complicated place with a lot of interacting variables. We can never make a decision that might not inadvertently hurt someone at some time, despite our best intentions. And we can't control all the variables. There is a much more empowering way to think about trust – trust-building is a process that can apply to everyone and that can be worked on.

Call to act: Make time to find different ways to build and sustain trust with different people you work with.

Negative Mindset 2: I don't challenge my cognitive bias towards others.

Where there is a brain, there is bias, and this can affect our inclination to trust or not trust others. Our brain tends to categorise people into 'us' or 'them'. We trust those in the 'us' category because they are similar to us and are therefore safer to be with. This is called affinity bias. People who seem different or unfamiliar automatically fall into the 'them' category and we treat them with suspicion until we get to know them.

Call to act: Seek out people who seem different from you and consciously make an effort to notice what you have in common.

When people behave in a way that affects us negatively, our brain looks for an explanation, filling in holes with worst-case scenario assumptions. Without access to the perspectives of others, we tend to come up with distorted stories that makes the situation all about us. For example, if a boss doesn't respond to a request, the first explanation we wonder about is whether the boss is upset with us. If a peer doesn't respond to a request for help on a project, we assume he or she doesn't value our expertise. If we get interrupted or treated badly, we wonder: what did I do to deserve it?

Call to act: Identify your first thoughts as a first 'threat-influenced' reaction and re-think your interpretations. How else can I view this situation? What does this situation tell me about this person – what is going on for them, what might be an issue or challenge for them? How could I choose to think about this situation in a way that better serves me?

Negative Mindset 3: All you need to do is establish trust, then it takes care of itself.

Trust can erode over time. Why? We don't continuously do the work we need to do in order to understand what's going on in each other's heads. At best, we tend to know each other superficially or sometimes we are not interested in the other person. Our brain is lazy and likes to make simplified characterisations of others whilst focusing on our own goals, problems, thoughts, and dreams. We can end up not listening well to other people, and even when we try to listen, we rarely understand the depth of another person's experiences or perspectives.

Before you get defensive, ask yourself, how often have you felt deeply heard and understood by another person? It is difficult to get into someone else's head and see things from their perspective. It requires a lot of effort, and unless we have a compelling reason to put forth that effort, most of us don't think much about it.

This is why we miscommunicate and have misunderstandings. We don't fully understand each other when we talk, and those little misunderstandings add up to bigger misunderstandings over time. In addition, how many of us admit that we've been hurt or taken aback by something someone has said or done – and most misunderstandings don't get resolved or even mentioned until they've gone on long enough to cause deep rifts in relationships. If you add stress and pressure to the mix, this compounds misinterpretations tenfold, because now people are looking for threats or malicious intent.

Call to act: Become an agent of trust leading the way on accelerating trust by:

1. Assuming positive intent in another person.
2. Challenging assumptions you are making about another person and asking yourself what would be happening in the relationship if you were to assume something different or to think about the person in a different way.
3. Taking little nudges that make a big difference to sustain trust. For example, give feedback, ask for feedback, self-disclose concerns or insecurities or limitations, say sorry, admit when you don't know, be interested in the other person's goals, concerns and challenges, help the other person, look for win-win scenarios.

Strategies for accelerating trust

Accelerating trust in a one-to-one relationship by focusing on role modelling four trust qualities.

Trust is created from how you act and behave as well as through how you communicate. The Trust Equation tool is a brilliant way of getting you to think about whether a trust ingredient is missing in any of your work relationships and if so, what you can do about it. The Trust Equation developed by Harvard professor Charles Green looks at four qualities of trust that are all developable (see visual on next page).

1. **Credibility (your words and credentials)**. This comes from what you know but also how you communicate and your honesty and presence. Others will be evaluating the quality of what you say.
2. **Reliability (your actions)**. Do what you say, follow through, be consistent, predictable, giving a feeling of familiarity. Others will be describing what you do and the impact of this.
3. **Intimacy (connection)**. The safety you create with the other person that enables them to disclose and share. Others are measuring you on the extent to which they feel safe to share things with you.
4. **Self-orientation (caring)**. If you focus on yourself, you will likely negatively impact trustworthiness. However, if you focus on the other person, you will likely increase your trustworthiness. Others are measuring you on the extent to which you're able to put their interests ahead of your own.

TRUST EQUATION = CREDIBILITY + RELIABILITY + INTIMACY

SELF-ORIENTATION

CREDIBILITY	Relates to our words and is revealed in our honesty and presence.	I can trust what s/he says about...
RELIABILITY	Relates to our actions and is revealed by keeping our promises and being consistent.	I can trust him/her to...
INTIMACY	Relates to our connection with others; people feel safe talking about difficult subjects.	I feel comfortable discussing this...
SELF-ORIENTATION	Relates to our caring and is revealed in our focus (me or them?).	I can trust that s/he puts my interests above their own

Use the below pointers for each of the trust ingredients to reflect on whether you demonstrate this behaviour consistently and effectively.



