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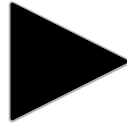
Ace The '3 C's' To Win Trust, Gain Speed And Build Relationships



STEVE WATKINS | 08:00 AM ET 05/15/2026

If you built trust and lace it throughout your organization, you won't just feel good. Your group will **gain speed and build strong relationships** to boost results.

Trust is a necessity to be a successful leader, says Shanda Gore, Toledo, Ohio-based founder and president of leadership development, strategic planning and culture-building consulting firm Mays & Associates.



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"People follow those they trust," said Gore, author of "The Pinleader Path."

Build Trust Authentically

Trust **has to be authentic**, too. "It's not forced and it's not automatic," Gore said. "It comes with relationship building."

Trust is particularly vital now, says Ravi Rajani, London-based keynote speaker and author of "Relationship Currency."

Rajani believes the world is in a "trust recession." The Edelman Trust Barometer showed in 2024 that 61% of respondents believed business leaders were intentionally communicating things that are misleading, false or exaggerated. He figures that number has increased since.

Resist The Trust Recession

Yet even as trust wanes, it is a **necessary component of success**.

"Every authentic business relationship is built on one thing and that's trust," Rajani said.

The best way to build trust is to simply do what you've said you would do, Gore says. That way, people know they can count on you.

Trust enables your group to work rapidly because people don't question everything they're told.

"When I look at exceptional leaders, they build trust quickly and they move their organizations forward in a fast-paced world," author Gore said.

Build Trust With The "Three Cs"

Build that kind of trust through what Gore calls the three Cs: care, communication and civility. Doing so will carry you in any situation but **particularly when there are disagreements.**

"A good trust culture gives you the ability to have a conversation with someone who may not agree with you," Gore said. "But you have enough trust in the relationship to respect them and hear them all the way through. We can still work together because it's a display of care."

Rajani tells clients to build trust through connection, competence and character.

Connect by building interpersonal relationships, he says. Ask thoughtful questions and share personal stories that show you're vulnerable.

Build competence by showing your expertise "without shoving it down someone's throat," Rajani said. That creates credibility.

Character shows up when people believe and trust what you're saying. Your actions back up your words.

"When you are only competence, you become a commodity," Rajani said. "Then you become easily replaceable."

Build Trust As A Habit

People need to turn the behaviors that contribute to each of those traits into long-standing habits, he says.

For example, make it a habit to pay compliments in a productive way. Be authentic and specific while showing impact.

Say an employee made a presentation. Don't just say, "Great job." Instead, you might say, "That was one of the most impactful presentations I've ever heard you deliver," Rajani said.

And add: "When you spoke about your struggle with impostor syndrome, that really hit home. And how you were able to connect that to the problem that we solved was masterful. It inspired me to use more vulnerable and personal stories in my own presentations."

Build Trust For Profit

Strong trust inside of teams **pays off on the bottom line**, Gore says. "Trust leads to relationships, which leads to good business," she said.

Trust stems from the person at the top.

"Exceptional leaders have a strength of character," Gore said. "You can trust that they're not going to lie to you. If you lie to me, I can't trust you."

Be straightforward with people, too. Communicate clearly. That way, there are fewer misunderstandings. And when the need to pivot arises, such as in an economic downturn, people follow your lead.

"If I can trust the leader, I'll take that bad news better," Gore said.

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