- I communicate clearly in a way that makes sense to others.
- I share my expertise with others in a way that they can benefit from.
- I say when I don't know, share my limitations, engage in conversation when I don't have the expertise.



- I take personal responsibility for when things go wrong, focus on learning, move on from disappointment.
- I am consistent; others know what they will get from me and get it.
- I keep to and deliver on promises.
- I do what I say and follow through immediately and/or communicate to reset expectations.



- I share personal stories, vulnerabilities (concerns, fears etc) with others.
- I create a connection with others in a way that fits their worldview and interests.
- I empathise with others, am sensitive and share my response to their feelings.
- I am discreet and maintain the confidentiality of information.



- I ask questions and seek to learn and discover new ways that can help others.
- I challenge, give feedback, and share my thoughts so as to have a more meaningful dialogue with the other person.
- I focus on the long-term relationship not only the immediate result.
- I focus on achieving a win-win for both parties.



EXERCISE

Given your reflections, take 2-3 business critical relationships and reflect on:

What are you already doing consistently and effectively and what is the impact of this in your relationships?

What can you start to do that you're not already doing in these relationships? What would be the difference?

What could you do more effectively and consistently?

ACCELERATING TRUST IN A CONVERSATION WHEN THE RELATIONSHIP IS BROKEN OR WHEN THERE IS CONFLICT

Trust happens through conversations and requires two people to use particular behaviours in the conversation. The Trust Creation process developed by Charles Green refers to a 5-step model that describes these behaviours in action. It is a useful tool for focusing on behaviours that elicit trust and placing you at the centre of role modelling those behaviours to encourage them in the other person. It's a great tool for when there are tensions between you and the other person.

Step 1: Engage - 'Let's talk about...'

Offer something of value in an open discussion to the other person.

"I understand that you're trying to achieve ...", "I hear that you have ... challenge that you're trying to resolve with the customer."

Step 2: Listen - 'Tell me more...'

Hear what is important to the other person and what is driving their thinking.

'What's led you to believe that?' 'What's behind your statement or thinking?' 'What do you believe is driving that?' 'What is it about ... that matters to you?'

Step 3: Frame - 'So the issue is...'

State the root issue using caveats and problem statements and hypotheses, take personal risks to explore sensitive issues in depth, articulate a point of view.

'It sounds like the issue is....' 'It seems to me that ... is happening.'

Step 4: Envision - 'Let's imagine...'

Articulate how things could be different which would involve any win-win situations and show collaborative effort.

'How might we achieve ...' 'If we fixed this issue; how would things be different?' 'What might be different if we resolved this issue?'

Step 5: Commit - 'How could we...'

Jointly communicate actionable next steps with commitment and movement from each party.

'What if we were to do ...?' 'What are we both taking away from this?' 'What are our commitments to one another?' 'What will get in the way of us honouring our commitments?'



EXERCISE

Use the five-step Trust Creation Process to reflect on how you might approach the conversation and show up.

How will you choose to think about this conversation?

What is your desired outcome?

What do you know about the other person (their goal, desired outcomes, challenges, concerns, motivations, perspective)?

What might you need to consider in this conversation?

Accelerating trust in teams by focusing on a conversation around what works and doesn't work



EXERCISE

Reflect on a team you are a member of, or lead, right now and use the below questions to think about the team and its dynamics.

When is the team at its best? This helps you think about what energises the team, what its strengths are.

When is the team at its worst? This helps you to think about what might de-rail a team, what actions might be getting in the way of it performing at its best.

What are the unwritten rules of this team? What is really valued but not explicitly communicated and how does this drive the team's behaviour and performance?

What do you find hard to admit about your work or yourself/your own role in this team? Are you holding back from role modelling courage — a critical ingredient to vulnerability-based trust?

What do you believe the team avoids talking about? What is the team in fear of taking risks around and why might this be?

What do you hold back from saying in this team? For example, it could be about the behaviour of team members, the collective performance, issues between members that are affecting the whole team.

Use your responses to think about:

1. What is working in the team right now? How are you celebrating and acknowledging success?
2. Where is there opportunity to strengthen the team dynamic and how might you do this?
3. How can you use these questions to encourage honest dialogue as a way of accelerating trust?

BUILDING VULNERABILITY-BASED TRUST IN TEAMS

Patrick Lencioni in his book *The 5 Dysfunctions of High Performing Teams* talks about vulnerability-based trust. It states that the foundation of any high-performing team involves getting comfortable with sharing weaknesses, mistakes, insecurities, fears, limitations.

This sounds easy but — as described in the earlier part of the workbook — can be difficult because of associated risks. Most of us have not been conditioned in organisational environments to say, 'I've messed up', 'I am stuck', 'I feel insecure about...', 'I don't know', 'I am anxious'.

To accelerate vulnerability-based trust, we need to create psychological safety for us to 'say it as it is' and one way of doing this is through personal storytelling. Personal stories not only build up your level of courage, but they also enable you to create a deeper connection with others, increasing empathy and mutual understanding. All this can trump judgement when in the heat of conflict or when somebody has given feedback that hasn't quite landed with us.

Personal stories

1. Describe what life was like growing up.
2. Describe a challenge that has shaped who you are today (what might drive you).
3. What is your biggest insecurity and how does it play out?

ASKING FOR AND GIVING FEEDBACK

Feedback is a great way of accelerating trust as it shows care, curiosity, and courage. When we deeply care about getting each other to great heights and getting to great heights as a team, we will ask and give each other feedback. We will push each other out of our comfort zone and therefore give feedback that is challenging but useful. Feedback also enables us to strengthen our relationships with one another, challenge our assumptions and misinterpretations, and deal with things that might get in the way of us working well together.

Here are four things you can start to do:

1. Obtain constructive feedback from those around you

If you role model asking for it, you encourage others to do so and will develop relationships where people will be more open to receiving it from you.

2. Give constructive feedback on an ongoing informal basis

Focus on the situation, actions, impact and make it a dialogue that is just as much about praise as well as criticism.

3. Gauge how your message has landed

Observing and listening for cues – is someone receptive, interested, curious or are they in shock, angry, and defensive. Explore what they are going through and what they need. For example, find out what reflects and challenges self-perception? What has the person started to think about? How can the feedback be used to help the person achieve what they have set out to meet customer demands, business expectations?

4. Encourage feedback in others – giving and receiving

Ask your team to obtain feedback from stakeholders, from each other, to give feedback to stakeholders and each other as well as to their own respective team.



EXERCISE

Take six people with whom you work with right now (they could be a mix of direct reports, peers, senior stakeholders, customers, other external stakeholders) and ask the following questions of yourself:

What do you personally value in me and why?

If I leveraged my strengths, what could I be doing that I am not doing right now?

What do you believe holds me back from being at my best and your one piece of advice to address this?

What is the one thing I do that holds the team back from being at its best and your one piece of advice to address this?

What is the one thing that I do when I work with you that frustrates or irritates you and what would you like for me to consider?

What one thing could I do to strengthen our relationship, either in the what or the how?

GETTING THE BEST OUT OF ONE ANOTHER

The more that you can share about yourself with others, the greater the chance that you will have at them being better able to work with you. The more you can find out about others, you will have greater success at working with them in a way that resonates, aligns, and gets the best out of them.

Any psychometric tool that looks at styles are all great tools to use to help create a shared language for understanding one another. If you don't use a psychometric tool, then use the questions below to think about striking a dialogue with others:

1. How do you like to be communicated to/influenced?
2. When do you produce your best work?
3. What energises you?
4. What is important to you right now in your work?
5. How do you measure your personal success?
6. What are the 1-2 things that you're grappling with right now?
7. What three things can I do that get the best out of you when working together?
8. What are your non-negotiables – the things that you're not willing to compromise over that tell me about what's important to you? (These usually speak to personal values).



FINAL REFLECTIONS

Who are 2-3 people at work you would like to strengthen your relationship with?

What are the 3-4 things you would choose to share about yourself and what would you want to know about them.

Go and have a dialogue whose purpose is to 'get to know each other better'.

Building and Accelerating Trust

Further resources

[Performance vs. Trust - Simon Sinek](#)

[What a Trusting Team Feels Like - Simon Sinek](#)

[The Courage to be Vulnerable - Brene Brown](#)

[Five Things High-Performing Teams and Leaders Are Unafraid to Do](#)

[The Five Dysfunctions of High Performing Teams - Patrick Lencioni](#)

[The Speed of Trust - Steven Covey](#)

[The Trusted Advisor - David Maister, Charles H. Green, Robert M. Galford](#)

everywomanNetwork Resources

[The Trust Equation: 6 ways to think about how and why we trust our colleagues and teams](#)

[How psychologically safe are you and your team?](#)

[Getting the best from a virtual team](#)

References

[The Neuroscience of Trust](#)

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